

Living Streets Hamilton submission to ‘Market study into the retail grocery sector’

By Peter H Bos

Submission to [‘Market study into the retail grocery sector’](#)

Submitter: Peter H Bos with support from Judy McDonald on behalf of **Living Streets Kirikiriroa** (Hamilton). Living Streets Kirikiriroa is the local branch of [Living Streets Aotearoa](#)

‘There is only one way to eat an elephant: a bite at a time’

We are asking the Commerce Commission to recommend that:

- (1) ‘Dairy’ is a permitted activity in all District Plan zones.
- (2) ‘Produce stall’ be a permitted activity in all District Plan residential zones.
- (3) The minimum parking requirements for local dairies are removed.

Link to [Hamilton District Plan Chapter 4 rule 4.3](#)

Desired outcome: To have consumers able to reach small grocery retailers located within a 10 minute walk from their homes, to enable top-up shopping.

History of what used to be allowed:

In March 1962 an article on [‘Town and Country Planning’](#) stated that ‘until recently, if you owned some land you could do what you liked with it. You could build a house, a factory, a shop, and it was nobody’s business but your own’. The [Encyclopaedia of New Zealand website](#) has the following statement about dairies: **‘Dairies offer an independent way to own your own business, and the older dairies were often based on people building a room onto the front of their houses and set up a shop selling a few grocery items, confectionery or other easily handled goods’.**

Example of the outcome of what used to be allowed:



Dusseldorf, Loricker Street: 16m2 kiosk in front room of Irene Velton’s home



Massey Street Hamilton



Mokau 36m2 dairy

Link to more on [‘Irene Velton Kiosk’](#) and [‘Massey St Dairy’](#) and [‘Mokau Dairy’](#)

Our concern is that with each update of the Hamilton District Plan, the outcome is less walkable neighbourhoods.

Is it possible that Hamilton District Plan rules have been over-influenced by large suppliers such as Foodstuffs?

‘Discussions were held with a representative from Foodstuffs (NZ) Ltd. In the light of these discussions the following alteration has been made: dairy groceries having a gross floor area not more than 150m² have been included as a predominant use in the Commercial 1 Zone. The representative of Foodstuffs (NZ) Ltd suggested that an upper gross floor-space limited of 80m² for a dairy grocery would not present an economic proposition. Present development by that company of dairy grocery units requires a gross floor-space in excess of 120m². The upper limit of 150m² is considered reasonable and practical’.

*Hamilton City District Scheme (Section 1 & 2) first review – Report on Commercial areas Dec 1975 – ref s
711 552 209 931 151 Ham*

Of particular interest, given the rapidly ageing population in New Zealand and the accompanying issues of loneliness and isolation, is the following comment from Ludo Campbell-Reid (<https://theregister.co.nz/2019/04/16/local-dairy-going-extinct/>), which emphasises the need for local connections and relationships. The contribution of local mobility to the maintenance of communities is a major part of the philosophy of Living Streets:

“The corner dairy is an integral part of the community that has filled the gap of quick and convenient for a very long time. Most dairy owners operate 365 days a year, and with that comes a personal touch with their clientele. Owners are personally involved with their customer base, giving them an unmatched advantage over supermarkets and other convenience forms of business, including gas stations.”

End