

**BEFORE THE HEARING COMMISSIONERS
AWANUI**

IN THE MATTER

of the Resource Management Act 1991 (**RMA**
or **the Act**)

AND

IN THE MATTER

of the Proposed Far North District Plan 2022

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF AMY TAPPER ON BEHALF OF WAIAUA BAY
FARM LIMITED**

5 MAY 2025



HOLM | MAJUREY

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INTRODUCTION

1. My name is Amy Tapper.
2. I am currently Owner's Representative at Waiaua Bay Farm Limited. My responsibilities include supervision of physical assets, overseeing consultants working on major capital projects in conjunction with the CEO, and acting as a representative in New Zealand for the U.S.-based ownership representing their interests and key community relationships.
3. I am authorised to provide this evidence on behalf of Waiaua Bay Farm Limited.

Purpose and scope of evidence

4. This evidence will address:
 - (a) The ethos and vision of Waiaua Bay Farm Limited;
 - (b) Future development aims;
 - (c) The Master Plan for Kauri Cliffs; and
 - (d) The reasons for seeking the rezoning at Kauri Cliffs;

OVERVIEW OF WAIUAU BAY FARM LIMITED

5. Waiaua Bay Farm Ltd is the company that owns the 2,350 hectare property known as Kauri Cliffs, located on Northland's eastern coast running inland between Waiaua Bay in the North, and Takou Bay on the southern boundary.
6. The property was purchased by the late Julian and Josie Robertson in 1994. Following the initial property purchase the Robertsons went on to develop a championship 18-hole golf course and luxury lodge. Both the golf course and lodge known as 'Kauri Cliffs' have consistently been ranked among the world's best, and are considered amongst the most sought-after premium visitor experiences in New Zealand.
7. Further developments occurred in subsequent years. These developments included the addition of neighbouring agricultural land blocks, ongoing development of the lodge with a spa facility, and additional villa accommodations designed for visiting families.
8. For over twenty years the hospitality operation was family run, until 2023 when the Robertson family has appointed Rosewood Hotel Group to manage the lodge. The golf course, farming and forestry continue to be owner-operated by the Robertson family with the assistance of a skilled management team.

9. In addition to Kauri Cliffs, Julian and Josie Robertson went on to develop a golf course and lodge in Hawke's Bay known as 'Cape Kidnappers', also a working farm, and 'Matakauri Lodge' in Queenstown. Waiaua Bay Farm Ltd also holds 'Brooksdale Station' in Canterbury, a mixed freehold and Crown Pastoral Lease farming sheep, cattle and forestry.
10. Following the passing of Julian Robertson in 2022, Waiaua Bay Farm Ltd is now owned by the New Zealand Trust, with Julian and Josie's family as trustees.
11. The Robertson family's commitment to New Zealand is enduring, and the intent with this proposed zoning reconfiguration and associated Master Plan is to unlock the property's potential with careful and considerate development. This includes enhanced facilities and attractions for visitors, and premium residential real estate marketed to likeminded primary, and second or third home investors.
12. In my role I have been in liaison with our planners and legal team as the Master Plan has been drafted.
13. For over 25 years, Waiaua Bay Farm Limited and Kauri Cliffs have contributed significantly to the local economy, driven by visitor spending from discerning tourists.
14. Beyond economic impact, we have created employment and career opportunities for both past and present team members—whether as a stepping stone in their professional journey or through long-term tenure and career development.
15. Local suppliers and businesses have benefited from capital spend during development and ongoing construction phases. We continue to support the local economy through strong supplier relationships that sustain our hospitality, farm, and golf operations.
16. The land itself has benefited from the Robertson family's commitment to sustainability and environmental preservation. This includes extensive pest management, the retirement of pastures, and significant investment in native planting to enhance waterways and natural habitats. The Robertson family is committed to preserving the native bush under a QEII covenant, which includes a magnificent Kauri tree estimated to be 700–800 years old. The area is protected with best-practice measures such as elevated boardwalks and sanitation stations to prevent the spread of disease and minimize human impact
17. Also notable is the Robertson family's commitment to recognition and protection of the New Zealand Heritage Listed Wāhi Tapu Area associated with the traditional burial caves of Piakoa, also known as Opiako.
18. As a family, the Robertsons strive to be good neighbours, actively supporting community initiatives - both personally, through the 'Aotearoa Foundation' and through WBFL's corporate contributions,

such as donations of high value services for the purposes of fundraising.

19. With twenty years of experience at Waiau Bay Farm Limited, I have witnessed the Robertson family embrace their role as international investors in New Zealand with immense pride. Across generations, they have consistently demonstrated a sincere commitment to ensuring that their investment benefits both the environment and its people.
20. The existing and future development of Kauri Cliffs is, at its core, the realisation of one family's vision for a New Zealand retreat. Where breathtaking landscapes and rich heritage are woven together with warm, classic hospitality and an unwavering dedication to excellence.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AIMS

21. Waiau Bay Farm Limited would like to develop additional visitor attractions and amenity while opening land for residential development in the central and northern reaches of the landholding.

MASTER PLAN PROCESS

22. The Master Plan for Kauri Cliffs has been developed to support our zoning submission as part of the Far North District Plan Review process that commenced in 2022. It is set to be the foundation document for planning the future development of the property in a sustainable, responsible and commercially viable way.
23. The objective for any future development is to uphold our values of economic and environmental sustainability while maximising the most desirable natural features of the land for property users and future residents.
24. Our project lead in developing the Master Plan has been Mitchell Daysh, with inputs from landscape architects, ecologists, iwi, archaeologists, civil and geotechnical engineers and architects.
25. The future direction for the property is to develop the resident, guest and visitor attractions with enhanced amenities such as a stand-alone golf clubhouse and training facilities, a beach day visitor facility, and improved lifestyle amenities such as an enhanced swimming pool, a kitchen orchard, and increased guest and staff parking. Additional golf course playing facilities are also being considered along with the extension of walking and mountain bike trail networks.
26. To support this future growth increased staff accommodation/housing is anticipated in the Master Plan.
27. The family's ambition is to maintain Kauri Cliffs legacy as a world class destination adapting to the demands and wants of its current and future clientele; while providing a limited opportunity to 'buy in'

through a premium residential community development that is in keeping with the property's reputation for excellence. We consider that the Master Plan is the pathway to achieve this.

PROPOSED REZONING

28. Of key concern for Waiaua Bay Farm Limited is that present sub zones within the Kauri Cliffs Special Zone are not optimal for the business outcomes we seek. The proposed rezoning provides a clear and purposeful pathway forward, while preserving the intent of the Kauri Cliffs special zone, and protecting the special character and landscape features of the property.
29. The present Lodge Subzone is compressed and does not allow adequate space to develop guest amenity in keeping with our world class operation. Hospitality for day visitors is presently confined to the main lodge, overlapping with exclusive high value visitor stays. Visitor and staff parking is not adequate for future growth and operational needs. The addition of premium residential homeowners will require the scaling of leisure amenities and a hospitality hub, all consistent with a world class residential community.
30. The current Kauri Cliffs Special Purposes anticipates the future development of up to 60 premium residential sites. The present Golf Living Subzone is not ideally situated, with key sites bordering farming, golf course maintenance, and forestry activity. With the ambition of developing high value residential house sites, privacy is an expectation and the overlap with business operations is not ideal.
31. The proposed zoning adjustments address these concerns as supported by the Master Plan together with achieving development efficiencies through proximity to existing key infrastructure such as roading and electricity.

Amy Tapper

5 May 2025