

23rd of July 2025

HEARING STATEMENT OF EDUARD & INGEBORG AMSLER, PAIHIA

As you are aware, we have employed BOI Planning to present planning evidence to support a permitted activity status for residential activity and visitor accommodation in the Paihia Mixed Use zone, outside of those identified with the pedestrian frontage overlay (which is the core area).

We are Eduard & Ingeborg Amsler, owners of 46-48 Marsden Road, Paihia. The property was purchased by us in 1989 as a commercial site in view to develop it at a later stage. The property used to have a restaurant on site and since 2020 it is temporarily used as an RV car park. Our future plan was to develop the site, however with the new District Plan restrictions of having to have tourist- or any accommodation only on the 1st floor, will make any new development not viable.

To explain:

Paihia has one main tourist season, being the summer season. Outside of the summer season it is a matter of survival for all businesses.

If you drive through town now, you'll notice that there is hardly any foot traffic, let alone tourists. Business owners have to earn their living in 5 months of the year. From Mid-April until the End of October we are in off-season, except for a brief influx during school holidays.

Our town is divided into the main business centre which starts at Bayview Road at the North end of town and finishes at School Road at the South End of town.

In this area you'll find all retail shops, tour operator hubs, most office spaces, eateries and the wharf. This is where the foot traffic happens and where visitors are drawn to. Outside the main business area you'll only find bars/eateries, 2 dairies, a supermarket, a laundry, a liquor shop and service station.

To operate a retail business outside the main business area is a challenge with the exception of a restaurant/café. However, Paihia already has a choice of more than 18 eateries at present.

In order to increase the choice of newly built eateries, retail spaces and offices on the ground floor of the mixed-use areas, we would also need to increase tourism beds. If not, town would end up with a surplus of retail space, empty shops and not enough parking.

Retail and tour operators will always aim to stay in the main Business centre, as well as offices. The idea of creating a mixed-use area outside the main Business centre area may partly work in bigger towns but not in a small town like Paihia.

Paihia should not be compared with the rest of the North. We live off the Tourism trade. This is the main source of income. Tourism is the #1 earner.

To take a negative stance to new Tourism/Accommodation developments would set our town back in the future. Not being able to build accommodation properties on the ground floor would be costly and reduce accessibility. Any new future accommodation developer will think twice and may step away from a development. The costs of not being able to utilize the ground floor,

except for retail and to have to go through costly resource consents would make building unaffordable and very expensive.

Aesthetically, to fill up Paihia's beautiful waterfront backdrop with retail spaces which also is demeaning of the history of our town would not be welcomed by the residents and visitors to the area.

Kind regards,

Eduard A Amsler

Ingeborg U M Amsler