



23 February 2025

Kate Fleming
Westland District Council
39 Weld Street
Private Bag 704
Hokitika, 7842

Dear Kate & Westland District Council:

Resource Consent 230134: Land Use – Discretionary Consent: 240 Taramakau Highway (SH 6) Kumara Junction.

Thankyou for the notification of application for resource consent from B M Loader in relation to land legally described as Lot 2 DP 577153.

We are writing as affected persons regarding the proposed amendments to the resource consent for the property located at 240 Taramakau Highway (SH 6) Kumara Junction, which was previously approved for the construction of a community hall. While we initially supported the original application for the hall's construction and limited function, we are now strongly opposed to the proposed changes and formally request that they be denied.

When we provided our consent as affected persons for the initial consent, we did so based on the assurances given by the applicant, Beverley Loader, that certain conditions would remain in place to mitigate any negative impacts on our property and lifestyle. However, the modifications now being sought contradict the commitments she made to us. We were led to believe that Melody Hall was to be constructed with the purpose of a community hall to become an asset to the wider community and our small local community. The proposed amendments to the consent indicate the intention to convert this building into a commercialised cash-positive asset for the applicant at the expense of our local community. These changes raise significant concerns, including but not limited to:

- 1. Breach of Initial Assurances:** The applicant previously assured us that the hall would be used only for small community gatherings and not for frequent commercial events. The proposed amendments now introduce conditions that contradict these assurances, leading to concerns about the long-term use of the facility. The applicant advised us in person at our home that the proposed changes to the consent were her intentions since the hall's conception. In light of this, we now know we, and the council, have been manipulated by an entrepreneur building a commercial venture

under the false pretences of a community asset. The conditions sought by the applicant in the consent amendment are akin to that of a tavern or nightclub, not a community hall that we were promised.

2. **Extended Operating Hours:** The proposed amendments seek to allow events to continue until 3 AM on Fridays and Saturdays. This change significantly increases the likelihood of late-night noise and disruption, impacting the peaceful nature of our community.
3. **Amplified Music Allowance & Contradictions in Application:** While the amendment letter dated 13 May 2024 claims that no change will result to Condition 16 of the consent, the letter also states that amplified music will be played. As well as raising concerns that noise from the venue will create noise pollution impacting wildlife and the amenity of the area, there is a clear discrepancy in the applicant's statements regarding amplified music. The applicant asserts that no change to Condition 16 will result, yet they have requested an amendment to the condition's wording, indicating their intention to allow amplified music regardless and create an avenue to exploit noise-related conditions of the current consent. This inconsistency raises concerns about the true intent and enforceability of any noise restrictions. Any allowance of amplified music or instruments will have a significant impact on our lifestyle and fellow residents, particularly our ability to sleep and enjoy the quiet rural environment we moved here for. Furthermore, the amendment letter dated 13th May 2024 contains a detailed explanation around noise-making from the venue that further suggests an intention to exploit noise restrictions through technicalities. This is not conducive to the promises made to local residents previously by the applicant and accepted in good faith.
In the detailed explanation of intended noise-making from the venue, the applicant stresses that noise no greater than 55dBA would be present at the notional boundary of the nearest dwelling (which is our house). Whilst this suggestion by the applicant may be within the regulation they've referenced, no existing resident should be forced to listen to music and party noises at a volume such as this suggested within the confines of their own property. To have noise such as that suggested by the applicant in this particular area, would completely destroy the ambience and amenity enjoyed by us, fellow residents, and visitors and tourists to the Wilderness Trail and would make being outside of our dwellings unenjoyable and frustrating.
4. **Impact on Shift Workers and Sleep Disruptions:** As residents, we rely on uninterrupted sleep due to our work schedules. One of us works 14-hour shifts as a long-haul truck driver, where sufficient rest is critical for both personal health and public road safety. The other of us is a registered nurse. We specifically moved from a busier location (Shakespeare Street in Greymouth) to this rural area to accommodate our work-life balance and give us a reduced stress lifestyle. The proposed changes to the consent pose a direct threat to our ability to rest and

maintain our well-being.

Quality rest is especially important for us now as we both navigate life-threatening illnesses which have on-set last year. One of us survived a heart-attack in 2024 which is now managed through a reduced stress lifestyle and quality rest among other things. We also care for our mother on an ad-hoc basis who undergoes treatment for various illnesses of cancer. Sleep deprivation and stress relating to the proposed commercial venue across the road from our home is an unwelcome element of stress as we enter a chapter in our lives where our health and care for each other takes a more prominent focus than ever before.

- 5. Traffic and Parking Concerns:** The proposal increases the number of parking spaces from 16 to 38, along with the addition of minibuses, indicating an intention to make use of the higher limit of the licensed occupancy of 200 people for the venue. This will result in increased traffic, congestion, and potential safety issues in an area not equipped to handle such a rise in vehicle movements. Furthermore, we have already observed instances where traffic and parking have been poorly managed under the existing conditions. As evidence, we have attached photos showing unauthorised and unmanaged vehicle presence, demonstrating a lack of control over parking and traffic regulation at the venue. This raises serious concerns about the applicant's ability to enforce even the current limitations, let alone the proposed increase in use and capacity. Additionally, while the applicant has stated that verge parking will be controlled, we have concerns that the lack of enforcement to date suggests an inability to manage this issue effectively in the future. Appendix 1 exemplifies the most recent failure to control parking where owners of a campervan attempted to use the carpark for an overnight stay last week. Appendix 2 shows a vehicle parked on the verge outside the grounds of Melody Hall at 10:28am 23rd February 2025. We anticipate a scenario where guests will park on our grass verges as they did during the applicant's opening day event, further encroaching on private property and disrupting the rural character of the area.
- 6. Safety of Guests and Community Members:** Appendix 3 shows the proximity of a downward cliff face to the venue building structure less than 30m away. This poses a significant safety risk for the community during large events especially when alcohol is involved or children are in attendance.
- 7. Proximity to a School Bus Stop:** The location of the proposed hall is near a designated school bus stop. Increased traffic, unfinished late-night & early morning activity, and improper parking will create significant safety risks for children who use the stop regularly. The proposed amendments do not adequately address these concerns.

- 8. Loss of Rural Character & Amenity:** The original proposal was for a modest community hall for occasional use. However, the proposed changes indicate a shift towards more frequent and commercialised events. Despite the applicant noting in the application that intended use of the venue would be significantly less than that permitted in the proposal, there are no formal quantitative commitments relating to the frequency of use for the hall. This allows the frequency of events held at the hall to be open to interpretation and doesn't hold the applicant accountable to intentions as outlined in the proposal. This directly impacts the peaceful nature of our surroundings and is inconsistent with the rural setting. The area is zoned as rural, and such a significant commercial undertaking is inconsistent with the intended purpose of the area. It is also inconsistent with the existing infrastructure and properties currently in the immediate vicinity which were in existence well before the construction of the hall. The loss of the area's rural identity also puts surrounding properties at risk of devaluation due to loss of appeal. It's assumed that with increased car parking capacity will be a requirement for increased lighting of the area for both safety and security. This would cause an additional loss of the areas rural character and amenity. Light pollution currently only exists on Greymouth-Kumara Tramway from one solitary street light which the applicant was required to install upon creating access for the hall's site. The addition of lighting for the carpark and grounds of Melody Hall would take away from the atmosphere and rural character of the area at night enjoyed by us and fellow residents.
- 9. Negative Impact on Residents:** Frequent events, increased vehicle movements, noise, activity and extended hours will result in ongoing disruptions, reducing the quality of life for those living nearby. The assurances we received initially led us to support the initial construction project, but these amendments now place an undue burden on local residents.
- 10. Environmental Impact on Native Wildlife:** The area surrounding the hall is home to many native birds and wildlife, which will be negatively impacted by increased noise, traffic, and human activity. This jeopardises the existing appeal of the area where existing lifestyle residential blocks embrace the natural surroundings and wildlife. The proposed changes pose a risk to the delicate balance of the local ecosystem and should not be permitted.
- 11. Impact on Popular Cycle Trail:** The road connecting the hall with the highway is a well-used cycle trail, known as the West Coast Wilderness Trail, frequented by recreational cyclists, tourists and pedestrians. It should also be noted that the road does not have a dedicated cycle path or footpath alongside and all recreational activities occur on the roadway itself which is an open road of 100km/h with no road markings. Increased traffic volume and potential roadside parking pose a serious hazard to cyclists, increasing the risk of accidents and negatively affecting the safety

and usability of the trail. Local businesses such as cycle tours also use this section of the Wilderness Trail as a key component of the services they provide. Approving the proposed consent amendments increases risk and liabilities for these existing local businesses.

12. NZ Transport Agency Traffic Assessment: The New Zealand Transport Agency's assessment has indicated the proposed changes could result in an overall vehicle trip count of up to 288 per day through the SH6 / Tramway intersection and through the tramway itself. The higher end of this estimation must be used when considering the impact of the traffic increase on the area. If statistics nearing this estimate are realised, the result will be an upgrade in the road's classification (as per the New Zealand Transport Agency's One Network Framework). This could result in a requirement to upgrade the intersection and/or tramway, which will cost ratepayers and taxpayers while adversely affecting the safety of users of the infrastructure in the meantime.

13. Security Impact for Residents: The proposed changes raise significant concerns for local residents around security and safety of ourselves and our property. Increased activity in the area combined with an increase in operating hours of the hall leaves local residents and guests of the venue exposed to large numbers of possibly intoxicated people congregating and loitering in the area late at night and early hours of the morning. It must be considered that the rural location of the hall and our properties means exposure to extended response times for emergency services such as police and ambulance. The applicant has not made any assurances around organised security or police presence for events undertaken at the hall. When issues arise from an event at the venue such as medical emergencies, aggression, unruly behaviour or trespassing, the ability for emergency services to respond quickly is reduced by the geographical location of the venue and our properties. The applicant's own previous medical emergency is a perfect catalyst of this issue where she unfortunately fell in the hall after being knocked over by dancers and subsequently requiring ambulance attendance. It was well over an hour before an ambulance was able to arrive at the hall so thankfully the injuries were not life-threatening. We've had to request ambulance attendance at our property on three occasions and each instance resulted in a response time of at least 40 minutes and longer from placing the call to the ambulance arriving. All three of these ambulance calls were priority, life-threatening emergencies. This highlights the location's unsuitability for an event venue with the proposed consent amendments and demonstrates why venues with such consent conditions are usually located in town centres with ample emergency and security resources close by. Approving the proposed amendments to the consent exposes residents and the community to unacceptable risks associated with the geographical location causing extended emergency services response times.

This proposal from the applicant has caused us significant and prolonged stress about the impact on our lifestyle and well-being. We respectfully urge the council to uphold the conditions originally set in the approved consent and reject the proposed amendments. We believe that maintaining these conditions is essential to preserving the integrity, safety, and well-being of our community and ensuring that the development aligns with the expectations under which consent was granted. We signed the first consent to give Mrs Loader as she puts it "her dream", we now ask that the council help us to protect rather than take away "our dream".

We appreciate the council's time and consideration of our concerns. Please keep us informed of any opportunities to provide further input, including public hearings or meetings regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

[Redacted signature block]

Signed: _____

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted name block]

Signed: _____

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted name block]

Appendix 1



Appendix 2



Appendix 3 – Source: Google Earth



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