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Dear Friends and Supporters of Waterfront Watch

Happy New Year! It certainly promises to be an interesting year for WW with TWO building developments now under discussion for the northern end of our precious waterfront.

If you went away a few days before Christmas you may have missed the announcement, so here is what happened:

WW made a submission to the Wellington City Council in respect of the North Kumutoto project (the Site 10 building and associated developments) by the deadline, December 18 2014. Apart from the loss of public ownership and open space on Wellington's waterfront, the issues we raised related to the bulk of the building proposed, heritage, open space and traffic. There are other issues but we have chosen to focus on those mentioned here.

And then on December 23 the headlines in The DomPost read: "**Convention centre site in CBD axed.** Those involved are now proposing the CentrePort-owned Interisland Wharf, next to Wellington railway station, as the best site for the 165-room, five-star Hilton and 2500-capacity convention centre."

Apart from wellington.scoop.co.nz and *Eye-of-the-Fish* website, there has been remarkably little newspaper comment since the announcement. Given its timing, this should not surprise anyone.

WW is deeply concerned however, that the proposed site is not subject to any height restrictions (it is covered by the Regional Coastal Plan which does not impose any specific height restrictions) and "theoretically it means they could put up a 20-storey building if they wanted to". (My statement in The DomPost 24.12.14)

Obviously, any plans would have to go through the resource consent process – in this case any consent would be granted by Greater Wellington Regional Council (as the proposed site is outside the Wellington City Council's jurisdiction).

So, once again, watch this space. WW now has TWO building developments to scrutinize. There is a lot of work ahead and without your on-going support and encouragement we can't do it.

We need more people on the committee and I urge you to contact me on 04 479 3363 if you feel you could help in any way. We need people who can research and

write, raise funds, lobby or who have expertise with electronic communication. We really want to hear from you too, if you have ideas and proposals.

Thank you once again for your generous support in purchasing our **2015 calendars**. There are still some available (contact me, as above, or email waterfrontwatch@xtra.co.nz). We hope to wrap up the sales soon.

Next steps: in the normal course of events there would be a resource consent hearing for the North Kumutoto (Site 10 building+) development. I have been told recently by the WCC that both GWRC and WCC have received a request (from the applicant) for the application to be directly referred to the Environment Court for consideration. Both Councils have until 30 January to decide whether it will agree (or not) to this request and to provide reasons for this decision.

This means that WW could be involved at Environment Court level much earlier than we had considered likely.

Like all Wellingtonians, we are also awaiting further information and detailed plans from the developers of the convention centre.

If you can, please discuss these matters with your local councillors and let them know what you think. After all they are there in the first instance to represent you. We have to keep asking ourselves: are these developments what Wellingtonians want? For myself, I want as much public open space as possible on our waterfront and for commercial buildings to be in the CBD. What do you think?

Kind regards

Mary Munro

President