

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

**FOUNDRY GROUP (APPLICANT)**

**(Corporate)**

**09 February 2026**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**

1. My full name is Duncan Murray Unsworth
2. I hold a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Otago and a Post Graduate Diploma in Business Administration in Property Studies from Massey University.
3. I have worked in the property industry for 23 years and more specifically the Development Industry for 20 years.
4. I am Currently the CEO of the Foundry Group Ltd and was previously the General Manager at Cabra Developments Ltd.

### **ABOUT FOUNDRY GROUP**

5. Foundry Group (Formerly Cabra and Sam Property) has a long-standing history as developers who build communities and create desirable places to work rather than simply acquiring and holding land. Our company ethos is grounded in creating high-quality, enduring neighbourhoods and workplaces that integrate well with their surroundings. We take pride in our developments and consistently aim to deliver outcomes that enhance the broader environment with a strong emphasis on maintaining a sound reputation. Our Group of Companies have over 50 years of history within the industry. Subsequently we are always conscious that each development protects and enhances our reputation and ensures our customers are proud to live or work within a Foundry Group development.
6. This commitment is demonstrated through recent completed projects such as Deacon Point in Riverhead, where we provided an esplanade reserve along the Rangitopuni River with over 10,000 plants, shared cycle and walkway and public reserve, and the Huapai Triangle, a private Master Planned Community, which incorporated a coordinated approach to residential, childcare, retirement, commercial, and community-oriented design. These projects are just two examples which show our emphasis on environmental sensitivity and long-term place-making, to create and benefit communities now and into the future, rather than short-term speculation.

7. Our Huapai Country Club retirement village development further reflects this quality-first approach. That project recently received significant industry recognition by winning the best Large Retirement Village in the North Island, voted for by our Residents. This illustrates that our residents feel a strong sense of pride in the places we create. This pride is a hallmark of our wider portfolio and reinforces our intention to bring a similar standard of development to Mangawhai.
8. Foundry's partnership with Proland Matters Company Limited ("Pro Land") is a natural alignment of values and objectives. Proland has contributed positively to the local community for many years and brings a deep understanding of Mangawhai's unique characteristics. Together, we aim to deliver a development that both respects local identity and elevates the quality of growth in the area.

#### **THE LOCATION OF THE PLAN CHANGE LAND AND WHY WE WISH TO DEVELOP IT**

9. Our site's proposed for rezoning offer clear spatial advantages, including strong physical and practical connectivity to the existing township, the school, and Pacific Beach but also offering an alternative solution to Mangawhai's Growth. These locational benefits support a development that is integrated rather than isolated, promoting ease of movement, and connectivity to key community features such as the school, shops and cafes thus reinforcing Mangawhai's existing urban fabric.
10. By contrast, permitted development or consented rural lifestyle projects often provide limited benefits to the broader community. Such development typically lack walkways, green space, local commercial offerings, or upgraded connections—features that can only be secured and delivered through comprehensive master planning and appropriate zoning.
11. Mangawhai's growth to date has too often occurred in an ad hoc manner, driven largely by piecemeal developments rather than cohesive planning. This has resulted in dispersed development that has lacked the necessary planning and contribution to the required infrastructure. Our proposal represents an opportunity to shift toward a fully master-planned community that achieves demonstrably better social, environmental and economic outcomes for the community.
12. The cost of housing is a real and growing challenge in New Zealand, and we think part of the answer is doing development at a scale that genuinely changes the economics. When a site is large enough to be master planned, we can spread the upfront planning and consenting effort over many more homes and design the infrastructure as one coherent system rather

than a patchwork of upgrades. That lets us size and stage roads, water, wastewater and stormwater efficiently from the outset, avoiding the extra cost and disruption that comes with ad-hoc, out-of-sequence growth and related upgrades. Scale also gives contractors confidence in a long pipeline of work, which tends to sharpen pricing and lift productivity. Done well, master planned greenfield communities can deliver fully serviced sections at a lower unit cost, while also creating better places for people to live.

13. Ongoing growth in Mangawhai is inevitable given the area's existing urban and rural population, coastal appeal, the motorway extension to Te Hana, and its strategic position between Auckland and Whangārei.
14. Mangawhai has had one of the highest rates of growth in the country for many years. There is no reason to expect that growth to cease, especially now that construction of the motorway through to Te Hana is scheduled for detailed design and construction to start in 2026.
15. Growth should not be viewed as the enemy. In my view, the appropriate response is not to simply resist this growth but to enable it when it incorporates long-term, comprehensive and intelligent planned solutions. Our master plan illustrates a staged development that would unfold over time in line with demand and infrastructure provision. In order for areas and/or regions to thrive, they need customers (as in ratepayers) for the Council. This provides Councils with more revenue to provide better facilities and maintain infrastructure for its existing and future ratepayers.
16. There is a reason there are now three world class Golf Courses and associated residential and commercial development in close proximity to our proposed Plan Change Area. It is one of the most stunning and desirable locations in New Zealand. Despite the initial opposition to these developments, it is hard to argue they have not enhanced the area socially, environmentally and economically largely due to the fact they have been carried out with long-term stewardship in mind leading to great outcomes. We feel what we are proposing will have similar outcomes, albeit catering to a far greater proportion of the socio-economic population and on a more condensed footprint than these developments.
17. It is important to note that zoning land does not immediately result in housing or instantaneous pressure on infrastructure. A well-planned supply pipeline ensures that future growth can be sequenced logically, giving Council time to budget for and deliver upgrades as needed. We are committed to working alongside Council in delivering some of this

infrastructure, as we have a history of doing in the Auckland Region, whether it be reserves, transport upgrades or any of the three waters. To this end we have sent a draft Infrastructure Agreement to Council but understand that they cannot consider the document now as they prefer to enter into such agreements at resource consent, rather than the plan change stage of the process.

18. Some of the alternative growth areas identified in the Proposed District Plan are not viable due to their poor location, lack of connectivity and amenity, or low desirability for example there are extensive areas of land zoned at Kaiwaka for additional residential and rural lifestyle development and there seems to be policy driver to direct growth the Hakaru as well. These areas are unlikely to attract that extent of demand for housing or business activity in the medium term. In our view, the land subject to this Plan Change is far better suited to accommodate growth. Mangawhai will continue to be the desired area for future population to locate. The plan change land therefore aligns with actual market behaviour and resident expectations.
19. Our intention is to create a community that is not only functional but highly desirable—a place where people can live, work, and enjoy public amenities. The proposal is grounded in a forward-looking understanding of Mangawhai's needs and the characteristics that make the town attractive.
20. Throughout this process, we have made genuine efforts to engage with the community via open days, email outreach, and meeting requests. The level of engagement achieved has been mixed, and in some instances, groups have not fully understood the intent or benefits of the proposal. We would have preferred more collaborative dialogue, and to have had parties express their concerns or issues earlier.
21. Despite these challenges, our commitment to working constructively with the community remains unchanged. We believe the best developments are informed by local perspectives, and we intend to continue seeking productive engagement as the planning process evolves.
22. We are also prepared to front-load certain infrastructure costs by way of an Infrastructure Funding Agreement ("IFA"). In that context we believe there are no known physical, policy or consenting limitations to being able to provide the required infrastructure over time as it is required, and there is consequently no infrastructure related issue to not zone the land as we have sought.

23. A key strength of our proposal is the inclusion of appropriately scaled commercial areas, that will add to and not detract from the existing commercial areas, rather than a uniform spread of housing. Across Auckland where we have carried out the majority of our developments, we have seen other developers deliver many large-scale residential developments which have suffered from the absence of walkable commercial nodes, resulting in car dependency and weaker urban design outcomes. By integrating commercial opportunities from the outset, we aim to create a balanced, accessible community that supports local employment, reduces transport emissions, and fosters daily convenience for residents.

## **CONCLUSION**

24. In conclusion, Mangawhai's growth is happening whether we plan for it or not (in the context of significant ad hoc rural residential development if planned development in desirable locations does not occur) This Plan Change is a chance to meet that growth reality in a way that is deliberate, affordable, and genuinely beneficial to the town. Our proposal enables a fully master-planned community where infrastructure is sized and staged upfront, costs are carried by the developer, and new homes are delivered in sequence rather than through fragmented, ad-hoc sprawl. We've shown through our track record that we don't just subdivide land; we build places people are proud of and that communities value over time. We've engaged early, listened carefully, and we are committed to continuing that partnership through design, delivery, and long-term stewardship. Put simply, this Plan Change offers Mangawhai a better growth outcome — more certainty, better integration, and a higher-quality community — than the alternative. It is an opportunity that cannot be spatially replicated. For those reasons, we respectfully ask the Commissioners to support the Plan Change with the amendments that we have sought through the expert evidence.

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**Duncan Unsworth**

9 February 2026

**Attachment:**

Relevant Recent Project Experience

- Huapai Triangle (SHA) Plan Change, Resource Consent and Project Management of Civil Construction
- Huapai Triangle Daycare Resource Consent
- Whenuapai Plan Change (ongoing)
- Country Club Huapai Resource Consent and Project Management of Civil Construction
- Papakura Clevedon Road Resource Consent and Project Management of Civil Construction
- Deacon Point Resource Consent and Project Management of Civil Construction
- Matakana Resource Consent and Project Management of Civil Construction
- Two Riverhead Rural Subdivision Resource Consents and Project Management of Civil Construction
- Cullen St Mangawhai Resource Consent and Project Management of Civil Construction