



Whakaari Memorial Steering Group

Briefing to Whakatāne District Council
Living Together Committee – 6 March 2025

Presenters: Carolyn Hamil, Mark Inman,
Romana Graham, Rosemary Sloman,
Kay Boreham

Kaupapa

- In late 2023, in response to calls from various parts of the community, the Whakatāne-Ōhope Community Board approached Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa to explore a permanent memorial to the 9 December 2019 eruption of Whakaari-White Island

Kaupapa

- Rūnanga CE Reuben Araroa agreed that the time was right to explore a permanent memorial.
- The Whakaari Memorial Steering Group was established:
 - Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa CE rep – General Manager Romana Graham
 - W-OCB reps – Carolyn Hamill and Mark Inman
 - WDC CE rep – Principal Advisor Kay Boreham
 - Rosemary Sloman seconded for fund-raising expertise

Mahere - planning

- We began with a communication to the group we refer to as ‘the Whakaari whānau’ – the group of people most directly impacted by the eruption and its aftermath
 - The survivors
 - The families or those on the island who did not survive, or who later died of their injuries
- ❖ All communication with the Whakaari whānau is through the NZ Police Family Liaison officers

Mahere - planning

- Their feedback was in support of a permanent memorial 'space'
- Early engagement began with hapū through TRONA board reporting
- Early engagement began with first responder groups
- The Whakatāne-Ōhope Community Board resolved to set aside \$40K seed funding for an initial design concept



Mahere - planning

- March 2024 Expressions of Interest were called for local creatives who wished to be involved in the project – five were received
- These progressed to a Request for Proposal to determine who had the experience, capacity and capability to create a design concept
- Takutaimoana Harawira and Brendon Law of Law Creative were selected to create a design concept
- May 2024 – MOU signed between W-OCB & TRONA and the Eastern Bay Community Foundation, establishing a Whakaari Memorial holding fund

Potential sites

- Initial discussions were held with WDC staff about site feasibility

A riverside location, near Te Hau Tutua Park

Kāpū te rangi

Ōtarawairere Road/Lookout

For a variety of reasons, including comparative site complexity and feedback from Whakaari whānau, it was decided to explore the area beside Te Hau Tutua Park



Potential sites

- Work continues to identify a suitable site
- Having considered feedback from the most recent engagement with hapū, the Steering Group will not be progressing further investigation of the site beside Te Hau Tutua Park



Consultation

- We have had a whānau-first approach

hapū consultation is ongoing

we are sharing the kaupapa with you today

wider community consultation will progress in due course



Funding

- The final cost of the project will be determined by the final selected site
- A comprehensive fund-raising campaign is planned
 - discussions are being held with central government which we hope will provide a significant percentage from its Memorials of National Significance fund
 - There are a range of philanthropic funders we will apply to, and groups individuals who have expressed a desire to donate
 - This year's Inman-Marshall fundraising events in Ōhope generated \$90K



Potential Council support

- Support for funding applications
- Ongoing awareness so the background to any eventual planning consent process is understood by staff teams
- A future discussion on incorporating site maintenance into Council work programme – potentially paid for by invested funds



Thank you for your time . . .

Questions