

Tena Koutou i tenei ata

Kua noho taku whanau ki tenei rohe mai i to ratou taenga mai i Hawaiki.

No Te Pahi me Te Ururoa ahau

I hokona e matou whenua ki nga mihinare, ka neke ki etahi atu waahi

Ko ahau ano te rangatira o te whenua i Kerikeri

Good Morning

My family has lived in this region since arrival in NZ from Hawaiki.

I am from the lines of Chief Te Pahi and Chief Te Ururoa

My family sold our land in Kerikeri to missionaries in 1826 and moved to other areas that were less attractive to the new settlers.

Today, again, my family has legal ownership of a block of land in Kerikeri.

Along with my neighbours, who have provided 10 submissions and extensive further submissions among them, I have been engaged in the PDP process since 2022. I am not a wealthy corporate developer, and have struggled most of the time to pay the required experts over the 3 hearings, but have been disturbed by the lack of interest that Council planners have shown in producing a plan that has a sound economic basis and one that the community truly supports both now and for future years.

For a region that has population of 37.4% Maori, it is surprising that planners have recommended a town centre in Kerikeri that is “Kingsland” dense and without regard to how 37.4% of the population have lived for centuries and may still prefer to live.

Clusters of detached housing that still allow for us to garden but keep us close enough together to share resources such as a common store-house and meeting place that we can walk to, is already understood by planners, but we seemed to have been consumed with re-creating a copy of Kingsland or Newmarket, with little thought for the huge difference in our size and culture.

I get that planners have “consulted” with groups through the Spatial Planning exercise for Kerikeri and Waipapa, but when I know that the groups have been provided with “targeted questions”, not provided all of the information, or that our councillors have been lobbied by council staff before voting on the adoption of the Spatial Plan, I know that our people and the community haven’t been provided with genuine opportunity to input into planning for Kerikeri / Waipapa or the district.

I applaud the initiative to protect our highly productive soil to ensure we can grow food for now and for future generations.

However, I believe that council planners have been locked into a small window focussed on dates and process, and that sensible planning has flown out of said window.

The Council relied on the availability of Kerikeri Irrigation as one of the criteria to determine the new Horticultural Precinct. While being in the area of supply for Kerikeri Irrigation is one thing, having enough water supplied to service horticultural activity is another. Only titles over 2ha are eligible for irrigation, and there is insufficient water available to irrigate all of the eligible land.

The two horticultural uses in Location 1 are mine and the Knights who have plum trees on a small part of their site. Neither of the sites are commercially viable, with owners in full time employment. These sites have not been commercially viable for more than 50 years, with previous owners trying kiwifruit, avocados, blueberries, nashis, pineapples and bananas. Due to crop rotation requirements, the sites with productive soil are not large enough for intensive vegetable growing. My site is too small and too close to neighbours to be able to spray crops, and fruit sales are not able to cover growing costs.

Council Planners have failed to give attention to the obvious productive soil surrounding our district's new dams and aquifers. They have been unable to answer why - if the Rural Production Zone plus the National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land is appropriate to manage all other current or future horticulture in the district - in the Kerikeri / Waipapa area a highly restrictive Precinct over fragmented land that cannot access irrigation is necessary or appropriate.

The proposal to establish a Horticulture Zone / Precinct over areas that are now so fragmented that viable horticulture is unachievable will result in sterilised existing rural residential and commercial land.

The existing rural residential and commercial uses on Kerikeri Road and at the Redwoods should be appropriately zoned to reflect the land uses that have developed and not be subjected to unnecessary cost and regulation simply to serve as a "buffer" for horticulture on other land.

Kei te tumanako ahau kia tika te mahi mo te katoa

Audrey Campbell-Frear