



From Devonshire tea to the curry mile

Southern town centre, Papatoetoe's Hunters Corner could become Auckland's *Little India* if locals back the idea.

With funds from the Ōtara-Papatoetoe Local Board, the business association has commissioned BID-savvy market researcher Buzz Channel to conduct a street survey of business owners, employees and shoppers.

Town Centre Manager Donna Lee says the proposal is to develop the Great South Road-based retail strip into an authentic Indian precinct.

"It would be branded as *Little India*, a shopping and dining destination based on its unique traditional Indian character," says Donna.

"It would be a place where people could come and experience a slice of Indian culture."

The concept is proposed in the Hunters Corner Town Centre Society's Strategic Plan 2016-2021 and reflected in the Ōtara-Papatoetoe Local Board Plan 2017. It was also flagged in a [STUFF article](#) last September.

Conducted in January, the five-minute survey asked locals what they thought of the *Little India* idea and sought their views on what it could be like.

"Indian communities the world over know of Hunters Corner while locals recognise our town centre as a hub for high quality Indian food and clothes, as well as the best place to buy and sell gold jewelry," says Donna.



"Singapore has its Little India while Manchester and London have their own Curry Miles. . . Hunters Corner can bring both concepts to Auckland, celebrating our cultural point of difference."





Each town centre has its own distinctive character, such as the Hunters Corner.

Of Ōtara-Papatoetoe’s 86,300 population, an estimated 8000 speak Hindi – India’s main language. This year’s Census will no doubt boost those figures.

Featured in its recently published Local Board Plan, this image (left) is captioned “*Each town centre has its own distinctive character, such as the Hunters Corner*”.

Under the heading “**Revitalising town centres**”, the local board indicates a desire to increase the number of events to foster community spirit and better understanding and appreciation of different cultures.

Diversity is welcomed and celebrated. In 2017 the local board established a local Ethnic Diversity Forum, to improve the engagement of ethnic communities with the local board.

From Mrs Hunter’s tea rooms. . .



In 1912 a Scottish couple, James and Elizabeth Hunter, built a house on the Great South Road, opposite East Tāmaki Road. Mrs Hunter soon opened a haberdashery and sweet shop in the front of the house, and later turned this into tearooms.

. . . To the curry mile.



In 2018, lovers of Indian cuisine are spoiled for choice throughout the Hunters Corner precinct.

From curry houses to specialist tandoori outlets, there’s much to salivate over.