

**BEFORE A HEARINGS PANEL
OF THE FAR NORTH DISTRICT COUNCIL**

I MUA NGĀ KAIKŌMIHANA MOTUHAKE O TE HIKU O TE IKA

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| Under the | Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) |
| In the matter | of a request for rezoning of land in the Kerikeri-Waipapa area under the proposed Far North District Plan |

**SUMMARY STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF KENNETH MACDONALD IN SUPPORT OF
SECTION 42A REPORT FOR HEARING 15D**

COUNCIL FINANCES AND INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

6 October 2025



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 My name is Kenneth Macdonald. I prepared a statement of evidence in relation to a rezoning request by Kiwi Fresh Orange Company Limited (**KFO**) in the Kerikeri-Waipapa area under the proposed District Plan of the Far North District Council (**Council**). I refer to my qualifications and experience in my original statement, dated 11 September 2025, and do not repeat those matters here.

1.2 The purpose of this statement is to provide a brief summary of my evidence, and to provide an initial response to the rebuttal evidence of KFO, noting that a full right of reply will be provided by the s 42A team (including additional expert input as required) following the hearing.

2. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

2.1 The Far North District faces significant financial challenges due to its low gross domestic product and limited household incomes. This creates a tension for the Council as it seeks to balance the need for new infrastructure to support growth with the ongoing maintenance of aging assets—all while keeping rates affordable for households.

2.2 Current funding mechanisms, including targeted rates and general rates, may not be affordable for households. Government funding is uncertain, and the Council does not yet use development contributions under the Local Government Act 2002 or financial contributions under the RMA, though it is consulting on introducing a development contributions policy. Water supply and wastewater will sit with the recently established Northland Waters CCO (with costs ultimately borne by the Far North District community) and stormwater will remain under Council responsibility.

2.3 While I acknowledge the potential funding mechanisms, there is uncertainty as to whether and how these will be implemented and who will ultimately be required to pay for new infrastructure. The KFO approach seems to be to seek rezoning of their site and then “sort it all out later”.

- 2.4** It is difficult to assess the financial impact of the KFO proposal on the Council and the Northland Waters CCO due to the uncertainties described above. The proposed rezoning by KFO introduces substantial financial risk. Infrastructure cost estimates are high-level but significant, and there is no clear funding strategy or binding developer agreements in place. Rezoning could create expectations that Council or the CCO will deliver infrastructure that is neither planned nor funded, potentially leading to increased debt and ratepayer burden, and displacing other strategic priorities.
- 2.5** Given the scale and significance of the financial risks, I do not consider it appropriate to rezone the KFO land in the face of such uncertainty and lack of information.
- 2.6** Additionally, the proposed site is in a flood-prone area, which raises further concerns about long-term financial liability. I would be concerned if the Council and its ratepayers were exposed to future costs from weather-related damage as has occurred elsewhere in New Zealand.
- 2.7** In light of these uncertainties, I consider that it is not fiscally responsible to proceed with rezoning unless infrastructure planning, funding, and risk mitigation are clearly addressed.

3. RESPONSE TO MATTERS RAISED IN REBUTTAL EVIDENCE

- 3.1** The evidence of Mr Brownlie on behalf of KFO takes issue with my statement that the KFO approach seems to be to seek rezoning of their site and then “sort it all out later” in terms of infrastructure. He considers that my statement “is indicative of the Council’s broader ideological opposition to greenfields development in Kerikeri and Waipapa”.
- 3.2** I hold no ideological opposition to greenfield development in the Kerikeri region or elsewhere in the Far North. On the contrary, I welcome appropriate development that contributes to growth and prosperity.

- 3.3** My concerns regarding this particular development are not ideological but practical. The proposal lies within an area identified as having flood risk and it requires significant infrastructure upgrades. To date, there is only a general assurance that the developer will meet infrastructure costs after the rezoning has occurred (with plan provisions proposed to that effect). I consider that this lacks the specificity and accountability required. There has been no detailed proposal presented that outlines infrastructure contributions or long-term maintenance responsibilities.
- 3.4** My role requires me to assess risk and ensure fiscal responsibility on behalf of ratepayers. As one of the gate keepers of Council assets and risk, I must rely on properly documented commitments. In the absence of detailed financial proposals and projections, I am unable to base decisions on general assurances. My reference to “sort it all out later” reflects concern over the absence of these critical details.

Kenneth Macdonald

6 October 2025