

# Our main streets' changing face

THE face of small towns across New Zealand is changing and along with it changes to the retail sector, with more choice being offered in takeaway foods.

As stores close in rural towns like Te Kuiti and Otorohanga, they are more often than not replaced with another fast food outlet.

## FIT CRITERIA

Waitomo District Council's annual plan leaves the leasing of premises in Te Kuiti's CBD to individual landlords, as long as the business fits its resource management criteria.

But Waitomo mayor Brian Hanna says he is concerned that the only new businesses in Te Kuiti's Rora St, in recent months are food outlets with 10 of them selling takeaway-style food.

An exception is the Stoked Eatery restaurant which occupies the old railway station building, but more fast food outlets are planned to open in Te Kuiti with approval recently granted for a Subway store.

Deputy mayor Guy Whitaker is of a different opinion saying he has no issues with food outlets opening "as they are the future of small towns".

Otorohanga mayor Max Baxter

says with 10 fast food outlets along Maniapoto St, he's not too concerned about how the retail sector dynamic is changing, but would not like to see too many more opening.

He says it's difficult from a council perspective to limit the number of food outlets in a town, but thinks central government should take responsibility with its immigration policies.

He says new residents get extra points towards their citizenship, if they are prepared to go to the regions.

"Migrants tend to set up fast food shops, are prepared to work as a family and derive an income that will keep only themselves going."

In a poll taken on Maniapoto St and Rora St this week the overwhelming consensus was that there is far too many food outlets offering the same types of food, with many of those polled suggesting healthier choices would be appreciated.

The question as to whether councils should have more control over the type of stores on North King Country's main streets was equally divided with strong opinion. Those in favour felt that councils should adopt more of a social conscience to the matter, while those opposed, say councils should have no input whatsoever.



**NOT OUR ISSUE:** Otorohanga mayor Max Baxter says it's difficult for councils to limit the types of stores in the main street but he would like to see the Government take some action over fast food outlets. FILE PIC.

## The word from the street



**CONCERNED:** Waitomo mayor Brian Hanna says he is concerned about the number of outlets selling the same types of food that are operating along Rora St.



**Guy Whitaker (53)** owner, 100% Te Kuiti & Otorohanga, Waitomo deputy mayor

Mr Whitaker has no problem with the number of food shops in Te Kuiti, and says the community must think so too as none are closing because a lack of patronage. He'd like to see more variety in the types of food sold, and a Thai restaurant open in Te Kuiti.



**Karen Spencer (53)** customer services, BNZ

Mrs Spencer thinks we have "way too many" food outlets, but agrees that there is plenty of variety. She doesn't think that bakeries and takeaway shops offer a healthy choice of food and would prefer some healthier choices to be available.



**Jo Osborne (40)** owner, Tsunami Curl 2015

Despite there being plenty of variety she thinks Te Kuiti is "way over the top" with its number of food outlets. She sees the choices of food available as predominantly healthy, but wants to see cafes sell "simple foods without getting too fancy".



**Veronica Sullivan (35)** salesperson, First National Real Estate

She wants to see more up-market choices and a good family restaurant serving anything "except fish and chips". She says Te Kuiti has "quite a few" choices now with a sushi shop and a pizza shop opening recently.

TO P18

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# The word from the street

FROM P10



**Chanelle Sharpe (34) owner, United Video**

Mrs Sharpe says there's too many bakeries and takeaway stores which offer good quality food, but she believes there is no difference from the next store as far as choice. She would like to see a healthier range of food sold in Te Kuiti and would be a supporter of a salad and juice bar should one come to town.



**Steven Searancke (27) travel professional, Harvey World of Travel**

Steven considers himself a bit of a 'gourmet foodie', but says there are too many food outlets all selling the same type of food. He would like to see more variety of food available in Te Kuiti and a really good restaurant selling gourmet-style food.



**Annely Moys (34) owner DM Jewellery Design, Otorohanga & Te Kuiti**

Mrs Moys is happy to see more restaurants in the town where people sit down and dine rather than buying takeaways. She says the opening of a new cafe in recent weeks "caters for a different market to takeaways" and she feels that this is "a step in the right direction."

As for bakeries and takeaways she says that "the food choice they offer is the same and boring" and she would prefer healthier options.



**Norm Burmester (53) owner, Otorohanga Agri Machinery**

Mr Burmester admits he likes his takeaways and says he's "noticed a bit of a trend for Asian-owned takeaway stores opening" but believes "the more

stores you have the more the choice" and "that's got to be good for the town." He would, however, like to see a better range of sandwiches on offer.



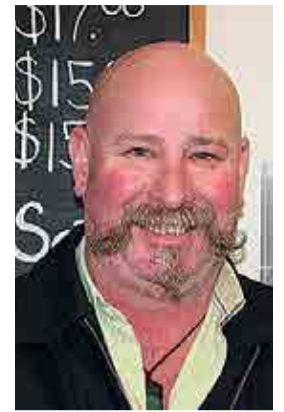
**Paramjit Singh (26) duty manager, Thirsty Liquor**

Mr Singh wants to see a KFC, kebab, and maybe a Moroccan grill store added into the mix of food stores in Otorohanga. As for fast food outlets he says there is "enough" and thinks there is a good range available.



**Eilish Pearce (21) sales assistant Pa-per Plus**

Miss Pearce says there is not enough cafes offering quality. She says there is quantity, but thinks if Otorohanga is going to have more food outlets open up she would like to see "better quality cafes open" offering "boutique food."

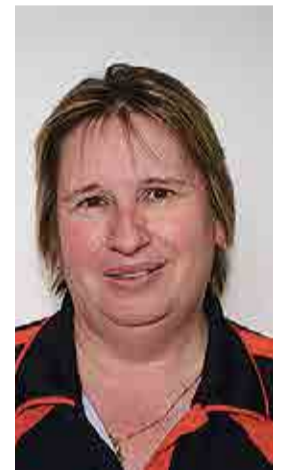


**Sean Lewis (49) owner, Sean the Barber**

Mr Lewis says Otorohanga is not a "lot different" to other small towns in New Zealand as far as food variety is concerned.

He sees the fast food industry as an entry level for new migrants and "just duplicating what is already available."

He wants to see a return to the "good old Kiwi sandwich which is not over-dosed with mayonnaise."



**Linda Coxon owner, Mitre 10 Otorohanga**

Mrs Coxon says there is plenty of choice and she's happy with the quality of product that is available in the town, but feels Otorohanga has "enough food outlets."



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