

In the matter of the Resource Management Act 1991

And

In the matter of Variation 2 to the Proposed Kapiti Coast District Plan

Submission of Waikanae Beach Residents Society Incorporated

Gerald Rys, Chair

**Submission by the Waikanae Beach Residents Society Incorporated
(WBRSI)**

- 1 My full name is Gerald John Rys. I have been chair of the Waikanae Beach Residents Society Incorporated (WBRSI) for 5 years since its reforming. I have been a resident of Waikanae Beach for 14 years and live in Waikanae Beach North.
- 2 At its AGM on 26 July 2020 the WBRSI had approximately 176 members all residing in the Waikanae Beach area, the majority in the old beach area.
- 3 The purposes of the Society as set out in its constitution are:
 - (a) *To take such steps as are necessary to preserve and protect the special character enjoyed by the Waikanae Beach Community and ensure that the Waikanae Beach Community continues to be a wonderful place to live, where the residents thrive in a relaxed beach community with its high amenity values.*
 - (b) *To make representations to Councils and any other relevant bodies concerning Waikanae Beach.*
 - (c) *To undertake scientific, legal and other research relating to the coastline and Waikanae Beach.*
 - (d) *To make representations, gather evidence and make submissions concerning any Hearing, Regional/District Plans or Draft Regional/District Plans.*

(e) To take any appropriate legal or other action required to further the objectives of the Society

(f) Do anything necessary or helpful to the above purposes.'

4 Waikanae Beach has three distinct areas:

- (a) The Old Beach, which in general terms is the area that is the subject of this hearing.
- (b) The Northern sub-area, which is situated to the north of the Old Beach.
- (c) The Southern sub-area, which is situated to the south of the Old Beach.

5 In the longer term the Society considers that all three areas should be zoned as Beach Residential in accordance with the recommendation in the 2017 Character Assessment report. This submission however focuses on the Old Beach area.

6 This submission will cover the broader and long-standing Waikanae Beach community views, processes, community expectations and desires as expressed through a wide range of submissions, community and council meeting and reports. It does not attempt to argue or define the exact details of the proposals, except the major one's that we expect will maintain the character of Waikanae Beach. Others will cover these more eloquently and in more detail than I can.

7 The Society also notes that there is often a loss of memory in our institutions as to the origins of this process, and the depth of community

support for these issues. While there is always differences of view as to the detail and the consequences, there has always been support for the maintenance of the current character of Waikanae beach.

- 8 The WBRSI was stated in 2015 due the concerns regarding the change in character of Waikanae Beach with the establishment of a Health Centre in the middle of the old beach residential area rather than in more suitable commercial areas. The WBRSI supported the appellants in the Environment Court on this issue, which was lost.
- 9 This further heightened awareness of the beach residents that the character of the beach could be rapidly changed with this precedent.
- 10 Also beach residents could see no reason that the Waikanae Beach area, particularly the Old Beach area, should not be zoned Beach Residential as other areas along the Kapiti coast had been, such as Paekakareki, Raumati and Otaki. They saw a range of unique features that created the unique character worth preserving, and the rezoning as a means of doing this.

Community support for Beach Residential

- 11 When the Society was formed, the application form for membership invited each member to identify the issues of most importance for the Society to pursue. The area most frequently noted of those responding was to '*Preserve the special character of Waikanae Beach*' or similar wording around community and commercial development.
- 12 In 2013 the Kapiti Coast District Council commissioned a character assessment report from Urban Perspectives that covered the Old Beach area. It was commissioned because in the then Proposed District Plan Otaki Beach, Raumati and Paekakariki had been zoned Beach Residential.

Submissions were made requesting that the Old Beach also be zoned Beach Residential and accordingly the report had been commissioned.

- 13 The report recommended that the Old Beach area *'warrants the same level of protection/management as the other beach character areas. Therefore, the PDP Beach Residential Zone guidelines are considered relevant and appropriate for the study area as well.'*

Future Beach Waikanae document

- 14 On 6 September 2015 the Council held a 'drop in' meeting at which approximately 200 residents attended to discuss the future direction of Waikanae Beach. A second evening meeting was held a few days later on 22 September that was attended by a further 70 residents. The main concern emerging from these meetings was the special character of Waikanae Beach.
- 15 In early 2016 the Council initiated the Waikanae Beach Futures Project. A Working Group of 27 local residents, including three Waikanae Beach Residents Society Inc Committee members, and numerous Society members, and Council support staff had seven group meetings over four months to develop a consensus on the vision for Waikanae Beach. A community meeting held in July 2016 was attended by approximately 300 residents who were asked to prioritise various aspects. One of the highest priorities was *'Protect our eclectic neighbourhood and history'* which was supported by 267 residents.
- 16 The 'Our Future Waikanae Beach' document was produced in March 2017. It had 25 recommended Actions. A key Action was *'Creating clear rules on development for neighbourhood in Waikanae Beach, in keeping with the special character of that neighbourhood'*.

17 In May 2017 the Residents Society surveyed its members and asked them to prioritise the 25 Recommended Actions. Two Actions were supported well ahead of the remainder.

18 The top recommendation was -

'Creating clear rules on development for each neighbourhood in Waikanae Beach, in keeping with the special character of that neighbourhood'

19 The second was -

'Ensuring any development takes account of and fits into the unique natural environment of Waikanae Beach'.

20 In response to the recommended Actions in the Our Futures document, Council commissioned another Character Assessment from Urban Perspectives that was completed later in 2017. It recommended that Waikanae Beach (including the Old Beach area, the Northern sub-area and Southern sub-area) be zoned Beach Residential and gave specific recommendations as to Plan provisions including particular provisions for the Old Beach area. The recommendations included –

'there are local character variations across the study area as a whole with the Old Beach Area standing out as a distinctive entity with unique characteristics that clearly differentiate it from the remaining parts of the study area. The character differences relate to history of subdivision and development, block structure, street character and general consistency of subdivision and building age patterns. Further to this, the central location of the Old Beach Area and the small commercial core adjacent to the beach has made it a local destination and a social focus for the study area as a whole. Relative to the

northern and southern sub-areas, the distinctive local character of the Old Beach Area is considered to be more sensitive to change and therefore warrants recognition and management.'

- 21 At its meeting in November 2017 the Waikanae Community Board accepted the Character Assessment and its recommendations. The Board went further with a recommendation to Council that it be adopted and implemented with urgency.
- 22 Since the opening of the Kapiti Expressway, vehicle and people pressure have increased and will be further enhanced when the Transmission Gully expressway opens. It is apparent that there is significantly more development pressure coming onto the area surrounding the exchange at Te Moana Road. The Ngarara development is already under way, and there is no doubt that commercial interests will wish to develop the area immediately adjacent to the interchange.
- 23 There is already change under way at Waikanae Beach, and some of that is inevitable. However, the area covered by this draft variation is recognised by all the landscape professionals who have looked at it as having distinct character which contributes to the feel of the area and is an essential part of what is to be a part of the Kapiti Coast.
- 24 The WBRSI support Variation 2 to rezone the Old Beach as Beach Residential.
- 25 The early formal adoption of the variation will ensure that the character of the area will be considered when resource management issues are considered.

- 26 There are varying views on site coverage. The WBRSI favour 30% coverage.
- 27 With regard to the Floor Area Ratio we have had the advantage of reading Sarah Poff's expert evidence and agree with her recommendation that if the site coverage was 35% then the ratio should be 0.4:1.0. If this recommendation is adopted, the WBRSI agree that the site coverage should be 35%.
- 28 With regard to maximum access width, the WBRSI agree with Mr Muspratt's recommendation.
- 29 While not directly part of this hearing, the Society wish to stress the need for KCDC in the future to actively support maintaining the beach character, including through minimising the amount of concrete including no kerbing and channelling and footpaths where not present now, having parks and reserve plans for the beach optimising the vegetation.
- 30 While there might be differences in agreement on the detail, most beach residents strongly agree on maintaining the old Waikanae beach character the cultural well-being, its history, and its ideologies and values.
- 31 I encourage you to listen to the long-presented views of the residents of the beach and implement policies that support these values.

Thank you

Gerald Rys

Chair WBRSI