

Submission to the Opotiki District Council on their Statement of Proposal in response to the joint request by Te Arawhiti and Te Whanau a Apanui.

My name is Silvana WiRepa

In this submission I am responding in particular to the Statement of Proposal as it relates to Whanarua Bay.

- **Background**

I inherited my share in Lot 28, 8505 SH35 Whanarua Bay. My grandfather Romio WiRepa was the owner of Whanarua Bay until government legislation changed the status of his land from being maori title to general title without his knowledge. Our family lost the bulk of whanarua bay because of this change in legislation because Romio died without knowing and without being given the opportunity to have the land converted back to maori title. His land was to be shared by his surviving children equally. We were cheated out of our inheritance.

Our family has been disadvantaged severely. The reserves need to be returned to the WiRepa's. It is little compensation for what has occurred in the past.

- **My Submission**

- **First Proposal.** Opotiki District Council proposes that seven parcels of land at Whanarua are transferred.

These reserves were taken from the WiRepa family WITHOUT any compensation or remuneration given to the descendants of Romio and Mary WiRepa. All the reserves in my opinion are to be returned to the descendants of our grandparents.

- **Second Proposal.** Opotiki District Council proposes that the urupa on Lot 80 should be vested in Te Whanau a Apanui as a separate title of land and no longer having reserve status.

This is for the descendants of Romio WiRepa family to decide and to make public if necessary in due course. I don't believe it should be under the auspices of Te Whanau a Apanui as a whole unless an agreement is undertaken to have the reserves transferred back into the ownership of the Romio WiRepa descendants. .

- **Third Proposal.** Opotiki District Council proposes that the Recreation Reserve Lot 66 (the roadway down into the Bay) and the remainder of Lot 80 (as well as some other smaller lots) are vested in Te Whanau a Apanui and reclassified as Historic Reserves. The public rights of (walking) access would be as per the Act as is currently the case.

If the land is to be vested in Te Whanau a Apanui then it should only be done so with the intention of giving back to the descendants of Romio WiRepa at the same time.

- **Fourth Proposal.** Opotiki District Council proposes that Te Whanau a Apanui would be the sole administering body for the reserves.

The reserves are presently administered by the Opotiki District Council. We pay our rates to that Council and acknowledge that Councillors are democratically elected. We are being asked to transfer administration of the Whanarua Bay reserves to Te Whanau a Apanui - an organisation that we are unfamiliar with. Your options are to support the proposal, to reject the proposal, or support the concept of a 'Joint Reserve Board'.

This opposition of the return of the reserves to the WiRepa family who have been so significantly disadvantaged to me should not even be a topic of conversation. The European owners and others who are not descendants of Romio WiRepa have not suffered the indignities of being dispossessed of their heritage. This was our ancestral land and the bulk of the land should never have been in the possession of european or unrelated ownership. THE LAND IS TO BE RETURNED TO THE WIREPA FAMILY and to even have to debate it at this stage is astounding.

The access to the bay was always to be via. the bridge for those waterfront homes. That has been my understanding as said by Arthur WiRepa when he was alive. The WiRepa family need to take back control of their land. If it is to come back via. Te Whanau A Apanui so be it. All the land sold to the owners excluding what is under wirepa ownership on the upper levels was never supposed to be. All that land was to be retained in the wirepa name and managed similar to how the Hei family manage their affairs. As far as I am concerned they should not even be given a say.

- **Summary**

Summarise your submission.

- **Date and Send**

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Remember that Opotiki District Council must receive your submission:

*before **Thursday 4 March.***