

Kenepuru & Central Sounds



Kenepuru & Central Sounds Residents Association Inc.

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Submission from the
Kenepuru and Central Sounds Residents Association
to the –
Retrospective Resource Consent Application
from the music festival
Twisted Frequencies
Application Number: U130779

Introduction

The Association's members are some 260 households whose residents live full or part time in the Kenepuru and Pelorus Sounds. Our AGMs are well attended and members are kept fully informed of the decisions and actions of its appointed committee. The views expressed in this submission are based on those collected from both the Association's committee and members at large.

The Association's members have chosen to invest in these Sounds for leisure and/or business (especially tourism, aquaculture and agriculture/forestry). The common philosophy revolves around the sustainability of a uniquely pristine marine environment for the enjoyment of all.

Kenepuru & Central Sounds Residents Association Inc.

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The Association is an Incorporated Society, the objects of which are stated in its Rules as follows:

Para 2.1.1:

To promote and generally act in the interests of residents, ratepayers, and persons connected with Kenepuru Sound and/or of such central areas of the Marlborough Sounds as are either adjacent to Kenepuru Sound, are in the opinion of the committee part of the central Marlborough Sounds, or which may otherwise be connected with the Marlborough Sounds in any way whatsoever.

Comments on this Resource Consent Application

Our Association has noted several areas of deficiency within the *Twisted Frequencies* Resource Consent Application that was presented to Council on 18th December 2013 and is now being considered by Council on a retrospective basis (the festival having gone ahead without consent and in contravention of an Abatement Notice).

1. Description of the Site.

The Applicants have used a range of confusing/incorrect descriptions of where in Clova Bay the festival was to be held.

It was **not** held principally on private land, and there was considerable spill-over into the DOC Waimaru Reserve.

This would have severely inconvenienced any other casual campers wanting to stay at the Waimaru Reserve.

2. Local Emergency Services.

There was no discussion with the local Rural Fire Forces prior to the event, which is unacceptable for such a large gathering.

The application is deficient in that there is no Civil Defence / Disaster / Risk Management Plan in the Application. This is particularly unacceptable given the isolated location of the festival.

3. Neighbours/Consultation.

There appears to have been very little pre-festival discussion with the landowners most affected within the Clova/Crail/Manaroa area of the Sounds.

Contrary to what is stated in the Application and based on feedback received by the Association, many of those immediate neighbours were extremely concerned and/or angry about the festival, having experienced a very similar event (Monster Mash) at the same venue in 2008/9.

4. Traffic Management

The Application is extremely deficient in this regard.

A Traffic Management Plan should have been prepared by the festival organisers, reviewed and approved by Marlborough Roads, and input sought from the local Sounds community.

5. Noise

The Application does not mention the fact that music would be (and we have been advised was) played continuously – that is, 24 hours a day for the entire length of the festival.

This obviously has had a huge detrimental impact on all the immediate residents, and other holidaymakers in Clova Bay.

6. Facilities

The Application mentions “abundant toilet facilities”.

However these can't have been abundant enough according to visitors who have been to the Waimaru Reserve since the festival and found “paper and human deposits” behind every bush in the vicinity. The Application is deficient in that it does not specify what facilities were to be provided. This is a very serious deficiency given the applicants' expectations as to numbers.

7. Rubbish

Festival-goers should have been encouraged to take all their rubbish away with them as they left the festival, to the appropriate facilities in town. “Pack it in, pack it out”, as the saying goes.

In any event what was provided re rubbish disposal was clearly inadequate as we understand that locals have been told that around 2 tonnes of rubbish was collected from the immediate festival area by organisers after the event finished. The Application is clearly deficient as it does not specify exactly what the rubbish disposal and collection arrangements are.

8. Food Stalls

There appears to have been no attempt made by the organisers of this event to get the appropriate food licences from Council. The Application also incorrectly states that the local school would be holding a fund-raising barbecue. This did not happen either.

Decline Application

For the reasons outlined above, the Association believes the Application is clearly deficient in a number of key areas and accordingly the Association would not have supported the Application in its current form even if it had been presented to Council on a timely basis.

The Association recommends the Application be declined.

Community Concerns Arising from the Actual Event.

In order that all can learn from this most unfortunate and undesirable situation the Association also extends its submission to cover its views on various matters arising from the event as held.

› Roading / Signage / Traffic Issues

The issue that affected most Sounds residents from several days prior to the event to several days afterwards, was the huge increase in traffic volume on our roads. There were even traffic jams in Clova Bay!

On our estimate hundreds of vehicles of all descriptions made the 2.5 hour trip in from Havelock, and a complete lack of road-side signage to the event meant that many also made incorrect detours along the way. This could easily have been resolved by issuing all ticket-holders an appropriate map.

There were several reports of “close calls” on the roads, excess speeding, and one accident which involved a vehicle going off the edge.

The Association is most concerned that due to the inadequate planning etc these instances could have been much worse, considering the increased holiday traffic normally on the roads at this time of year too.

➤ **Civil Defence/Emergency/Risk Management**

As noted the Association does not believe that the event organisers appropriately addressed any of the issues around Risk Management. There are only two sentences about this in their Resource Consent Application.

On New Year's Day, this area of the Sounds received heavy rain and thunderstorms, which if continuing much longer, would have caused chaos at the event. Our local emergency services, and the community, would have been severely stretched to assist an event of this size.

As well as adverse weather events, other emergency scenarios such as a gas-tank explosion, wasp-nest attack, earthquake, etc. are possible scenarios which should nevertheless be planned for by the organisers of such events.

➤ **Rural Fire Issues**

The Association believes that most Sounds residents would have been aware of, and supportive of, the total fire ban in place from 18th December – 6th January. (This is traditionally a dry time of year, with a huge influx of people into the Sounds, but also when many fire-fighters are away on holiday.)

The festival organisers had no alternative form of heating arranged for their wet, cold party-goers. This resulted in a last minute and highly irregular application for a fire permit. Given the isolated location this situation must be addressed by the organisers of any such future event.

The Association has seen the submission prepared by our two local Rural Fire Forces, and fully supports that submission.

➤ **Water / Sanitation / Health / Environmental Issues**

It is our understanding that around some 1000 people visited the event at Clova Bay. The Association has a number of concerns under this heading. For example:

How did the local water supply to the DOC Waimaru Camp Ground cope with this influx?

Although participants were asked to bring their own drinking water, how did they wash with no shower facilities?

If they did wash, where did that grey-water go to?

Was there running water at the toilets, and where did that come from, and go to?

Given the planned duration of the event, what plans were in place should a Norovirus (or similar) outbreak have occurred?

As noted earlier, although the Applicant's Resource Consent mentions "abundant toilets", we do not believe there were sufficient on site early enough to cope with this crowd. As a consequence there are disturbing reports of large amounts of "human waste deposits" in the bushes.

Campers at the Waimaru Reserve immediately after the event left earlier than planned due to the state of the Reserve, and some also reported suffering severe stomach upsets.

Nowadays adequate sewage and grey-water systems are vital to all New Zealanders, and clean fresh-water and sea-water are imperative for the well-being of everyone in the Sounds.

If this event had gone through all the proper Resource Consent channels, most of these issues would have been properly addressed and resolved, giving a far better outcome for the local environment of Clova Bay, and the people of the Sounds.

➤ **Security/ Lack of Information**

The holiday season always brings an influx of people to the Sounds, and although the vast majority come to enjoy the place, there is also an increased risk of property damage and theft.

Many property-owners, particularly in the vicinity of Clova Bay, were alarmed at the huge number of festival people flooding into their neighbourhood, and took extra steps to secure their properties at this time.

This situation was probably aggravated by the fact that until the "party-goers" started arriving, it would seem many Sounds people had no idea that such an event was happening. Once again this issue could (and should) have been addressed by an appropriate Resource Consent Hearing, where everyone in the area could have been well briefed **before** the event.

➤ **Noise**

As stated above, the event organisers do not mention in their Application, that their intention is to play music (very loudly) from two stages for **24 hours a day**.

This is a gross violation of good neighbourly relations anywhere, and is not diminished by the fact that Clova Bay may well have fewer residents than another part of the country.

If such an event were to be held again in the future, this is certainly

one area where restrictions would absolutely have to be made.

➤ **Drugs/alcohol**

Members of our Association observed disturbing use of alcohol and drugs at this event, which was supposedly meant to be free of both. In such a remote situation as Clova Bay, with its close proximity to the sea, we consider it lucky that neither the event organisers (nor ultimately the local community) had to deal with missing persons, under the influence of either or both these substances.

The Resource Consent Process

The Association believes (and has received widespread feedback to the same effect) that the way this event carried on regardless of the Abatement Notice they were served, has made a complete farce of the Resource Consent process. We think the situation should have been monitored more closely by Council, and the Abatement Notice enforced. Many Sounds residents can still recall what was done to stem numbers when the Portage became a “must attend” New Year event for large numbers. The Council should have thought that aspect through.

As well as submitting on this Retrospective Resource Consent, our Association has also been asked for feedback on how the Council should proceed with cases like this when an Abatement Notice has been ignored.

The Association believes that such blatant disregard shouldn't be ignored, and that Council would be acting reasonably to initiate a prosecution or at the very least seek a substantial payment from the event organisers.

We are also disappointed at Council's decision not to check out the venue themselves, at the time, to see what was happening.

In conclusion, the Association believes that if the Resource Consent had been appropriately filed 3-6 months in advance of the event, then the Sounds community could have given voice to their concerns, and been a part of the decision making process.

To be clear, it is the Association's view that some of its members and other residents also believe that with proper event management, adequate planning and an appropriate venue, this type of event could still be held in the Sounds.

We hope that by making a detailed submission to this Retrospective Resource Consent as a way of voicing the community's concerns, the issues we have highlighted will be on Council records and carefully reviewed should this type of festival be mooted again.

Should this Application proceed to a Hearing, we wish to be heard.

For and on behalf of the
Kenepuru and Central Sounds Residents Association

Signed



Ross Withell

President