

STATEMENT BY ANNIKA DICKEY ON BEHALF OF OUR KERIKERI TRUST

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In support of submissions by Our Kerikeri Trust, Vision Kerikeri, Carbon Neutral NZ Trust and Kapiro Conservation Trust

Human Scale and the Village Feel — The Future of Kerikeri

When we talk about Kerikeri's future, we're not just talking about land use and zoning — we're talking about *people, place, and the heart of our town*.

Kerikeri is unique in that we are a land-based town. We don't have an oceanfront or a river views to define our identity. What we have — and what people treasure — is a sense of community, greenery, and human connection. But that identity will only survive if we shape it intentionally through good design.

Right now, Kerikeri feels vehicle-dominated and directionless. For years we've been in a holding pattern — almost on pause — waiting for clarity about where our town is heading. In that time, some of our buildings have passed their use-by dates. Others were built in an era when the car was king, with little thought for walkability or human experience.

It's time to move forward — but we need to do it *wisely*.

We don't oppose growth. We recognise that intensification and redevelopment are part of Kerikeri's future. But growth must happen on human terms — through human-scale development that feels comfortable, accessible, and connected. Buildings should enhance the street, not dominate it. They should be designed for people, not parking. They should contribute to our village character — not erode it.

That's why, as community groups, we've consistently called for design guidelines, character guidelines, and masterplans to be embedded in the District Plan. These tools are not about stopping progress — they're about *guiding* it.

Any rezoning or up-zoning in Kerikeri — whether to Mixed Use, Medium Density, or Town Centre — must be contingent on those design guidelines being in place. Otherwise, we risk creating an incoherent town — one that grows in fragments, loses its soul, and fails to deliver the quality of life our community deserves. Remember, we don't have an ocean or river view to fall back on if we create a soulless, boxed-in town. Our landscape doesn't automatically redeem poor design — we have to create our own sense of beauty, character, and belonging through thoughtful planning.

We've seen what happens under permissive, effects-based planning — inconsistent outcomes, ad-hoc development, and erosion of amenity. We don't want to repeat those mistakes. Kerikeri needs a design-led framework — one that sets out how buildings meet the street, where public spaces connect, how greenery is integrated, and how walking and cycling become safe, natural choices.

This isn't about nostalgia. It's about building a future-ready town that still feels like Kerikeri. A town where you can walk safely with your tamariki, meet a neighbour in the street, or sit outside a café and feel a sense of belonging.

We don't have an ocean view or a river promenade — but our redeeming feature can be design itself. We can be known as the best example of how a land-locked, rural town can evolve into a vibrant, human-scale place worth visiting and investing in.

To achieve that, Council must empower design — not as an afterthought, but as a foundation. Every plan change, every rezoning, and every large development should be guided by a clear urban design framework that reflects the community's vision and values.

Kerikeri has waited long enough. We're ready for change — but we want change done *right*. Thoughtful, beautiful, people-centred change that re-energises our town and restores our identity as a true village community.

Speech No.2: The Turnstone Land – A Once-in-a-Lifetime Opportunity for Kerikeri

I'd like to speak about the Turnstone land — or what many of us still call the Bing property — and the extraordinary opportunity it presents for Kerikeri.

This land sits right on the riverfront, only a few minutes' walk from our town centre. It's rare — almost unheard of — for a town to have river-edge land of this scale and beauty so close to its heart. It gives us the chance to do something truly special — to reconnect Kerikeri with its landscape, and to create a place where nature and community meet.

Now, we already have one of New Zealand's most treasured heritage landscapes — the Stone Store Basin — a place that symbolises our history and identity. But the Basin is not within walking distance of the town centre, and it's rightly highly protected. Its quiet, historic nature means it's not a space that can or should host the kind of everyday community activity our growing town needs.

That's why Turnstone is different. It gives us a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create a *complementary* public riverfront — one that's close to the CBD, connected to the town centre, and designed to bring people together.

Imagine being able to walk or cycle from Kerikeri's main street down to the water's edge — through landscaped parkland alive with native planting, art, and activity. Imagine a place where people gather for markets, music, food, or just to sit under a tree and enjoy the river. That kind of space would give Kerikeri what it has long been missing — a true focal point that brings life and connection to our town.

We all know that Kerikeri doesn't have the ocean or river views other towns can fall back on. Our beauty has to be created through design, through how we shape our spaces and connect people to nature. The Turnstone site gives us that chance — to create something both authentic and iconic, right on our doorstep.

But this opportunity is fleeting. Once it's carved up, fenced off, or developed without vision, it will be lost forever. We can't afford to look back in ten years' time and wish we'd been braver.

We have a chance right now to make sure that public access and activation of this riverfront are guaranteed — that the land is designed and planned with the community in mind, as a living, breathing public space.

Kerikeri has waited for a long time — for direction, for coherence, for a sense of place. The Turnstone site could be the key to unlocking that — connecting our town to the river, to nature, and to itself.