

Close Up: Sandspit Fight

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Just north of Whangarei lies an 80 hectare sand dune that captures the very essence of arguments over New Zealand coastal property ownership. For 40 years, the Ngunguru Sandspit has been privately owned and remained completely undeveloped but now its relatively new owners want to build a small town on it. Landco is proposing a 350 house development on 36 hectares of the spit. The rest of the spit, more than half, will be set aside as a reserve. The land isn't zoned for that kind of development and locals are adamant it remains that way. Sofia Wenborn gets to the heart of the battle.

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