



SELLING THE LOCATION: DOES COFFEE BEAT CLASSROOMS?

“Location, location, location” is one of real estate’s most repeated lines. Our analysis of advertising text suggests agents treat it less literally than the phrase implies, with much of the location story left to the suburb name rather than spelled out. It also highlights some clear opportunities where agents can push the location story harder.

As part of our ongoing review of advertising language in the real estate sector, we used automated text analysis to classify the language in more than 25,000 residential and lifestyle listings advertised across New Zealand during May 2026. This included listings by both Bayleys and other agencies. Our goal was to learn more about how the market is positioning properties and identify opportunities for our agents to enhance their marketing.

Location-related content accounts for an average of 21% of all text within listings. Breaking the location theme down further into sub-themes, local amenities & access have the largest focus, with 80% of listings including text that covers this sub-theme. Some sub-themes are property-specific, such as waterfront and coastal locations, whereas others will be reasonably universal, such as schools and education.

A result that stands out is content about schools and education. More than half of listings made no mention of schools or education. This is a notable gap given school zoning is a priority for family buyers. While most listing platforms include widgets that identify school zones, this seems like an area that should be marketed harder.

This finding is particularly interesting when contrasted against the most commonly mentioned location: shopping, supermarkets and retail. We wonder if big picture demographic trends like having children later in life and growth in the proportion of child-free households are fueling a subtle pivot away from the local schools and on to the pressing matter of shopping and coffee?

We also perceive agents are often letting the suburb talk for itself, rather than spelling out the benefits. We feel this is reasonable if advertising to buyers who already know the local area but leaves the local story untold for those new to the area.

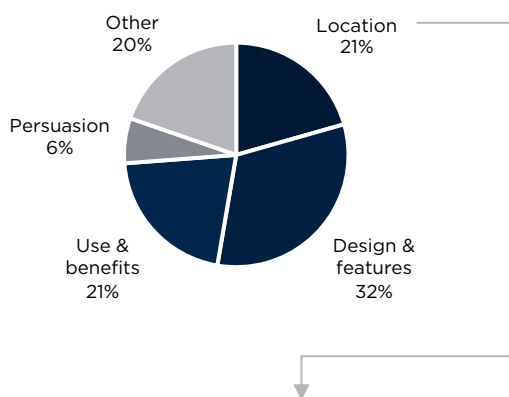
For vendors and agents, the practical point is to consider whether “location, location, location” is truly being captured when marketing a property, or whether it can be showcased in brighter lights.

What agents are focusing on

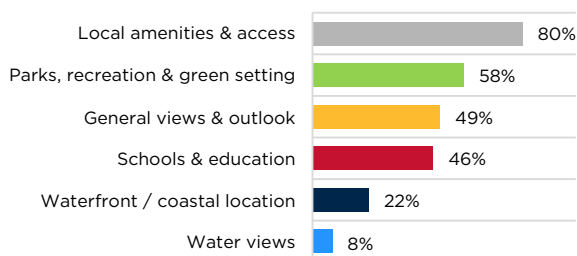
Location sub-theme	% of listings mentioning theme	What it means in marketing	Example
Local amenities & access	80%	Proximity to everyday conveniences and transport connectivity.	“Positioned close to shops, cafés, public transport and motorway links, the home offers easy access to daily essentials.”
Parks, recreation & green setting	58%	Nearby outdoor spaces, recreation and natural surroundings.	“Nearby reserves, walking tracks and green spaces add to the relaxed lifestyle appeal.”
General views & outlook	49%	Quality of the outlook, aspect and views (excluding water views).	“An elevated position captures a sunny outlook and a strong sense of space and openness.”
Schools & education	46%	Proximity to education facilities and specific school zones.	“Families will value the nearby schools and sought-after zoning for established local education options.”
Waterfront & coastal location	22%	Proximity to the waterfront and access to coastal amenities.	“Enjoy a coastal lifestyle with beach access, waterfron walks and boating facilities close by.”
Water views	8%	Views or outlook over water.	“The living area opens to wide harbour views, creating a strong visual connection to the water.”

What the data shows

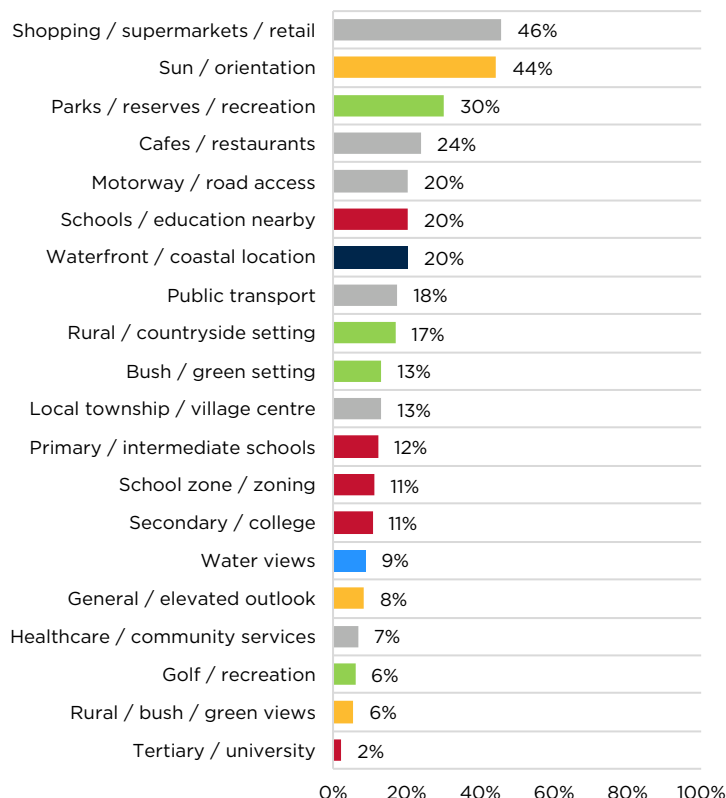
Overall average split of listing text by type (average % of listing text)



Major sub-themes within the **location** category (% of listings mentioning the sub-themes)



Top 20 location detailed characteristics discussed (% of listings mentioning this characteristic)



What our experts are saying

"The value in this data is not just what agents are saying, but what they are leaving out. Schools and education are the clearest example."



Eos Li CFA

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"There are niche parts of the market, such as baches, where school zones are unlikely to be a big priority. That niche is nowhere near half the market."



Chris Farhi MRICS

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"Marketing works when everything is firing. Listing copy is a small part of the puzzle, but it does the explaining, and keen buyers often read it more than once."



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