

**BEFORE THE KAIPARA DISTRICT COUNCIL'S HEARING PANEL**

**IN THE MATTER OF**

the Resource Management Act 1991 (**the Act**)

AND

**IN THE MATTER**

An application for Private Plan Change 85 (**PC85**) -  
**MANGAWHAI EAST** by Foundry Group Limited  
(formerly Cabra Mangawhai Limited) and Pro Land  
Matters Company to rezone approximately 94-  
hectares of land at Black Swamp and Raymond Bull  
Roads, Mangawhai

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**SUMMARY EVIDENCE OF DUNCAN MURRAY UNSWORTH ON BEHALF OF**

**FOUNDRY GROUP (APPLICANT)**

**(Corporate)**

**17 February 2026**

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## **Summary**

1. Foundry Group is a long-established development business with over 50 years of collective history, focused on building enduring communities rather than simply subdividing land and/or land banking. Our approach is grounded in creating high-quality neighbourhoods that integrate well with their surroundings and protect our long-term reputation. We are very passionate about creating another desirable neighbourhood in this prime location.
2. Recent projects referred to in my evidence demonstrate our commitment to environmental enhancement, integrated design and long-term place-making. These developments incorporate reserves, walkways, coordinated land uses and community amenities that foster pride and lasting value. We are constantly researching the market and looking for other desirable neighbourhoods and developments to ensure we are providing the ultimate lifestyle for our end customer. We see this as a unique point of difference as often developers are too focused on maximising the yield rather than looking to create value through intelligent design and amenity.
3. The proposed plan change land is well located, with strong proposed connectivity to the existing township, school, harbour and Pacific Beach. Rezoning enables a cohesive, master-planned community rather than fragmented rural lifestyle development, which typically lacks walkability, green space and integrated commercial amenities. The location of this Plan Change 85 land was one of the main attractions to us when we acquired the land. When acquiring land in general, obviously location, serviceability and subsequently the cost of development and the ability to sell down the end product plays a significant role in the feasibility of a project. We have never had any doubts as to whether we can create a financially viable and feasible development in this location. This has also been illustrated by the fact I have been approached by several Retirement Village operators about developing a Village within our land. By contrast we have recently been offered the land that formed part of Plan Change 83 (The Rise) and had or have no interest in this due to its isolated location, lack of connectivity and lack of amenity. Perhaps this is why since being approved nearly 18 months ago there has been no development activity and I am unsure as to whether a Resource Consent has even been lodged. I suspect that our development will supersede development of the land at the Rise in the course of time.

4. Growth in Mangawhai is inevitable, driven by its coastal appeal, strategic location between Auckland and Whangārei, and the planned motorway extension to Te Hana. This is reflected in the number of developers undertaking new developments in the town, something that was not historically the case. The appropriate response is to manage that growth through comprehensive, staged planning that delivers better social, environmental and economic outcomes. I note that the Spatial Plan (December 2020) for Mangawhai was developed before the motorway extension was confirmed so I expect that significant driver of development was not taken into consideration in the Spatial Plan and the extent of land it identified for growth. The lack of vision from others and failure to look into the future has been disappointing but not entirely surprising.
5. Developing at scale allows infrastructure to be designed and staged efficiently from the outset. We are prepared to work alongside Council, including through an Infrastructure Funding Agreement, and have a strong history of delivering infrastructure with other landowners and/or infrastructure providers and public amenities as part of our developments.
6. This Plan Change provides a deliberate and higher-quality growth option for Mangawhai, including appropriately scaled commercial areas to support local employment and daily needs. It offers a more certain, better-integrated outcome than continued ad hoc development and aligns with where demand for housing is most likely to occur. Throughout the consultation period there have been concerns about creating a fourth commercial node. When we initially met with Proland we were both adamant we did not want to create a development completely dominated by houses with no other amenity. By providing these areas it gives the public and our end customers options to access local shops and other services by foot or bike. Furthermore, we are taking a long term view here and see that as the area evolves and develops there will be significant demand for this type of walkable development so see this as essential and also a point of difference from some other recent proposed developments within the area.
7. In Mr Foy's Rebuttal Evidence, he suggested that up to 1,500 residential lots are enabled under the District Plan rules in Chapter 16 of the District Plan at Mangawhai Central. This number in my view does not represent what is feasible and likely to occur. Given a large portion of the Mangawhai Central development has been developed already and consent for the balance has been lodged this number of dwellings will never eventuate. There simply is not enough remaining land available in the context of the existing and to be consented development. The more accurate figure here is just 785 lots according to the

Developer's Representative. Mr Foy also assumes further 'theoretical' growth via infill or brownfields development and minor dwelling development which I know from experience will never happen to the degree he suggests due to private land covenants placed on titles preventing this, lack of desire from existing owners and placement of existing improvement on the site.

8. Overall, we have invested in developing a quality proposal, that in my experience will result in a successful quality environment.

**Duncan Unsworth**

17 February 2026