

**IN THE MATTER** of the Resource Management Act 1991 ('the Act')

**AND** of an application for resource consent to construct and operate a  
campground at Davie Street, Hokitika

**IN THE MATTER**

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**EVIDENCE OF JACKIE MATTHEWS  
ON BEHALF OF TUFFY INVESTMENTS LIMITED**

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## INTRODUCTION

- 1 My full name is Jacqueline Yvonne Matthews, I am known as Jackie. I am a full time mum and an active volunteer for groups that my children belong to. I have lived on the West Coast for most of my life and I am proud to call myself a Coaster. My family and I live in Hokitika and my children attend local schools.
- 2 My father is Evan Jones, who is the owner/manager of Evan Jones Construction Limited and Tuffy Investments Limited. Tuffy Investments Limited is a family business and my evidence is written on behalf of Tuffy Investments.
- 3 Tuffy Investments Limited are proposing to develop and operate a campground and holiday park in Davie Street, Hokitika.
- 4 My evidence today will discuss:
  - Background to Tuffy Investments Limited and the proposal
  - Development of the Proposal
  - Description of the proposal
  - Operations of the Campground
  - Benefits of the Proposal

### Background

#### Tuffy Investments

- 5 Tuffy Investments is a family business that was started by my father, Evan. Evan also owns a construction business that has completed several successful projects in Hokitika and other parts of the West Coast.

#### The idea for the Campground

- 6 In the summer of 2016, my husband and I hired a campervan to drive around some of the South Island to show our kids the country that they live in. We had a great time, stopping at different holiday parks every night or every second night and making our way mainly around the top of the South Island. It was a memorable trip, and when we arrived back to Hokitika, I knew I had an answer to one of my father's regular questions, which was - "What does Hokitika need?"
- 7 The answer was a campground. Every town needs a campground. Hokitika's only campground had closed in November 2015, leaving a massive gap in the accommodation sector in Hokitika. Not only that, he also owned the only decent sized piece of land left in Hokitika, which could accommodate a holiday park.
- 8 It seemed like the perfect match. It was almost perfect timing, Evan Jones Construction Ltd had men available, so the concept started to be explored.
- 9 Soon, it was all systems go - we had a plan, which was modelled on the holiday parks we had stayed in over summer. We knew it had to be 'The Complete Package', offering a range of units as well as campsites, communal areas for

games, kitchen and dining, outdoor areas for bbq and childrens playground and traveller amenities (such as toilets and showers)

#### The Site

- 10 The Davie Street block of land has been owned by Tuffy Investments Ltd since 2005. However, it has been a wasteland, covered in gorse, since the development of residential housing in Jollie Street in the 70's and Rolleston Street at a later stage.
- 11 There have been several subdivisions since the 1990's in Hokitika, such as Alpine View, Brickfield Estate and the latest subdivisions, Racecourse Terraces and the new Takutai subdivision. Davie Street, as a sub-division doesn't seem as attractive, as people who can afford to build, have the luxury of being able to choose sea and mountain views as well as having all day sun, so as the idea of a holiday park was being discussed, the land at Davie Street started to tick some boxes which suited a holiday park development.
- 12 Firstly, the land was located in the township of Hokitika, secondly, it was a decent size, holiday parks are not small places, they need space for their range of accommodation they offer, and thirdly, as mentioned, there are already many desirable subdivisions already in and around Hokitika. It seemed that a holiday park would be a good use of the land, which is now privately owned, that has been doing nothing for over 40 years.

#### **Development of the Proposal**

- 13 As I have explained the idea of the campground is something I came up with after my own camping holiday and staying at other campgrounds. We have spent a long time developing the idea into a real concept.
- 14 The site for the campground is located in Davie Street, which is a residential area. We were very mindful of this when working with the architects to design the site. The amenities such as toilets, showers, kitchen, dining, TV Lounge, children's playground and BBQ area were all placed in the middle of the site, with the accommodation being built around the amenities, so they are facing into the amenities.
- 15 The lighting to complement the accommodation and amenities is be positioned so they are downward facing, so that there is no glare directed off-site. The lighting plan has been designed also taking into account the surrounding residential environment.
- 16 We have also engaged a landscaping expert to respond to create a landscaping plan that ensures privacy for neighbours and guests, and also makes the campground a pleasant place for people staying and also for neighbouring properties with a view of the site.

#### Need for a Campground

- 17 Hokitika is a tourist town. We are the 'gateway to the glaciers', as well as having many of our own attractions at our back door, the Hokitika Gorge, Treetops Walkway, the cycleway and the beach, just to name a few.
- 18 As we live in a tourist town, we need to be able to cater to each and every tourist; and be able to offer the type of accommodation they require, which suits their budget.

Since the closure of Hokitika's only campground back in 2015, Hokitika has lost the ability to do that.

- 19 Hokitika has other types of accommodation such as a hotel, motels, airbnb's, chalets, and now a few motels which also offer a few powered sites, but currently, there is nowhere in the township of Hokitika that offers the 'complete package' of a campground - motel rooms, standard cabins, powered sites, tent sites, showers, toilets, a kitchen, a dining room, a laundry, a BBQ area, a games room, a playground for the kids, and a campervan waste disposal point, all, within walking distance to the town centre.
- 20 Hokitika needs to be able to keep the tourists in our town. If there is nowhere to stay, they will carry on to the next town and spend their money there. Figures from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment show that for every \$10 spent on accommodation, tourism expenditure on food and beverage services is \$6.70, passenger transport \$14, retail sales \$7.45, fuel and automotive \$8.95 and other tourism products \$3.80.
- 21 The Grey Star on 4 January 2017, reports that the "Coast overflows with tourists" and National MP Maureen Pugh states "Tourism expenditure on the West Coast had grown by 9.8% in the year since October 2015 and visitors spend \$470 million. Nationally, tourism expenditure was forecast to grown by 65% to \$16 Billion in 2022. We need to maximise the benefits of tourism growth, while balancing pressures on local communities and infrastructure". A copy is attached as **Appendix A**.
- 22 By being able to meet all travellers' accommodation needs and budgets, by Hokitika providing a complete range of accommodation types, there is a great economic spin-off for the whole town.
- 23 Figures from Statistics New Zealand for holiday parks on the West Coast show an average occupancy in January/February 2016 of 43.5%, and an annual average occupancy of 22%. However, former managers of the former Hokitika Holiday Park have advised us that their average occupancy in January/February was higher than this, making annual occupancy around 40%. Hokitika also has the Wildfoods Festival, which is the second weekend in March and also Agfest, which is held bi-annually. Accommodation providers in Hokitika are very busy during these events.

### **Proposal**

- 24 The proposal is for our family business, Tuffy Investments Limited, to construct and operate a holiday park at the site in Davie Street, legally described as Lot 1 DP 349111.
- 25 I have explained that I came up with the idea after travelling with my own family, and it was our experiences on that trip that helped shape the proposal. We stayed at several campgrounds on our family trip so we knew what aspects we as a family enjoyed, and things that we would like included in our own campground.
- 26 The proposal our holiday park consists of 6 self-contained double units, 4 self-contained ensuite units, 9 cabins, 22 powered sites, 26 tent sites with no power, a childrens playground, TV Lounge, games room, kitchen and dining area, outdoor BBQ area, laundry, toilets and showers and a campervan waste disposal point. There is also a shop in its reception area which will cover campers basic needs - icecreams, ice, bread and a few canned items. All of our facilities would be tasteful and to a high standard.

## **Operations of the Campground**

- 27 The hours of business will be 24 hours in that people will be staying over all time periods however we propose having an office and shop open from 7am to 9pm daily. Guests will be expected to check out by 10 am daily and check in will be from 3pm -9pm daily. The shop is service guests providing a few convenience items, such as canned foods, icecreams and milk.
- 28 There will be onsite management at all times and carparking is provided for each unit or site, onsite to avoid parking on the street. We believe a significant amount of our business will be tourists and corporate clients.
- 29 In addition to a campground manager, we will be employing staff to do laundry services, rubbish removal, cleaning staff and grounds maintenance staff to ensure a high quality of the campground for guests.

## **Rules**

- 30 We will have a management plan in place and will be strictly enforcing rules around respecting other guests and our neighbours.

## Noise

- 31 Camp rules will explain that there is to be no excessive noise after 8pm, and if there is any excessive noise, the manager will shut it down. In fact, campgrounds tend to be self-regulatory, as a former campground manager advised us, that in her experience, generally if one group was too noisy, it would be another group of campers that would tell them to be quiet.

## Feedback

- 32 As stated, we will have an on-site manager. We will welcome feedback, both good and bad from our campers, and will be dealt with accordingly, and in a timely manner. This also goes for any concerns that neighbours may have - they will be dealt with accordingly and in a timely manner.

## Affiliation to Kiwi Holiday Parks

- 33 We plan to become a member of Kiwi Holiday Parks NZ, which is a nationwide group of holiday parks which all must meet a minimum standard to be part of this group. Our park will certainly meet the standard, and will no doubt be one of the jewels in their chain, as our standard will be high and the park will be completely new. Kiwi Holiday Parks are looking forward to being able to offer Hokitika again, as a stopover.

## **Benefits of the Proposal**

- 34 The benefits of our proposal are significant. In addition to providing this accommodation option for tourists, there are several other benefits for the town.

## Employment

- 35 Construction of the campground will create employment for the construction and development phase of the project, for builders and contractors, as well as local electricians, plumbers and others required to work on this large project.

- 36 Not only will building trades be employed, we plan to source local talent and resources, such as artists where and when applicable. This is all part of keeping our park family friendly and will enhance the environment that we plan to offer.
- 37 Once the park is developed and operational, new, on-going employment for an on-site manager, as well as office and shop staff, cleaning staff and a groundsperson will be necessary. Based on advice from other camp ground managers, the total staffing requirement will be 1 or 2 permanent full time staff and up to 10 part-time seasonal staff. Not only will it create these jobs, but our campground will enhance other existing businesses that service the hospitality industry, such as laundry and other services, such as rubbish removal.

#### Supporting Tourism

- 38 Having tourists stay in Hokitika provides benefits for other businesses in the town. By being located in the township of Hokitika, campground users will quickly take advantage of being within walking distance of some of Hokitika's top attractions.
- 39 A further benefit derived from this business will be ongoing spending by guests while staying on numerous local activities. Westland has around 141 tourist providers and we intend networking with as many as possible to help our beautiful town grow economically.

#### Use of the site

- 40 I also think that having the site used as a campground that has been designed to be visually pleasing to both guests and neighbouring properties is a better use of the site than having it sitting vacant as it has been for several years.
- 41 We are proposing to retain the back section as native bush which further enhances the visual amenity for neighbouring properties and guests. And as well as this, the proposal includes upgrading Davie Street, which is also a benefit.

#### **Conclusion**

- 42 Ever since I went on a family campervan trip around the South Island, I have known that a campground is something I wanted to establish in Hokitika. Hokitika is my home and where I raise my family and I love seeing it thrive with visitors also enjoying our special town.
- 43 Hokitika is very much a tourist town and this proposal will provide another accommodation option to travellers who want to stay in our township. We have worked with experts to transform my idea into a real proposal that I believe will be a real benefit to Hokitika. There are several employment opportunities that will be created, and the location close to the town means that guests can easily access other businesses and events in town to further support Hokitika.

Thank you

Dated this 1st day of February 2017.



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## Movie stars stay on Coast



Laura Mills

The Punakaiki Beach Camp hosted two famous guests just before Christmas — though staff did not recognise them at first.

Borat film star Sacha Baron Cohen and his actress wife Isla Fisher have been holidaying in New Zealand.

They were spotted in Queenstown and then made their way up the West Coast.

The celebrity couple arrived in the country early last week after spending time in Fisher's native Australia.

Fisher starred in Home and Away, Scooby Doo and The Wedding Crashers.

When they checked into Punakaiki, management did not initially recognise their famous guests.

"Another camper mentioned it (later)," Craig Findlay said today.

Baron Cohen and Fisher were travelling with their three children in a campervan.

"They were very friendly and a lot of fun," Mr Findlay said.

The Findlays believe a photo uploaded to Fisher's Instagram page of the sun setting was taken on the beach at Punakaiki.

Fisher also posted an Instagram photo of herself and an unidentified snowman in the Southern Alps, and another of the famous Cardrona bra fence.



PICTURE: Instagram  
Actress Isla Fisher watches the sunset at Punakaiki.

Baron Cohen and his wife Isla Fisher

# Coast overflows with tourists

## Glacier visitor numbers up 20%

Laura Mills

Car parks are overflowing, motels are full and West Coast hot spots packed to the rafters as the tourism season gets into high gear.

At Franz Josef Glacier, the glacier car park has been regularly full, and on December 28 alone more than 6100 people visited.

At Punakaiki, vehicles are parking anywhere and everywhere, and people are having to queue for the toilets.

At high tide, the viewing platforms at the blowholes are full.

Tourism West Coast chief executive Jim Little said even today most Greymouth motels had 'no vacancy' signs out and the Franz Alpine tourist train was filled with six or seven carriages each day.

Mr Little said the season was not expected to peak until mid-January.

"Generally it's on a par or better than last year — and last year was up on the year before by quite a bit."

He said they were starting to see some dispersal of tourists, with the first Chinese tour buses now visiting Westport.

Craig Findlay, from the Punakaiki campground, said they were busier than usual.

"We were expecting it to be busier than last year. The Kaikoura thing is impacting," Mr Findlay said.

Outside the blowholes the car park was full and motorists were parking wherever they could.

"Hopefully improvements do happen or it's going to be madness," he said, referring to plans to boost parking and toilet facilities at Punakaiki.

DOC conservation services manager

Wayne Costello, of Franz Josef, said the car park at the glacier was so full yesterday that people were parking and down the access road. It was busy to take 140 vehicles and had regularly been overfull lately.

"Buses couldn't get in," Mr Costello said.

"This time of year it's normal."

DOC track counter figures show December was the busiest on record at the glacier. A total of 96,000 people visited the valley this December — 20% on last year. The busiest day was 6103, on December 28.

Whataroa tourism operator Geoff Eatwell, who runs Alpine Fault Tours, said they had someone cancel their spots on the tour because they could not find accommodation.

"Resources are being tested. With growth proposed, to be honest, we got some serious work to do to keep. We don't want to turn it into a negative with people being disappointed," Eatwell said.

National Party list MP Mauri Pugh said tourism expenditure on the West Coast had grown by 9.8% in a year since October 2015, and visit had spent \$470 million.

Nationally, tourism expenditure is forecast to grow by 6.5% to \$16 billion in 2022, Mrs Pugh said.

"We recognise the need to maximise the benefits of tourism growth while also balancing pressures of local communities and infrastructure challenges, so that we can maintain high quality visitor experiences."

She said the Government plans to invest a further \$45 million over the next four years, including \$12 million in regional infrastructure.

