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To whom it may concern.

Magnificent, Mighty and Memorable, a vision that underpins a very good idea, an idea that I trust this time will come to be. I trust this is the time for the Whale Song project.

Some ten years ago, when I became Mayor of the Kapiti District, I was approached by Mike Fuller and Gavin Bradley with this amazing idea of building a life sized pod of whales.

I was immediately interested, and supported them in setting up a fund to raise money to make this happen. We needed to secure land, get planning support, and sell the idea to the community.

The Kapiti District at the time was the fastest growing in the Wellington region, and I understand that is still true today. Kapiti is an exciting beautiful part of the region and with our wild west coastline, some 45 klms long, this intimately links us to our coastal environments, and the fish and mammals in our lives.

So for me, I saw Whalesong as a "must see" attraction, bringing people into our area to see these amazing life size structures, learn about our local whale story history from pre-European times, and to allow our local iwi to tell their stories and to link us to whale stories from around the world.

The project was to involve school children, and the use of recycled materials. We then discussed how these sculptures could make a whale like noise. One vision was letting our children take this story to other children in the world

As importantly this whole project underpins an opportunity to understand more about our ocean environment, and why we need to keep our oceans and the rivers feeding them healthy for these amazing creatures to live well.

But we couldn't make the project fly at that time, so it is with much delight that I understand this project has surfaced again, this time with some real support, with land generously offered by the Ngahina Developments Ltd.

This is a point of difference idea, there is nothing like it anyway where in New Zealand, it is an international quality tourist attraction, it will put Kapiti on the map, and will add to the tourism package for the Wellington region. The idea is a real economic driver as well, offering an opportunity for future employment, and an ability to support the ongoing developing opportunities for Kapiti Island and stronger business partnerships with iwi.

Mike Fuller has the dream, and the skilled capacity and experience to make this project happen. Now that a formal Trust has been established for this project, if funded well, it will fly!! (or swim!!)

I strongly urge you to consider this extraordinary idea as a project of national and regional significance. Many stand to benefit from it, locally and nationally, profiling our significance of our whales and the critical role they play right here in our own backyard between the mainland and Kapiti Island.

Thank you for the opportunity to support this project. I wish you all well.

Yours Sincerely

Jenny Rowan JP QSO
Former Mayor of Kapiti.
Chair Wellington Conservation Board.
Board member of the Kaitiaki Matu Somes Board.
Chair of the Lake Horowhenua Domain Board.