

HEARING NOTES

Hearing of Submissions Pursuant to section 49 of the Conservation Act 1987

Milford Dart Limited 'Dart Passage Tunnel' Concession Application March 2012

Background;

The Minister of Conservation's Intention to grant a concession to Milford Dart Limited for the construction and operation of the Dart Passage Tunnel in Mt Aspiring and Fiordland National Parks was notified for public comment on 12 November 2011. 1262 written submissions were received, and 212 people requested to be heard in support of their written submission. Of the 212 people who requested to be heard, 97 people turned up to the hearing. Hearings were spread over 10 days between 12 March 2012 and 23 March 2012.

MDL presented their right of reply on 20 April 2012.

The purpose of hearings was to provide an opportunity for those who wished to present their submission in person, or to clarify their written submission, to speak in person to the representative of the Director General of Conservation.

All written submissions will be taken into account by the Minister of Conservation, regardless if people spoke to their submission in person or not.

The purpose of these hearing notes is to assist the Hearing Chair in preparing a summary of submissions (pursuant to s 49 of the Conservation Act 1987). As such the notes below are not a transcript of the proceedings, they are a relatively informal record of comments made by submitters, questions put to submitters (by the Hearing Chair and/or his assistant) and responses made by submitters.

18 May 2012

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| Monday 12 March 2012 Te Anau Club Inc. |
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Chairperson – Paul Green

Assisted by – Chris Visser and Clare Lenihan (Conservancy Solicitor)

Note Taker – Erin Dunlop

Present from DOC – Sarah Murray, Reg Kemper, Beth Masser

Present from Milford Dart Limited – Michael Sleight, Tom Elworthy

Paul Green Intro 9.08 am:

Introduced Clare and Chris.

Explained hearing rules and process.

Frana Cardno #946 . 9.15am

Rachel Coburn standing in for Frana, expressed apologies and read from written submission

Strongly opposed to application.

Background to their life –World Heritage – Fiordland National Park is significant in terms of UNESCO.

Fiordland National Park Management Plan when under review, did not acknowledge the application.

Disgust at the consultation process around Fiordland National Park Management Plan review.

Significant adverse effects on existing Concessionaries.

The tunnel proposal could have adverse effects on economy – speed up visit.

Southern scenic route being cut short.

Economic implications are outside application considerations but economic effects on existing Concessionaires should be considered by Minister.

Transport to Milford Sound can be reasonably be undertaken in another location – Milford Road [referring to s17U(4) Conservation Act 1987]

Higher tests for structures and facilities in National Parks (National Parks Act).

Why isn't the existing route adequate / reasonable – incomplete analysis of this (By dept and applicant). The Milford road is world class route. Fully serviced transport from Te Anau – 4 hours return. Satisfactory to visitors. Southland Transport Study – independent study. Increased visitor numbers could be catered for through modifying use of the existing Milford Road i.e. park and ride system etc.

Present road is adequate based on feedback from research undertaken – people rated experience 8.9/10. Quality of services – 8.8/10. Rates higher than any other activity in NZ.

There is no evidence that travelling through the tunnel would increase quality of visitor experience. Why would visitors want to travel underground through alpine fault? Does not enhance the enjoyment for users of either National Park.

The avalanche zone on the Milford Road is not avoided by use of tunnel.

Inconsistent with General Policy National Parks. – Alternative Access is already there (section 17U CA)

Part 2 of Submission

Purpose for which land is held under National Parks Act – If coaches cannot use existing roads, alternative means within NP should include freedom of use by other public – this proposal doesn't include freedom of use or enhance access / use of public, therefore the proposal is contrary to the provisions for public access and enjoyment of National Parks.

Fiordland National Park is a World Heritage Area. DOC is obliged to protect overwhelming landscape character/natural heritage. Shorter travel options, engineering excellence not appropriate to replace landscape character or natural heritage.

Homer tunnel constructed prior to Fiordland National Park and World Heritage Area Status.

Manapouri Power Scheme – required separate piece of legislation to go ahead.

Why special allowance for this application?

Tunnelling is equivalent to mining. Proposed tunnelling has similar effects – so again, why can't activity adequately occur outside of the National Park.

Inconsistent with Statutory Plans – General Policy National Parks, National Park Management Plans – not provided for in plan. New roads were not considered appropriate when plans reviewed last.

The tunnel would decrease enjoyment of Milford Road Experience, other Concessionaires, and World Heritage values.

Precedent consultation – Public Conservation Land is managed on on behalf of public. Conservation Management Strategies and National Park Management Plans are prepared through public consultation. They are like a contract between Public and DOC – FNP and MANP plans. If concession granted contrary to plans, sends strong message to public as these plans can be overridden through one application process, and DOC will lose trust (of the) public. This will undermine public trust and enthusiasm to engage in consultation processes in future.

Adverse effects – Minister may decline if insufficient information to assess the effects — or insufficient mitigation measures. Application does not have sufficient information on mitigation / avoidance measures.

Safety plans, construction plans etc being provided after the Concession granted, is insufficient information for Minister to assess.

Final specs and plans still to be provided – where is the full assessment of effects?

Gunn's Camp – would oppose.

Water Effects – taking water from National Park would have potential adverse effects within National Park – report hasn't addressed this.

Lack of concrete information – cannot adequately assess application or mitigation measures i.e. water source (for making concrete) – not known or addressed in report.

Spoil content unknown. Estimated sulphate rich rocks unknown – Acid leacheates could occur which leach into water – unknown.

Spoil dump would need to be managed in perpetuity – is DOC or applicant happy to accept this responsibility? Risk of ongoing to costs to crown.

Safety Risks of proposed tunnel operation and risk to human life during construction. Hollyford portal – rockfall, debris, and instability could increase erosion through construction.

What would happen to waterbodies above portal if fractured?

Independent audited safety plan – this application warrants one as per other concession applications. Construction of tunnel should be declined as safety cannot be adequately assessed due to incomplete information.

Increased use of Milford could displace other users who are already attracted to Milford.

Effects of traffic on Hollyford road existing users – Hollyford is a unique aspect of the park and these users could be displaced. Could destroy the intrinsic values of Hollyford road. Natural values important in Milford road and in Hollyford from visitor feedback.

Questions if effects on Hollyford users has been adequately assessed – minor or temporary effect? 5 years construction phase – delays can be expected because of complexity and weather demands of proposal. 15 years is more likely.

Information available insufficient for adverse effects on natural environment. Application is being granted without Construction plan and this is not consistent with the Act.

Doubts that applicant has skill to carry out activity so will contract in. Applicant does not have investors to do this. Lack of investors, insurance and skill – applicant unable to carry out activity.

Could expose the crown to litigation and risk and ability to protect World Heritage sites and National Park.

Frana seeks that the Decision Maker is aware of the investment risk and provide this risk analysis to the public.

Maintenance requirements for stockpile – who's going to do this. Guarantor? Bond? Ongoing monitoring costs? Tax payers must not be left with clean up bill.

Ability to visit quiet, abundant in bird life and walkers and families. This generation has no right to prevent her grandchildren to enjoy this.

Questions

PG: World Heritage – does Frana see this [proposal] as a threat to WH status or is hers a more general concern?

RC – there's 24 WH sites getting knocked off the list so Frana doesn't want this one knocked off.

PG – Is she suggesting that there aren't concessions of a similar size and structure that are putting sites like these in danger?

RC - Can't answer that.

PG - Area there any other Concessionaires who have supported the proposal?

RC – can't answer. Don't think any are in support of it from what she has asked.

PG - Has Frana got a view if there should be a carrying capacity for Milford?

RC- Through the submission she talks about numbers dropping – economic crisis. 2005 peak – Milford coped admirably. Doesn't seem to be an issue with numbers yet.

Call for DOC and Milford Development Authority and Environment Southland to make

PG – Frana talks about the Restriction on public use – do you acknowledge that similar situation exists i.e. at Deep Cove etc?

RC - You still can use that if you wish. This tunnel is specifically for people involved with this company.

PG – Regarding Frana's strong concerns about Conservation Management Strategy and National Park Management Plans being a contract between DOC and Public etc – legislation provides for discretion of Minister so I was wondering if Frana had a view when a decision maker might make a discretionary call on considering an application in terms of what a CMS or MP states on what a Minister should do?

RC - Those plans are there for a reason and they really area a contract between Public and Doc and would be deflating if all those policies and measures were wiped to shorten a trip from Qtown to Milford is not an adequate reason.

CV - Chris asked about effects on other Concessionaires.

RC - Hollyford track guided walks – Hollyford Independent – Humboldt Falls etc.

CV – I'm aware of the Concessionaires in the area, can you provide info on how this application would impact on these concessionaires?

RC – the Hollyford Portal would destroy the area and the impact the portal would have on the Hollyford Road area would impact on the activities of existing users. Huge amount of concern amongst Concessionaires and existing users.

Venture Southland #838 – Steve Canny 10.15am

Reiterated key points from written submission. Venture Southland's submission has been peer reviewed by Statutory expert – minor amendments to submission.

Venture Southland strongly opposes – wish to see declined.

Background to Venture Southland.

Proposal would impacts on existing use, long term reputational impacts of NZ, long term implications for Southland and Otago Regions.

Economic Effects – Cannot be considered under this part of process, however want to highlight some concerns with existing Concessionaires which have entered into agreements with DOC. Proposal has the potential to undermine those existing contracts between Concessionaires and DOC – appears to have not been any direct consultation with existing Concessionaries.

Decision of Minister re use of alternative utilities outside of National Park – existing Milford Road is a key touring route in NZ and Milford Sound internationally recognised as a destination.

2005 – VS, SRC undertook integrated transport study for Southland. Each of the opportunities being considered at time were subject to a SWAT analysis and received a score for 'most effective' transport option and 'least effective.' MDL project rated very low score for this study. [Evidence in written submission].

Unreasonable for Minister to grant (having regard to) s17U4 CA - activity can be already carried out in existing roading system.

Changes to MANPMP – changed circumstances and new knowledge since 2005. Numbers into Milford Sound decreased since 2005. Park plans were based on significant congestion at the time. Since then the reduction of visitors and the tunnelling itself has been known to be a very high risk activity – rock release, water, cost of drilling and tunnelling huge. The original reason for undertaking this work and current reasons have changed significantly.

Regarding dissatisfaction from visitors – quality of experience from visitors rated very highly for Milford Road and Milford experience. Little desire on part of visitors to spend long distance of travel underground in significantly seismic active area. No apparent significant reason to change the route and to create an underground travel experience – risks are significant.

Business Case – 215 – 220,000 visitors depart from Te Anau – not all depart from Qtown. Regarding visitor trends' are that the Tunnel is not required for all visitors. There is no good business case for the tunnel.

As soon as you change visitor trends and patterns, likely to shorten the duration of stay within NZ – not positive from Tourism NZ perspective.

Little evidence to support the development from business or tourism perspective.

National Parks. No reason why private interest can be served solely for these impacts within the National Park – grave concerns about the precedent created through the granting of such an application - future applications, and public perspective. Integrity of National Park is something we need to protect strongly.

Tunnelling is similar in impact to mining. The residual material left after tunnelling is not dissimilar to the overburden associated with Mining. The potential adverse effects of this residual material, such as the potential for acid leacheates, should have similar mitigation measures proposed to the rehabilitation plans of mining activities.

Grave concerns about Ministers ability to make a decision based on the info provided around activity proposed.

No real way of undertaking activity without drilling and sampling at regular intervals. Seismic drilling and surveys would add info – but no certainty with this exercise.

Huge risk with costs. There is a significant bluff on West side of valley, main issue – creating clogging and congestion of Hollyford River. Chemical makeup of rock material would be monitored and then the applicant would step back – who would adopt this responsibility.

Significant amount of fill and could have significant level of impact on valley itself.

Given public outcry (mining) Schedule 4 lands, are these issues being dealt with in a consistent manner?

Fill, amount of water encountered, striated nature of geology in this area, potential to drain alpine lakes and splinter formations extremely difficult to assess and therefore mitigate. Doubt Ministers ability to make a sound decision due to lack of detail in application.

Release of rock through tunnelling – hydraulic pressure behind rock could be greater than in application.

0.7cu / sec. Transporting water away with this flow would be impossible from his perspective. Mitigation and treatment of these discharges would be impractical and not convinced it is an adequate mitigation measure.

Major concern regarding tunnel – doesn't appear to comply with any international standards – European Tunnelling Standards. This tunnel does not come near. No clarity around amount of electricity required to operate such a tunnel.

5m width tunnel – bus 135mm clearance between sides and bus. In emergency not much space for passengers to get out of bus – fundamental safety issue.

Worst case scenario. Major fire as Mt. Blanc demonstrated. Smoke floats up and asphyxiation occurs. If there is a bus driver could drive in specialist vehicle to pick up injured parties. An employer would not allow an employee to enter a tunnel with a bus on fire. Significant doubt about separately ventilated human refuge areas in tunnel – international standard.

No comprehensive safety plan for these instances, and it seems DOC hasn't required it. Major flaw.

Alignment of tunnel crosses major faults – high probability for significant seismic activity. Unknown risks 1717 last major movement – movement was 8m. 30 years overdue for major shake. These risks unable to be mitigated.

Statutory documents –2011 Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan reviewed, 2007 Fiordland National Park Management Plan, this proposal and others were known to parties and public consultation process – concern around the fact there is no provision for this application in these plans or no mention. If authors knew this was potentially happening why is there no provision in either of these documents?

Minister may decline application where he or she feels info available is insufficient or inadequate – Significant mitigations and safety measures not possible to assess at this point. There is significant risk based on the way this application is couched – to applicant, to crown, to decision maker, to other users of park.

Discussions with individuals who value Hollyford Area and Routeburn Area.

Common discussion points – intrinsic values – isolation, being able to get away from it all. Many international and domestic visitors value that aspect of the Hollyford end.

Concern on those intrinsic values of the Hollyford Road Area.

Backfill and portal adversely impacts on that experience.

Heavy roading to cater for large vehicles would impact on these values.

Observed at Hollyford Road end – potential adverse effects are noise – not dissimilar to Gates of Haast from Brewster. Aircraft movement has an adverse effect already.

Disturbance at portal area would have significant impact.

Changes in vegetation cover, soil disturbance, visual disturbance of airstrip area and erosion.

At Routeburn end – portal not in Front country, it is in Backcountry. Under the Mt Aspiring National Park Management Plan there is no provision for road into Backcountry areas.

Concern around this aspect of application.

These issues are significant.

'If this (the tunnel) is the answer, what is the question?'

Why is this route needed? Is there dissatisfaction with existing service provision and access outside of NP? Is there desire for International and domestic visitors to travel through tunnel? Is there evidence that there is gross dissatisfaction with existing access?

Significant info missing from application and for Minister to consider .

Pyke River, Mount Blanc – people responsible charged with serious criminal charges.
Significantly risky proposal – high probability for disaster.

No need for this proposal to go ahead.

Questions:

PG - Do you (VS) cover also the Routeburn valley?

Steve - No Routeburn is District Lakes.

This is a World Heritage Area – when govt entered into WH Convention / Accord they gave an undertaking to uphold principles. The proposal would have significant impact on users and these principles. The at risk World Heritage sites worldwide are normally in 3rd world countries. As NZ is a developed country, we have a responsibility to lead by example when it comes to protecting World Heritage Areas.

NZ is recognised as a high quality destination, and this application could undermine that status and international reputation from visitor and intergovernmental perspective.

PG - are you suggesting WH status would be affected by tunnel?

Steve - Yes very much so. Unintended consequences of such a project. In Elbe Valley the community wanted a bridge in valley but that was sufficient to have the area deregistered.

PG - Milford Sound – can you clarify the point around visitor patterns to Milford and how proposal could impact on this.

Steve - There is potential to have early arrivals as there is on existing route. Travel patterns 11 – 2.30. 3,500 in 2005 visitors on average. National threshold of 4,000 visitors before looking at provisions for adapting this. Could be relieved through using shoulder times. Pressures aren't there at this point.

PG - Any view of how people could use tunnel one way or two way.

Steve - Doesn't appear to be a profile for such an activity – probably a package sold internationally. Don't want to leak visitors outside of your experience – once you have secured a seat you want to take the return option too, but there is little information to predict at this stage what visitors would do in this scenario.

Te Anau Community Board - #174 11.15am

Alastair Dukes and Rachel Coburn

Rachel read written submission.
Strong objection.

Application is inconsistent with policy around new roads in National Parks and does not increase enjoyment in National Parks. Will establish precedent for activities in National Parks. Not a product – won't be able to sell it. It is a form of infrastructure and needs to be treated this way. Drive to Milford through Eglington is enjoyable and the tunnel would decrease this enjoyment. How do we wish to portray our environment in NZ?

Effects are not considered to be minor. Construction could drag on for 15 years.
Debris, dust, noise all considerable. Mitigation of effects are not reasonable in application. Bus transport significant impact on Hollyford area.

Intrinsic values of Hollyford area – World Heritage Area needs protecting.
Government responsible sends message to World Heritage board how NZ government views our environment.

The proposal would significantly impact on Lake Marion, Key Summit, and Routeburn tracks users.
The Hollyford portal and disposal site would impact on distinctly rare and special habitat.

Pressure on Milford Sound – by time the proposal is built, numbers may have increased again.
Most likely under a different government, limits on number of visitors may be required if congestion occurs.

Trip to Milford Sound can already be shortened from Te Anau. Different pricing for different times – mid day more expensive. People tend to buy more expensive trips [travel agents more likely to sell more expensive trips as they make greater commission].

Existing infrastructure can already transport visitors outside of NP. The application doesn't avoid existing hotspots such as Homer Tunnel.

The promise of shortening trip is not valid argument to grant Concession. There are other options to shorten trip - plane, helicopters, travel from Te Anau.

The Applicant [ref to Mr Elworthy] – one way travel results in 6.5 round trip. MDL would not want to divert customers to competing agencies. People more likely to leave a day earlier –shorter stay.

Lack of crucial information in application. DOC should only grant 15 year investigation period so as to supply public and DOC with relevant information.
Mount Blanc e.g.

Unreasonable assessment for size and scale of application – safety. NZ cannot afford another disaster.

Real threat of fire, seismic activity, power generation, hydrocarbon and tunnel runoff, hypnotic effect on drivers, breakdowns and accidents, international requirements for alternative access for safety, impact on surrounding areas for spill and construction impact.

Tight space for buses to operate in. Isolated. Pressure on ambulance and emergency services [which are remote].
Sewerage and runoff disposal.

Will consent be sold off to foreign hands? MDL do not build – will probably sell overseas.
Risk for World Heritage Area.

Proposal should be declined – inconsistent with purpose for which land is held.

Suggest 15 year investigation period to gather further information so public can submit on full details of proposal.

Questions:

PG – clarified overseas investment not consideration of Minister of Conservation.
Can you expand on what impacts would be on other walkers – lake Marion etc.

RC- Construction phase – large trucks, dust, debris, light pollution, crowding on specific environment around there. Rumbling of buses.

SDC - #823 Wayne Heerdeegan 11.22am

Acknowledged many parts already covered by Venture Southland.

Overview of role of SDC;SDC believe it important for community to consider the matters relevant to themselves. Council takes wider view – District perspective of application. Major concerns of council are roading, civil defence.

From the perspective of a regulatory authority – SDC appalled at extent of information required by applicant, which is broad and unspecific. In comparison – SDC have applied to the Department for a concession for a Mountain Bike Track and has had to specify the exact route.

Key principle – fairness of equal treatment under the law. Not just NP but across whole country. Should be required to provide same levels of info. Substantial breach of process and fairness under the law.

Roading authority – broad concerns on effects of roading network. Safety concerns – civil defence – it will be Southlanders dealing with any mess associated with Tunnel. Safety not addressed through proposal.

Effects of tunnel – doesn't put people in place in the wilderness. National Parks are there for people who hold special the aspect of Wilderness, and people can experience the National Park – the tunnel is a long dark hole. No placing of people into the Wilderness in this application.

Inconsistent with Purpose for National Park.

Strong level of support for this application to be declined.

Questions

PG – You talk about an inconsistent approach with this application – can you clarify what you are talking about.

WH- As applicant for other applications – level of detail of track, we down to GPS located every rock, moss, stream gully, bird nesting site within 5m max distance. This application has a broad massive deviation possible '*this tunnel could go anywhere*'

PG - Tunnel – what role does council have with approving the tunnel and what standards do they use?

WH – Resource consent will be required, SDC would have a conflict of interest, commissioner would be involved. SDC is roading authority so traffic connecting onto SDC road network, which is already stretched in terms of crown revenue. Would have to potentially widen road – no

consideration of this in application and quite aware the tunnel could affect the pressures on this roading network.

Southland Conservation Board - Rudy Ver Plancke 12.45pm

The Southland Conservation Board recommends this application for a Concession is declined. *"Goes against Conservation Act"*.

There are alternative routes into Milford Sound, and that is main objective for the application. To shorten the route there is alternative route by air.

Impact of other visitors from Hollyford Valley – Gunn's Camp – no mitigation for Gunn's.

Closure of airstrip for 2 years. What is going to happen to this. Used quite often by hunters, whitebaiters etc.

Noise – Construction noise up to 4.5 years. Hard to mitigate that level of noise.
Operational – buses, more traffic, not possible to mitigate that noise level.
Noise level spoils purity of National Park.

In a National Park the only thing you should hear is natural – wind, birds etc not digging tunnels for 4.5 years.

Purity of Hollyford River – Leaching, groundwater and runoff water – the application hasn't got mitigation measures for this either. No direct plan for safety in the tunnel. What happens if project falls over – big hole in mountain?

Questions:

PG - In regards to use of Milford Sound – does Cons Board have a view on capacity issues at Milford Sound?

RvP - No we haven't

PG - Has board had any discussion with NZCA?

RvP - Not able to comment on that.

Grant and Rachel Coburn (Personal Submission). #1067 12.54pm

We farm on leasehold property and have family history around construction of the Milford Road. Opposed to application.

General Policy for National Parks states: *"National Parks held for intrinsic worth...nature's terms"*
This quote outlines where we coming from. Shouldn't be up to any government's whim. Economic climate should not determine what happens in National Parks.

Shortening the trip from Queenstown to Milford is the main objective of application.
Not a valid argument to substantiate / justify the application.

Mitigation not seriously considered nor is there adequate information. Habitats destroyed, infrastructure would impact area for a very long time.

EG the application talks about relocating bats – but you can't relocate bats.

Inconsistent with plans and policies.

Not a product, it's a piece of infrastructures which is already catered for.

Shortening trip: why not start from Te Anau where services already exist. Park and ride option is ready to go when pressure demands it.

In the likely event of the venture defaulting, tax payers likely to be liable to clean up mess.

The risks should be fully assessed to assess the applicant's ability to carry out activity.

Milford Road was put in prior to National Park and World Heritage Area being gazetted.

This is sufficient for current demands. Another tunnel is not considered necessary.

Potential for precedent setting.

Involved with 4th generation farming. We are looking at leaving land better than how they started with it. Should we be looking at economic gain at expense of intrinsic values? No.

Slackening of rules in order for economic benefit. Does this mean we should reduce our values around environmental management in order to receive more economic benefit?

This application should be put on hold until all impacts are clearly outlined for the general public.

Questions

PG – Refer to General Policy National Parks quote. What circumstance do you think infrastructure might be permitted? You say modification and control should be minimal; do you think there are any cases where infrastructure might be appropriate or are you saying there shouldn't be anything?

RC - If you are to take due process for its value we have a National Park Management Plan in place to protect National Parks and I have faith in those processes, it's not just my personal point of view. We have a tourism industry happening and it is not necessary in this case to have a new piece of infrastructure. It is not required – we have good infrastructure in place now.

Spinoffs from one arterial route – could be more effects coming off this one tunnel. There is enough infrastructure already so we don't need anymore.

Kate and Steve Norris - #314 1.34pm

Steve spoke.

Read first 2 paragraphs from submission.

Our business is Fiordland Trips and Tramps – we take people through to Milford Sound.

We are owner operators, guided day walks, small group excursions in Milford Sound.

Hollyford Valley Recreational users. Interpret flora, fauna and natural history.

Strongly believe construction phase and end result would impact on Lake Marion walk, Hollyford Valley and significant natural values would be compromised.

Application inconsistent to the purpose for which the land is held.
Recommend a decline.

We use a transit van and hiace van. Ability to be flexible. Utilise Hollyford Valley 8/10 trips. Turning a section of that road into seal would impact on those trips. A lot of clients travel to Key Summit which looks into Hollyford and could see the traffic – having an impact on client's enjoyment of day out. Would have to change our advertising and change visitor expectations if this tunnel went ahead.

Questions:

PG - How many trips / year into Hollyford.

SN - Every day but xmas day. Take to Hollyford camp. 20/year there won't be any clients. At least 300/ year would travel to lower Hollyford Valley.

CV - What do you do in Hollyford?

SN - Marion Gantry, Gunn's Camp, Humboldt Falls, Pickup and drop-offs Hollyford track.

Key Summit used by 12-1500 people / year - not many on Deadmans track.
Occasional pickups off Routeburn track in winter months.

CV - Do you get many people off Routeburn coming down Deadmans?

Steve - Count it on one hand – usually only in winter, and would only do it once!

Hearing closed 1.42pm

Paul Green / Chris Visser / Erin Dunlop (notes)

Intro - Paul Green 9.10am

Introduced schedule and explained changes in programme.

David Hughes #1181 9.30am

Listening to National News last night – what I'm going to say you've heard before.

Transgression on World Heritage status is my main concern.
Very familiar with Fiordland - Milford journey.

Remember in 1990 I was in Milford with a load of passengers on bus, and we just heard Milford just became World Heritage site. Bus gave round of applause at protection of this area in perpetuity.

I have faith in World Heritage philosophy. I wonder if UNESCO has been made aware of this proposal to interfere with this World Heritage Area.
It has become apparent that while UNESCO gives the World Heritage status to our area, they also have the option to take it away. They have done this in Dresden, Germany after a bridge was built in World Heritage Area, and the World Heritage status was revoked.

If proposal was to go ahead, where is the teeth in the World Heritage concept? There is no gain in a proposal like this for NZ, only a cost in my view.

The respect people have world wide for the preservation of the scenery, conservation and values, is what brings people to this area.

Dollar driven individuals and entities from points north are benefiting from this.

NZ is globally acknowledged as world leaders in conservation of world's precious dwindling national treasures.

Asks that the Department thinks about these concepts. He can't believe that it's gone this far. That they have to have a public hearing to explain all this. Should be a blanket NO right at the outset.

'The World Heritage Area – leave it alone. Ok?'

Questions:

PG: You operate a business taking people into the park, and you are using infrastructure to do that. How much infrastructure in the WH site do you think is appropriate to enable people to enjoy Fiordland.

DH: All the infrastructure that's needed for a much larger number of people that are currently doing the journey to MS is already in place. Scheduling and timetabling has smoothed the flow of people during the day particularly around midday.

Now with the number of people going in their today, there is sufficient infrastructure. If it's not broken don't fix it.

PG:What would you suggest if infrastructure was used to its max and became overcrowded.

DH:I've travelled myself to other places overseas and can see that Milford Sound can be quite overcrowded. It can be sorted through timetabling and has been improved. I can't see how this can be improved by a tunnel bringing more people into Milford Sound and putting more pressure on Milford Sound.

CV:What does your business do into Milford Sound?

DH:We initiated the company Trips and Tramps, I am now semi retired.

Sarah McCrum #384 **9.43am**

Speaking in addition to her written submission.

Integrity – this is a very important concept. There are important ramifications if we lose this, and we are at risk of losing this. Losing it could have a huge impact for NZ.

It is DOC's responsibility protect and preserve integrity. This means the wholeness of place, purity of place, essence of place, moral and spiritual word (integrity) in terms of making decisions.

To preserve the integrity of the World Heritage Area, which is described on DOC's website and World Heritage website, this is one of the most outstanding World Heritage Area's in the whole world.

I have been to many places world wide, but the effect Fiordland has on you is completely different to any where else in the world. It's something to do with the air, the scenery, it refers to Gondwanaland and it's quite extraordinary.

It's extremely significant that it has deep roots that go beyond human civilization and it is more powerful than all those other extraordinarily beautiful places.

NZ is viewed world wide as the pinnacle of pure nature. So many people say '*one day I am going to NZ*'. Of all places that is calling them the pinnacle is Fiordland.

It has global significance. As a natural significance, not cultural.

How do you preserve the integrity of that?

As human beings we want to be able to share that, and not close off to public.

Integrity can be measured by how much you do not feel human impact in a place even when human impact is there. You can still get that feeling in the Milford area, you feel that you are close to places where you are very close to wilderness.

This tunnel is totally and utterly unnecessary. The trip by road is outstanding by world standards. All the way from Queenstown to Milford Sound. Completely outstanding country.

The tunnel shows off engineering prowess, but to build the tunnel to create a shorter route where the trip there is part of the experience is unnecessary.

There is a 90% satisfaction rate from passengers on the trip from Queenstown to Milford Sound.

There is no way we are preserving integrity of World Heritage Area by constructing a tunnel through it. You don't expect to see that level of engineering in a World Heritage Area.

Under the Conservation Act and National Parks Act no new roads need to be built. If activity can be carried out elsewhere, it should be.

The tunnel does not add to recreational value of the trip as it reduces the experience to a dark tunnel. It reduces the time to travel, but you can stay the night in Te Anau to reduce travel time. Nobody needs to 'suffer' a long trip, there are other options already.

By granting this Concession, the integrity of World Heritage Area is damaged beyond repair. The integrity of the Law is broken in several places.

From time to time Law needs to be stretched to unfetter the Minister. But to stretch it so much would fetter the Minister herself.

I live at Takaro Lodge, and visitors would be scared of DOC, as DOC would tell people off for cutting down trees etc. In 1999 I was introduced to the respect DOC had for the environment.

That has changed now and I am so shocked that this proposal has gone this far, and a hearing is needed to speak for the environment that you (DOC) have a mandate to protect.

We need to protect the integrity of the World Heritage Area.

I understand how difficult it is to fund a decreasing budget and struggling Department, but when you start to go down the route of selling out your integrity in order to get cash you are on the beginning of a downward slope of completely losing what you are all about. Don't lose site of the mission / vision. You can lose business if integrity goes. Work doesn't have value anymore.

The future of NZ depends on the preservation of this integrity in a world that is under enormous pressure financially, this is one of the few places we can preserve.

We are going to be surrounded by technology soon. We need to have these places as sanctuaries.

There is no need to sell our soul. The integrity of the World Heritage Area, the Law, the Government and DOC would be severely compromised if this goes ahead and she thinks DOC would seriously regret it.

No questions.

Lance Dalley / Ruth Shaw #17310am.

We are your employer, and I am disgusted to think you could make this decision without actually asking the people who employ you and pay you every week.

4 years ago at meeting with DOC, SDC, ES we talked about integrated management of Fiordland and National Parks. It was discussed that it was important that when making decisions we would have to look at the broad picture and not just the environment.

We are talking about fragmentation of visual effects, peace and serenity, loss of spiritual effects that Fiordland has on the world.

We can't talk about the buses, because it is the very essence of the proposal that is against the integrity of the National Park.

She showed the book "Hotspots Revisited" and explained that since 2004, the 38 hotspots described in this book have become so degraded since this book was published that they are no longer relevant.

The book described NZ is the only hotspot that the entire land is seen as a hotspot (one of 38 in the world). It is one of the most extensive podocarp forests on earth.

Since this book published, we can no longer write this.

The Government of the day states that what we need is more up to date and easier ways to access our beautiful areas.

National Parks overseas are managed well, and we are behind the 8 ball. Denali National Park they organise school buses to go in and you are not allowed to take your own vehicle.

More buses is not the answer here. We already have infrastructure to handle more people. We need to look at ways of improving the existing infrastructure.

In the report, the conditions DOC are recommending are such that while the bats were away, they would remove the trees and catch the bats and relocate them. Imagine if you went on holiday and when you came back your home had been destroyed and then you get told to go to a new place.

I go into forest just because I love it. If a person goes into the forest as a speculator he will come up with a scheme to make money, enterprise.

It's time we looked past this. DOC is losing money and Government is stripping resources you (DOC) require.

If it's of natural significance we should be protecting it.

It's time you put your job on the line, and stand up for the environment. If I was your employer I would have sacked you by now.

In any job description at DOC it states the applicant must demonstrate a love of environment and a passion to protect the environment. Now you are at risk of losing your job if you stand up for this. You need to stand up for what you believe in.

The report states that many of the effects are considered as minor. I don't think any of them are minor.

They are going to address dust problem by using water. Dust travels 15km from site so using water to do this seems impractical with a 15km radius.

This effect is not minor.

The use of the words “probably”, “maybe”, “potentially” are not strong enough. We need to be gutsy and say this is not on.

No Questions.

Mr Paul Spicer # 10.41

Read from written notes provided.

In support of granting Concession

Questions:

PG: In your comment about the bus trip, and being rushed – what’s your experience with travelling - do buses usually use tight timetabling and rushing?

PS:I haven’t had much experience travelling in buses so couldn’t answer that.

PG:Do you think the tunnel would have an impact on your experience of tramping in the Routeburn area?

PS:I have thought about that and no I don’t think it would.

Martin Silva #126 1.05pm

Travel Agent bringing people from overseas to NZ – Czech and Slovakia for 8 years. Loves tramping, and chooses this area to do this. Used to live in Glenorchy.

I appreciate beautiful NZ backcountry virgin forest – the reason for coming to NZ in the first place. NZ is a beautiful place to be, not to be rich, but to be.

My experience of our clients – they would say the same – they appreciate they can see beautiful country side, nearly untouched places which are possibly one of few in the world especially of this type. They are usually travelling all over the world, so have comparisons.

Many of them get taken to Gunn’s Camp, and like to be away from the main road to enjoy the forest as it used to be, the mountains as it used to be. Here is one of the few places you can see and experience it on your own.

We don’t have to have any concrete, steel structures etc.

Here all the main roads built can easily accommodate the number of people, so why do we need to make noise in the valley. When you stand on the Routeburn you can hear helicopters already down in the valley. Can you imagine the buses noise driving up and down the Hollyford while you are on the Routeburn?

The reason why the International visitors come here, in Europe you have beautiful Alps, but at 3000m you get lovely restaurant. But in NZ there are not any restaurants or infrastructure like this that is why they choose it. NZ and South America is becoming more commercial but still in some places they are more virgin than other places in the world. Milford is one of the last easily accessible areas to view this virgin land.

Why do we need such a tunnel? I don't think about earthquake etc, but people who appreciate it, they will still come here for a couple of days and they don't need to rush it in one day. People fall asleep on coaches driving down the West Coast or anywhere – these people are a type of person that fall asleep anywhere.

By shortening the trip, this is not going to solve the problem of people falling asleep.

In general, my worry that it is beginning to get too commercialised in NZ. I just came by bus with clients and they commented that it is beginning to be too commercial.

Conservation is about saving the place for future people, not about exploiting it on behalf of capital businesses. I am against the tunnel as it is a destruction of what we have here now.

Questions:

PG:How many visitors a year do you arrange travel for here in Fiordland?

MS: 3-400 people /year.

PG:In your view, how much roading would they consider is enough for them to enjoy Fiordland?

MS:What you got. They don't have already enough time to enjoy all the infrastructure available. Average tourists are here for 3-4 weeks, so if they travel they can stay here say 1-2 days. Trouble is there is a general understanding of NZ that you can see NZ in 2 weeks. That is nonsense. Travel agents tend to arrange short trips.

When people come here by travel agent they don't have an idea of scale of size of NZ. We need to encourage tourists to stay in NZ longer – not to shorten the trip.

As a travel agent, I get commission for every client put on a coach. Travel agents don't make commission on free activities, so tend not to encourage them. Travel agents will always focus on Queenstown, because that's where there are expensive products to sell.

The tunnel would not solve the issue of increasing the stay of tourists in the area.

Paul and Lynley King #221 1.18pm

Lynley presented her submission.

Played a bird song (Kaka) with a Dictaphone. Working surveying Rock wrens in the Darran Mountains.

We are speaking for the birds because they can't speak for themselves. I am a teacher and currently on a fellowship working with Conservation in this area.

Against proposal.

Husband was a geologist – mapping fault lines. Our daughter is coming back to Darran Mountains for climbing with friends. The World Heritage Area is special to her. Son wants to go climbing in Darran Mountains and is right into photography. He goes down to Hollyford to take photos of natural world. He also loves Kayaking down Hollyford.

The Hollyford area is special to me. I have recovered from Cancer and Chemo – visual memory of this place got me through.

Science teacher at school she covers ecosystems – they might be affected through this proposal.

Read the Oxford Dictionary definition of Conservation.

Applicants were not well taught about importance of doing their homework to understand their facts. The plate boundary – alpine fault is only a small distance away from the proposed tunnel route – Martins Bay through Hollyford.

This proposal is like a selling of assets. Assets within NP and there are no benefits to people through this. Tunnel is not necessary – already access through public roads. Tunnel is inconsistent with National Parks Act and Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan. Only in the case if enhancing visitor experience, should it be granted.

Just spent 2 weeks above Homer portal. At times couldn't hear the birds for her survey from the noise of the tunnel.

She looked down at queues of traffic lining up one time there were 9 buses. Noise is quite intrusive. Helicopters were also picking up and flying around Gertrude Saddle. Tunnels also attract other types of activity, it isn't just the buses going through.

Read an excerpt from "Landmarks" about Hollyford being the last quiet place on earth.

Finished with sound of Kakariki in Hollyford.

Questions:

PG: You say in submission that tunnel could increase the number of buses at Milford can you explain why you are saying that?

Lynley: Maybe there might be more coming from Queenstown. I think this could only happen if flights to Queenstown also increase. So this could happen further down the line. More flights from CHCH or Auckland could happen.

CV: Are you thinking that use will increase because of the tunnel or that it will increase regardless?

Lynley: I think the tunnel, Milford is one to tick of the list, so more people will do it if it will be a quicker trip and they have time pressures. Travellers tend to be under tight time pressures.

Fiordland Tramping and Outdoor Recreation Club #281 Andrew – 1.30pm

President of Tramping Club.

Based in Te Anau – the objective of the club is to promote and facilitate tramping and outdoor recreation for their members. Most members are from Fiordland Area but some are from overseas. Affiliated with FMC.

The club objects to intention to grant the Concession application to MDL.

The club has concerns with effects on its members within the National Park. The Hollyford Portal, and Routeburn Portal would increase traffic. This would directly affect their members. Noise pollution during construction – drilling, blasting, accommodation, power generation. Post construction – increased traffic for large parts of days. The nature of the terrain will amplify noise and ruin experience of trampers in the area of Routeburn and Darran Mtns.

It is not possible to mitigate these effects on our members.

Visual effects within the Hollyford. Airstrip raised, widened – will increase in visibility in valley. This is not discussed in Officers report. Light pollution – present in both valleys during and after construction. Viewing the night sky will be degraded, and is a big part of tramping experience.

Flora and fauna living in the natural parks will be affected by construction and after construction. A large part of tramping experience is interaction with the Fauna and Flora.

Construction traffic, access to National Park via the Routeburn shelter and road will be affected. Increase in buses between Dart Bridge and Routeburn will restrict access for many years to come.

Affects on local users of the area have not been taken into account in Officers Report.

It states most users of Routeburn Track are not NZ users. DOC has little reliable info on local use of the parks. Our club members use Routeburn and Hollyford tracks and venture further to side of the track.

17W CA – [Quotes] Where conservation management strategy or plan has been established.... Concession shall not be granted unless a concession where in granting consistent...

We as a club support the view of the Conservation Board that this application is outside of the provisions of the Conservation Act and National Parks Act.

Regarding 17U(4)(a) – *Application shall not be granted if structure or facility could reasonably be located....*

We believe the purpose of this tunnel is to facilitate travel to Milford Sound. There is already access to MS via alternative road. There is no need for the tunnel as there is already access.

I moved here from Europe to escape what they have done to the Environment.
I am very sad to be here reading this to you today.

Questions:

PG: Visual effects – was your main concern for people who are travelling in the Hollyford or from people looking from Routeburn or other places?

Andrew: I can only answer for the club. You could see the entrance from Pop Andrew etc. If anyone is tramping in the area, it will affect their experience of the area.

PG: Access – can you explain how the problem in the Routeburn would restrict access?

Andrew: Increasing traffic in the areas, therefore you are restricting the access of my members when buses are ferrying people in and out of the tunnel. Volume of traffic which is currently quiet, would be busier – i.e. parking etc would be tighter.

Visual effects – the existing airstrip and the degree of visibility from surrounding areas.

I'm a kayaker and kayak the Hollyford quite often and go past the airstrip. The proposal to raise the airstrip a number of metres and will be able to see it. You shouldn't be able to see the airstrip from the river.

Members of the tramping club walking the tracks – Marion Lake, Routeburn, looking down at the moment at a green area with a small runway [with developments at the airstrip], would then be looking down at a deserted airport.

Alan Mark #84 1.41pm

Personal submission and slight expansion of written submission.

Reading from handout provided (attached as appendix).

Alan Mark suggested than any compensation projects such as pest control should be planned in perpetuity, not just 5 years as this would be short lived. However even in perpetuity, such a project should not be considered in the decision making process as compensation.

Questions:

PG: As a member of Conservation Authority and Conservation Board, what role do you think they (NZCA) plays in this proposal.

AM: It is my understanding that they have some reservations but their hesitations are reflective of the future rather than the past. But it would seem that the principles of National Parks Act and the Conservation Act are to protect the natural environment in perpetuity and that visitors are there to enjoy the area without impacting directly on the environment.

PG: Given NZCA haven't made a submission, what role do you think they should have?

AM:NZCA would have made a conscious effort not to submit, but the majority would be adamantly opposed.

Wendy and Tom Holder #1000 1.55pm

Wendy speaking on behalf of her and husband. Read out their written submission.

We have no business interests at either side of tunnel. Our voice comes from own personal experience within the National Park.

In opposition of application.

FNP – provides opportunity to access natural environment and to enjoy remoteness.

My first experience of Hollyford was hunting and camping with Dad as a kid. It is the pristine nature, quiet which draws me back time and time again. We are as New Zealanders – the guardians of this jewel.

DOC as the guardians and we are relying on you to protect this.

Constructing 2 concrete portals and tunnel is not aligned with the purpose of the National Park. (She read out the Purpose for which Land is Held for National Parks).

Noise pollution – from construction, then operation of buses will ruin the lower Hollyford Valley for us and generations to come. A man made portal, buses and spoil risk damaging wildlife, plants and waterways.

What part does this proposal play in “preserving in perpetuity” the natural environment in the Hollyford Valley?

We currently have a road providing access to the National Park and Milford Sound. If visitors are in a hurry, they can fly or cruise. Regarding the Conservation Act 1987 Section 17U(4)(a)– “*Minister shall not grant structure or facility....*” Why does DOC consider the existing road could not be used? It is currently used, and is adequate.

Pumping through more tourists, by an exclusive company possibly sold to overseas investors, is not in keeping with the NP act or vision of New Zealanders.

Please tell Tom and I and provide an explanation to our children why you would provide for a private company to construct and run a private venture such as this in the National Park. Why enable tourists who are not prepared to allow an extra day to travel to Milford Sound via the road to get there faster?

Congestion in Milford Sound will only grow if more tourists are pushed through via the tunnel. This would have flow on effects on Wildlife. Commercial operators will then suffer, as tourists redirect themselves to quieter areas.

Lower Hollyford and Routeburn road areas would be adversely affected.

In a submission we wrote to Environment Southland regarding the taking of water and effluent by dairy farmers, there was no concern back then about the effects of dairying on our natural waterways. But now in Southland we have serious adverse effects of dairy farming.

Now these impacts are made, and can't turn back the clock.

Protect the environment for future generations.

Questions:

PG: In your view, how do you know when you have enough infrastructure at current time? How do you know when what's provided is enough?

WH: There is enough now having a road providing access to Milford Sound. And that is the purpose of the tunnel.

Before I could walk we were going into Hollyford where dad would hunt, mum would go fishing. Since then we've gone back 6 times already this year, tramping, taking children through there. Our children bring their friends back into the area.

They camp up the Hollyford. They stay in DOC huts and sometimes they camp.

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| 14 March 2012 Te Anau Club Inc |
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Paul Green / Chris Visser / Erin Dunlop (notes)

Wayne Duffy #933 12.00pm

The letter DOC sent out told us we could only talk about the tunnel and not about effects on Glenorchy

Paul: Yes that's correct

In Opposition.

I reside in Invercargill and spent 30 years hunting, jet boating, tramping in the Dart and Hollyford areas. These areas have clean rivers, tranquil setting, and I feel privileged to experience and to share with kids etc, and future generations without having adverse effects on the area.

The proposal will have huge effects on Gunn's Camp.

Jet boaters and hunters use lower Hollyford Road. Extra bus traffic will hinder that experience. 30 truck movements per day during construction will hinder movements of other users.

Actual construction at portals, where possible leachate from settling ponds could occur into Hollyford and Routeburn. High rainfalls – what if ponds were breached – no mention in report.

Where does power supply come from to supply the generators and Tunnel Boring Machine? Cost for running this for duration of the project?

Routeburn – World Heritage Track. Tunnel could damage this reputation. I walked track 4 times, with tunnel the integrity of the track would be lost knowing there is a tunnel underneath.

Based from my experience as an engineering supply contractor – I was involved in the Manapouri project. MDL has underestimated project, and it could fail and result in an environmental catastrophe. The project is similar in scale to the Manapouri tunnel.

Problems include rock instability through fault lines – tunnel sets, concrete for extra reinforcement. Huge pumps needed. Large seams of granite. Harder drilling gear, how to maintain stability for public access once constructed.

These things are overlooked.

A National Park is supposed to prevent such projects to occur. I'm surprised it has got this far.

In summary – normally I'm in favour of development which is directly linked to my employment as an engineer. However there needs to be a balance between National Park, World Heritage Area preservation and development and this area is particularly protected. If this gets the green light, then where would it end? It would make sense for another entrepreneur to build a road from Haast to Gunn's Camp and the Monorail to go ahead.

Questions:

PG: You talked about 'Intellectual knowledge' i.e. just knowing something exists has an effect – explain an example where you have been impacted similar sense?

WD: As a manmade project close to NP, not so much, but as I said, these places whether it be Milford Sound, Routeburn, wherever away from civilisation, knowing there is a tunnel right close to you, you've lost the sense of remoteness.

PG: At Wilmot Pass – do you feel impacted because of the Manapouri Tailrace?

WD: That road and tunnel was put in for a reason and it wouldn't be used to the same extent as this would be used. It is more of an access requirement rather than a tourism thing. Even with bus limits, what's to say this wouldn't increase?

CV: You say you are a jet boat user – can you tell me a bit more about this?

WD: We go down river hunting and recreational.

CV: Can you expand your point in relation to the tunnel limiting Jet boat access?

WD: With amount of excess traffic on road this may hinder the flow of traffic for private users.

Dave Kennedy #956 12.10pm

Written notes provided – attached as appendix.

Philosophies and priorities that concern me about the process, and the way DOC is managed at the moment. I am the Green Party spokes person for Invercargill and Southland electorates. I am on the Mountain Safety Council, Alpine rescue squad, tramped and climbed for 40 years around Milford area. I want my children to explore this area as I did.

1987 DOC was created with the intention that nature was to be protected for it's own sake for future generations to enjoy. Now DOC is driven by economic return. It seems that advocating for tourism and economic benefits is overriding the mandate to protect the natural environment.

To let this go ahead without sufficient info – why preferential treatment.

The tunnel would leave nothing positive for existing users of area – the changes wouldn't support the reasons why people visit this area.

Progress should occur in an inclusive way, not specific to a small percentage of people.

Practicalities of building tunnel seem to be understated. Aggregate crushing and screening plant would have a major effect, for example where is the material to come from?

Bond – history shows inadequacies of this as mitigation could be an ongoing requirement and bond doesn't always work.

Current distances to Milford are not unreasonable and people need to realise we are lucky.

World Heritage Area – outstanding universal value. National Parks Act – Purpose of National Parks read out.

How can a tunnel benefitting a few people be consistent with this description? How can all the effects be considered as minor – discharge into streams, processing plant, destruction of flora and fauna and impact on existing users?

No Questions.

Helen and Eddie McKenzie #1178 12.16pm

Eddie presented submission.

Come from Invercargill – I spend a bit of time in Hollyford and Routeburn for recreational purposes. I'm not that green, I have to use a mechanical means for getting around (wheelchair). I am speaking to my concerns on behalf of my wife Helen, who does a bit of tramping around the areas.

Removal of vegetation in lower Hollyford area and significant fill coming out of tunnel is going to create a mountain of spoil. The DOC report says this is a relatively minor effect, which is probably minor compared with Fiordland National Park but on it's own is a huge amount of material to be moved and the effects of this on wildlife will be more than minor.

Construction noise and vibration will be significant with all the power coming from Hollyford side – diesel plant, maintenance workshop, community will be significant.

Planner (report) has said there have been no acoustic studies done on it (the application) and that the wildlife will get used to it.

What about the trampers at Howden Hut, and tramping along the track having to listen to this 24/7?

I don't believe the noise and vibration coming from this area are minor – the noise won't go away, because even a helicopter travelling along the valley gives off a significant noise.

The effects on Fiordland National Park of feeding that diesel generator – amount of diesel and other hazardous materials will be going to the site i.e. concrete which could create a significant problem in the park.

Human waste needs to be taken out etc.

In the report lower Hollyford and Routeburn roads were not considered, but to build the tunnel, both roads will need to be widened to account for this amount of bus traffic – heavy traffic will put pressure on roads.

8,500ha² of bush gets larger when you consider the effects of the increase in footprint of roads. So actual effected footprint is larger than what is considered in report.

The airstrip is used for recreational purposes – is this going to be more costs to individuals having to go to Milford or what? No assessment of effects on this aspect.

Conflict at this point – how will you control traffic going past construction site, conflict between recreational users and construction vehicles?

All the environmental effects are said to be temporary in report, but in positive terms for development. I believe the National Park is there for New Zealanders to enjoy recreationally – how many New Zealanders will get benefit from this tunnel???

Extend power from Glenorchy to Routeburn to service ventilation ducts etc, so power lines running through park – unless they are underground – potential effects of those for lightning strikes, fires etc? Increased footprint?

Biggest effect on Recreational users such as us will during and after construction. It is going to have an effect on the roads for those recreational users as well at both ends.

It's going to have a huge significance for those recreational users. The Hollyford might not be classified as 'Wilderness' but to me, and many other people it is. *"It's wilderness to me"*.

Questions

PG:

Recreational use – airstrips etc. Can you see in the future there needs to be more or that there should never be any more facilities for recreational users in Fiordland?

Eddie:

Recreational facilities in NZ are for kiwis and overseas visitors. The key issue here is that the tunnel is about shifting people through to Milford a lot quicker and out quicker.

People travelling along Eglington get to see more beauty, and this would be lost with the tunnel.

PC Taylor 1.30pm

Tunnel adds very little new to the Fiordland National Park. It reduces the time to get to Milford but does not add in any way to a new experience in the National Park.

Wilderness values – At Knobs Flat I met some Europeans and they were blown away that there was no habitation in Fiordland. This is quite rare in the world.

This project comes out into the Hollyford Valley. It's Front country in terms of the Hollyford. However it's remote, it's the end of the road, end of NZ, end of the planet.

Beyond that the Pyke, Red hills, Cascade. This is just an incremental degradation of the remoteness.

Use of the tunnel might be expanded to serve business in Milford i.e. low loaders. Campervans on low loader into the tunnel to extend the original intent of the Concession Activity. Significantly upping the ante in the backcountry.

DOC can't concern themselves with the road, but every submitter would have concerns around what happens either side of the road. People are going down the Hollyford road to access the National Park.

Europeans are very happy to know that the wilderness exists, even if they aren't actually going to go there.

Portal in hillside – existence value is going to depreciate the remote values in the valley and further back.

Airstrip – double edge sword. I'm a pilot enjoy flying in remote country. Tunnel might enhance airstrip, at the moment it it's pretty threatened by river. Could improve viability of airfield, but it would be a different recreational experience for recreational pilots.

The remote values that are at the Hollyford valley and beyond are quite important. Jet boats and air access provide access to the more remote places.

If you put in a highway that is going to take away from the experience of those people.

Protects airfield, again, but degrades the experience of people visiting in that valley.

Milford to Haast – then you have a loop. This tunnel the thin edge of the wedge of this loop? There is potential to further threaten the remote values beyond in the Pyke Cascade area through those proposals.

In terms of road itself and Gunn's Camp, construction will have major short term effect – will affect guests. Not sure about construction workers. In the long term – Gunn's will be influenced by the tunnel and traffic coming through.

No talk in the report about how access into the tunnel will be controlled.

I wouldn't want to leave it up to the Gods to look after this end of the tunnel. Camera could work? But the presence of the tunnel will change use in ways that the company may not be able to see.

To the detriment of this backcountry remote feeling that the Hollyford gives to me and others that use this area.

Questions:

PG: Airstrip and Jet Boating experience and the tunnel's influence on those – what influence do you think it will have on those, considering the number and type of person carrying out those activities?

PC: It's a different experience. Jet boater – take boat on low loader from Queenstown through to Hollyford in order to enable more Jet Boating to take place in Hollyford.

Takes away from that remote feeling. Road will harden up to put more people in there.

Glenys Dickson #991 1.44pm

Legislative Process – add to submission.

Unacceptable that DOC less than halfway through a Fiordland National Park Management Plan agreed to consent to the MDL proposal.

I am a ex member Conservation Board– have important role in consultation and putting together these plans. The plan review had very high stakeholder interested. 31 days of hearings, over 2000 submissions were heard. Many resources were involved in writing the plan to plan how in next 10 years on how the land would be managed.

Quotes Section 1.2.3 – of Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan.

Reading the first page and final page, yet the content has been unobserved by the people processing the Concessions.

The trip to Fiordland National Park is about the quiet, intrinsic values.

Part 5 – Visitor Management Fiordland National Park Management Plan quoted. Is there an existing road outside of Fiordland National Park.

In Front country setting (quote from Fiordland National Park Management Plan), DOC is to continue to work with Tourism Operators to find ways to facilitate visitor flows during the day to manage effects...

Section 6 Fiordland National Park Management Plan also quoted.

Have these options been fully invested? I don't believe that they have today. Concessions shall only be granted if consistent with above conditions.

Quoted section about new roads in National Parks General Policy.

Currently there is essential good will in Te Anau area with DOC, gateway to Fiordland National Park. This goodwill would be jeopardised by decisions made against the will of the public.

Otago Conservation Board, Southland Conservation Board, NZCA are opposed to the application. Inconsistent with Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan, Fiordland National Park Management Plan, Conservation Act, National Parks Act, National Parks General Policy etc.

Appalling to happen against will of public.

Questions:

PG: At Milford Sound - what do you think the impacts of the application might be as far as Visitor Use.

GD: 50% of visitors to Te Anau use the road, if a number of people use the tunnel, it could take away from those who stay in Te Anau. Also could increase the number going through to Milford Sound increasing congestion. I believe it will cause more congestion at Milford Sound as it's not regulated by that extra distance to travel.

Real Journeys #906 1.53pm

Fiona Black.

I've worked in tourism 25 years and worked with Real Journeys since 2003, employed as assistant branch manager and am now branch manager. I have experience managing numbers at Milford Sound when they were around their peak – 476,000 people per year.

As outlined in submission – Real Journeys are concerned around MDL application being inconsistent with National Parks Act, Conservation Act, General Policy National Parks, Fiordland National Park Management Plan, Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan.

I don't intend to reiterate the detail in written submission.

World Heritage Area – this could compromise the World Heritage status. Integrity of this status could be degraded by the MDL proposed development. UNESCO could revoke our WH status. Loss of this could be a huge loss to us all.

Real Journeys are concerned with the specifics in application that relate to tourism.

Reason for unease – tourism is Real Journey's area of expertise and we can see in the application inconsistencies relating to tourism. Therefore there could be inaccuracies in geological, technical assessments also.

The applicant states that 50% reduction travel time resulting from the project will have significant benefits to Milford Sound and Fiordland National Park by spreading visitor throughout day.

We note 5.3.9.2 Fiordland National Park Management Plan integrated approach in management of road adjacent to NP is essential to ensure....

We think it appropriate therefore to submit on the tourism aspects of this application.

The journey Queenstown to Milford Sound is 286km, not 304 as was stated in the application. The buses turn off at 5 Rivers not Lumsden as stated in the application.

The applicant's visitor projections were based on a day in February 2007 following Chinese New Year which is the busiest time of year, and this would have provided unrealistic impression of visitor numbers.

Independent travellers give 'NZ Inc' – business for NZ. Not a good idea to try to prevent this. MDL cannot capture 50% of those independent travellers.

Dart passage to manage arrivals into Milford Sound. The number of passengers cruising the Milford Sound has reduced by 10% during the application process, not increased by 10% as predicted by the applicant.

Real Journeys believe the length of time to take the trip from Te Anau to Milford Sound manages the peaks throughout the day.

The Asian market require a hot meal in middle of day. Asians require to be in Milford Sound for lunch. This would be the same with the Asian tunnel clients. The middle of the day would still be the busiest time of day because of this fact.

There are other factors such as price (full price fares are more likely to be sold by travel agents) and market which drives management of visitor flows.

This peak in middle of day is likely to increase correspondently with tunnel, not be solved due to these factors.

Shorter days travel ex Queenstown, would simply result in passengers departing later, and would not fix the peak problem.

Fly-cruise- fly – if they can afford it, visitors will fly later, as it the experience of other operators in other destinations. Always a struggle to get them to get out of bed earlier unless it is something like fishing where activity is dependant on it.

These people will want to arrive in mid day – peak.

For Milford Sound day trip ex Te Anau we allow 6.34 hours according to cruise they choose to take. Includes traffic lights, check in time etc.

MDL have underestimated the amount of time coaches would take on their journey.

RJs are concerned about concept of faster travel on MS. MS is a once in a lifetime experience. Cruise is integral to experience. Overall, Milford trip has world class reputation. Dart Passage will diminish this journey as it would reduce the amount of sight seeing on the way. What effect will this have on the reputation of this journey and visitor destination.

What level of development is acceptable?

From operation perspective we were busy from 12.20 - 1.30 every day loading and unloading busses and cruises.

We know New Zealanders have a different perspective of crowding compared with overseas visitors. Southlanders are different to Europeans. Europeans know what to do when it is crowded – lining up etc.

Sensible management is more feasible than bringing in new infrastructure to manage crowding.

Air Asia is puling out of NZ travel which could reduce the amount of Asian travel to NZ.

Questions:

PG: How many buses Queenstown to Te Anau currently

FB: Ex Queenstown. - 3 regularly in summer 1 ex Te Anau. We can sometimes run 1 or 2 more depending on demand.

PG: Do you think the tunnel would increase numbers on any one day into Milford Sound?

FB: Doubt it – it would attract the once over lightly people but they won't pay. For people who want to tick things off on their holiday, they are unlikely to pay extra for this privilege. I can't see that it would significantly attract visitors.

PG: Milford Sound –you described how difficult it is to change the middle of day peak ex Queenstown, what sort of capacity under the current market at existing peak period, and if that peak was reached are there in your view any tools that can be used?

FB: There are limits in the plan that we can only take a certain number into Milford Sound full stop.

PG: I was looking to see what currently is the extra capacity at Milford Sound at the peak, and then if the peak is reached is there anything that you could see that the Milford Sound could handle that peak?

FB: In the peak of the day between 12-1.30pm, at the moment there'd be 750 – 800 tourist seats. At moment we have 1 boat tied up not using. We'd be running 2 11am cruises, and Southern Discoveries could be running something similar.

In terms of what you could do if you had more people turning up, it's very difficult to think off top of head. There is potential with the new breakwater project and harbour redeveloped that we won't have such a narrow entrance so potentially we could do shorter cruises.

PG: Differential pricing – do you find it works at shifting visitor arrivals?

FB: It does ex Te Anau, but ex Queenstown the passenger would need to get up at 4am to make a 10am cruise, so they are less likely to do this.

So different price margins in day we have 11am cheapest, then 2 onwards is cheaper too.

It depends on time of year.

PG: Does differential pricing work better for the independent traveller?

FB: Most people are linked into a cruise, geared towards independent traveller ex Te Anau. Accommodation is the catch. It would help to have more accommodation closer to Milford Sound.

Christine Poundsford #1071 2.18pm

I am a regular user of Fiordland National Park and Mount Aspiring National Park.

I chose to live in this area to be closer to the wilderness, and for 30 years it's been my priority to experience those places, with my daughter now too.

I have a young child and there is plenty of adequate infrastructure to access these places with a young child. Areas still in back country are really valuable, in the fact that they don't have easy access.

As soon as you get the development, you lose some of the intrinsic values and reasons why I like going into the bush. More roads and tunnels take away from those experiences.

I don't think we should cater for those tourists wanting a shorter routes at the expense of our younger generations and the future of those places for generations to come.

Vehicles would spoil the area. Changes would happen.

Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan mentions roads are not to be provided for. Reason to exclude this proposition is unclear.

Adversely impacts on the values and park users now and in the future.

Overall the future I see for our place in the world is that we currently have some of the most untouched and beautiful areas, and we need to keep it that way.

For those people who want easier access to places they can go to different places.

This sort of development is irreversible and it would be hard to explain to our future generations why we have done this.

Questions:

CV: What activities do you do in the Hollyford valley?

CP: Tramping in the Hollyford valley, in past I kayaked, and hunting in Hollyford and Mount Aspiring area.

Paul Ridder #218 2.23pm

Read from submission.

Opposed to grant of this Concession.

Deforestation and runoff main concerns.

40 coachloads of people going through the area (Hollyford) is not going to increase the value for us local users. Approval of application sets precedent – others will apply for similar applications and expect success. Others will be harder to decline.

Huge upgrade in airstrip will mean more aircraft activity – no good for Gunn's Camp or other users. Power to site should be included in application. Significant impact.

Scientific evidence that endangered species might be affected – not assessed enough species.

We have supported this area all our lives including grandkids today. A business of this type has no place in World Heritage Area or National Park.

If it has to go ahead, I ask that a Concession for further investigation only should be granted. Then full consideration could be given to how this proposal could be assessed and mitigated.

Questions:

CV: What sort of use have you made of the Hollyford?

PR: Fished, hunted, explored, tramped Hollyford. Guided for Real Journeys in Milford Sound, regular user.

Taking sons in there, and I want to take my grandson.

Every 12 months I do a fishing trip at Routeburn directly opposite where portal would be. It will stuff it.

John Stevenson #1087 2.30pm

Beekeeper in TA, before that was in Glenorchy beekeeping. Keen tramper, climber and amateur nature lover. Opposed to granting of this application.

User of this end and Dart side.

The proposal contravenes the management plans and the National Parks act.

I only casually read the applicants thing and the DOC info that goes with it. I have looked at some of the submissions quickly. When I first read that the amount of fill from this proposal dumped on the strip would be considered as minor – abhorrent.

Noise, turmoil, smell, destruction in this area at least 2-3km of construction site can in no way be considered minor. The whole proposal strikes at the heart of conservation in NZ.

Construction could take up to 5 years, how can this be considered minor?

Travel time to Milford, even though it's not affecting the National Parks Act, it is the basis why the applicant is asking for this to happen and justify the need for the tunnel.

Submissions made for the proposal, a lot of them have mentioned the trip itself, but none of them have mentioned the values in the valley, but they mention about the cleaner greener aspect of travelling a shorter distance.

National Parks are representing for New Zealanders. Why are we even coming to this hearing? I read the first part of the NP Act - ... "*intrinsic worth*"

This area fits everything that is here. There is pre existing access that was constructed pre National Park status. When the area was gazetted National Park, they took the existing road into account when they declared National Park Status. The Act doesn't make provision that this would be extended.

It's just lucky for the tourism industry that that road was put there prior to the NP. Nothing was put in the Act to accommodate any great extension to that infrastructure.

I also note in National Parks Act that the Minister has a number of bylaws that she can change by gazette. 6 of those bylaws relate to motors, vehicles and noise for motors. The intent of those bylaws is to limit noise from motors, not to increase it.

The whole intent of the National Parks Act is to reduce the use of motors in the National Park. In the preamble to S 4 – *“preserved in Natural state as far as possible...”*

This is so people such as myself can enjoy the mountains, rivers, sounds etc.

Vehicle movement in this area will increase with this tunnel in that area, extending it beyond the existing developments. There is an existing road from Glenorchy to Routeburn, don't know what the width is of this road, will it be an acceptable width to take the increase in traffic or would their need to be an increase in width – destruction either side of park boundary. Quite a bit of forest is not mentioned maybe because it is road reserve, but it would still impact on the park as well.

Final thing – S 5. National Parks Act – for that instance the application shouldn't have got this far.

Questions:

PG: Infrastructure – is there any instance where you think it should be added to a National Park?

JS: I'm personally against a lot of infrastructure in the parks, although they can act as a preservation of areas by being kept to an absolute minimum. They should be in keeping with the natural surroundings.

They should be done with the minimum impact on flora and fauna.

Where infrastructure is permanent and long term – I have difficulty being comfortable with it.

PG: Once tunnel completed – what would the impact be on your own recreation experience?

JS: Keen tramper and climber – visit Key summit 2 or 3 times per year. Walk down pass burn because it is quiet. Will affect that.

Drive down Hollyford with friends from overseas etc. Took them to Milford Sound and Hollyford. They were amazed at how beautiful and quiet it was. What they missed by not going out on the cruise in Milford Sound, was compensated by the experience in the Hollyford.

Glenorchy side I don't visit much now. They put in the Double Barrel Track at road end, I didn't think that was a good development at the time, I liked taking visitors from the shelter through to a gorge, which you can only do at low river flows.

Hollyford Museum Trust

Read written statement.

Tabled visitor books from Gunn's camp.

I have read all the other submissions and note theme of inconsistency and lack of information in them. We think DOC's processing and consideration of this application is flawed. Many other submitters share our concerns.

Inconsistent with legislation and statutory plans.

Applicant has not shown there to be a need for an alternative access to Milford sound, or that existing road is inadequate.

Geological risk of tunnel (reference to other submissions and venture Southlands' submission)

The Department has accepted the applicant's advice and assessment. Real journeys oppose, which is surprising (reiterate Real Journeys submission points). Reference to Southland Integrated Transport Study -- the existing road is adequate.

Lower Hollyford road. The trust is pleased to see support of other submissions regarding the values of lower Hollyford road.

If DOC considers benefits at Milford sound, DOC should also discuss impacts on the Hollyford road. There will need to be road widening, an act of Parliament would be required to remove land from the Park.

Adverse bus effects on the Hollyford road.

Workers accommodation -- Trust not amused at arrogance of applicant in assuming Gunn's camp is available for construction worker accommodation; it is not. This should have been confirmed as part of concession process. We never agreed to house worker accommodation, and we won't agree. Milford Dart Limited contemptuous to assume as such.

Gunn's camp is the most affected party in Fiordland National Park.

Costs -- project will cost more than that described.

Impacts of buses through Gunn's camp will be devastating. Will kill the only 1930s still functioning Ministry of Works worker camp in New Zealand.

Purpose of Gunn's trust is to protect the historical heritage of this camp -- to keep it as it is and maintain its quiet remote nature.

Read out selected sections of visitor books demonstrating visitor appreciation of the values of Gunn's camp from the 1960s to present.

Questions

PG; what are major negative concerns does trust have post construction on Gunn's camp?

RP; tunnel portal, air extraction noise, will destroy natural quiet. Daily increase of road traffic through Gunn's camp. Gravel road upgrades will destroy remote character of the Hollyford Valley. A decrease in the numbers of people staying at Gunn's camp due to the loss of the area's natural values.

PG; couldn't it also increase use as more people became aware of Gunn's camp?

RP; no. It's old world charm would be lost -- existing clientele wouldn't want to be there.

PG; could the Hollyford road be moved so it didn't run through the camp?

RP; not without unacceptable environmental effects -- removal of old growth forest.

PG; could providing construction accommodation be good for Gunn's camp financially?

Able; not in the long term, would be inconsistent with our Trust Objectives and our business model.

Ron and Robynne Peacock

There would be loss of natural values in the Hollyford Valley.

The airstrip is historic and its use is accepted in the Hollyford Valley.

Intrusion of traffic in Hollyford, knowing that the Hollyford is now busy will spoil it.

Tunnel is not needed, adequate access exists.

Incompatible with World Heritage Status. I was personally involved in compiling information for Fiordland National Park inclusion World Heritage Area 1985.

Gravel road is part of the National Park experience.

Proposal will not increase visitor numbers to New Zealand.

Robynne Peacock; our family has used the Hollyford for 30+ years. It's a great area, valued by my family. There aren't many other easily accessible family destinations in Fiordland. This stands to be spoiled by noise of construction and buses.

No questions

16 March 2012

Cue on Don, Invercargill (telephone submissions)

Hearing Chair – Paul Green, Chris Visser, Robyn Roberts (notes) Clare Lenihan (for part)

Kate Waterhouse #342 9.00am

This proposal has caused outrage amongst her friends. Have spent a lot of time in the park.

The advice received is flawed. Interpretation is wrong. It is not consistent with the management plans. The Conservation Boards do not support it. Fails to address noise during construction and operation. Leaching in the Hollyford River a real concern.

Found it disturbing that it is only the applicant's information is the only thing that the Minister based her decision on. For a project this size, the largest in terms of tunnelling in New Zealand it is astonishing.

Widening of the Hollyford Road was been dismissed. The road is a public road, the key infrastructure to both Parks. Astonishing

National Park Act - obviously states no road shall be built unless allowed for in the National Park Plans, which its not.

FNPMP is concerned about overcrowding at Milford Sound, impacting on the visitor experience. The plan is also talks about expanding front country access, this does not do that.

The proposal doesn't increase - enrich the visitor experience of the Milford road at all. This may make crowding at Milford Sound worst.

There is an expectation that wilderness should be within easy reach to Queenstown. This is a World Heritage Area.

Impact of tunnel construction and operation is not acceptable – leaching into the Hollyford River and then Lake McKerrow.

I have walked down the Hollyford River and seen the flood debris above my head. It is not a place to have a major construction sites and be able to mitigate the flood risk.

The length of a major construction should be questioned. The applicant states that they will avoid working through summer; this is Fiordland how can they work through winter. Risks around slope stability, the tunnel stability, how long will this go on.

The Minister must take notice of the purpose for which the land is held. This is a World Heritage Area and FNPMP specifically mentions the need to protect the wilderness that it is. The construction of this tunnel is not consistent with this.

This proposal may result in a change in the World Heritage Area status. This proposal directly impacts of the visitor experience to the area.

There are other ways to get to Milford Sound.

There is no public access to the tunnel, it is a private facility and private road. We are taking a part of the National Park and saying that the public cannot go there. No controls, traffic flows etc. This is a concern given the recent events in the European Alps.

In summary: I find it astonishing that this consent was granted. Troubled at the extreme incarnation of “Conservation for Prosperity”.

The costs and benefits have not been fully weighed up. There is no way to factor in additional costs, accidents, no clean up clauses for project failure, leaking, flooding damage, economic effect on communities. No reviews, no controls included in consent. If you wanted better economic values out of Fiordland or Mt Aspiring National Parks, this is not the way to do it.

This is an unproven company. Unacceptable risk in a World Heritage Area, the tax payer will bare the cost of failure and it seems the road widening.

This consent should be revoked, it is embarrassing and let’s not do this again.

Questions:

PG: Can you give an outline of your use of the Hollyford Valley and Routeburn?

KW: Walked all the major tracks and backcountry catchments - Routeburn, Rees/Dart and Hollyford.

PG: Buses at Milford Sound. You commented that crowding at Milford Sound may be worse, can you explain that.

KW:This is key to the consent, if the assumption is that is would be a good thing to have more people visit Milford Sound, where is the detailed analysis to show it is possible given the bottle necks that at currently exists, you are adding more traffic, how will this be managed. We are not anti-development. But this is digging through the heart of the Park.

Federated Mountain Clubs (FMC) #837 (Peter Wilson) 9.19am

Federated Mountain Club represents 15,000 trampers/climbers around NZ. Around since 1932 and were involved with getting the Mount Aspiring National Park lobbied to get it recognised as a National Park.

FMC is against this proposal and will fight it all the way. There is no mitigation that we will accept.

Proposal against the National Parks Act, a national park is to be preserved in perpetuity and public rights not permanently affected.

The Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan is clear – no new roads to be developed.

FMC agree with access to front country – but this is not front country.

You can't change a Plan by way of concession; it would need a plan change. Follow due process. Reconsider the process as we do not believe it is being followed.

National Parks Act – Public access. A concession can only be granted if it does not permanently affect the right of the public to the Park.

This is a private development that will have a private road that will have a 49 year lease over the National Park – the public is excluded for that time.

No instances in NZ that a transport corridor has excluded the public from a National Park – against the heart of why National Parks are set up - this is a breach of the Act.

Mount Aspiring National Park – We agree with the advice of the Otago Conservation Boards.

Fiordland National Park – We agree with the advice of the Southland Conservation Board

The proposal is clear that this is to get people to Milford Sound. The Plan says that any new proposal must demonstrate that the current facilities are used to full capacity and future demand. They are not.

No evidence to show visitor dissatisfaction with the existing road trip to Milford. Yes it is a long trip but they could overnight in Te Anau. No need to build a tunnel for a problem that does not exist.

This proposal could add to the congestion at Milford.

World Heritage Area – New Zealand is respected for conservation management. This allows our national parks to become theme parks. These are conservation areas for the world.

Impacts – the proposal states that the construction and operation of the tunnel will have little effect on other park users– we don't believe that. It will destroy why people go there. This is a permanent structure in the landscape.

The loss of the Hollyford Valley airstrip, this is used by recreation users, hunters, fishers, kayakers and surfers – there is no alternative.

There is not enough space on the airstrip for the spoil – this will leach into the river.

Safety – they will comply with the 1992 health and safety provisions. This is not good enough it should be to international standards. The applicant is trying to do it on the cheap. Their safety plan should be internationally peer reviewed.

Public liability – what happens when the applicant gets into financial difficulty? There needs to be a large bond included in the concession for when it fails, to allow the roading to be taken out. Otherwise it will end up that the Government will have to bail them out. We suggest a \$50 Million bond, which should sit with the Department.

FMC want a review clause on the concession, public provision. Concession fees need to be charged in accordance with the nature and scale of the development. Fees are too low at the moment.

Applicant needs to make a contribution to conservation way beyond what they are saying at the moment. Payment in kind, they need to give anything back to conservation.

Questions:

CV – You mention section 4 of the National Parks Act - public access. As you are aware the Department grants concessions in the form of leases for often quite substantial period of time. What are FMC views on this?

Peter - Most leases in national parks are for small scale things, not roads and tunnels. This is a different scale.

John Nankervis #1113 11.00am

This application goes to the heart of statutory planning regimes for national parks. The Officers Report is comprehensive – covers most points. However the balance is wrong and the recommendation cannot be justified.

I don't believe this is an activity that can justify a substantial encroachment on our national parks. There is nothing that takes the national park back to its natural state.

History – If you ignore history, you are at risk of repeating it.

In 2006 an amendment to the Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan was requested – the Otago Conservation Board thought that it was appropriate that the change be made. The driver of the Conservation Authority not to support that amendment was it was seen as an amendment to allow a concession application to be considered, and that it should be tested as part of the management plan renewal.

New plan approved in 2011, which had provisions relating to roading. The new plan does not provide for this proposal.

The plan deals directly with exceptional circumstances. This is not one. There is strong management planning direction that roading should not be allowed outside of the front country.

National Park Act provision – mentioned in the report but not given the full consideration it deserves. No road may be made over or through a national park. The Minister cannot give consideration to a road through a national park.

This proposal doesn't get to first base. It's not justified – too flimsy.

Questions:

PG – When could the Minister use discretion. Why is it envisioned that the Minister has discretion.

JN – If there was no road to Milford Sound and this was a way to do it. The argument could be allowing access – Ministerial discretion.

John Glover #76 (Kinloch Lodge) 11.35am

In support of the proposal.

There are secondary benefits that will come out of this proposal that should be taken into consideration.

There will be a reduction of flying over and into the park. The large number of over flights will disappear. Air activity is intrusive. Public transport that links both ends of the Routeburn is beneficial. The shuttle stops at the end of April; public transport will extend walking access to the Routeburn Track. This is lovely area but it has no public transport – this will open the area to more people and improve the road.

Routeburn Portal – this is a location that could accommodate the proposal without detriment to the visitors to the car park, shelter etc. The Routeburn shelter is a busy place however once you leave it (500 metres into the park) the only intrusive thing is aircraft.

Questions:

PG – Concerns about widening the road from the park boundary at Routeburn end?

JG – Needs widening now. It's a shocker there are large busses now, dust is an issue - increased activity anyway needs an upgrade.

CV – What are the busy times of day?

JG – Carpark – 9am to 10am guided walkers. Day walk traffic is increasing, there a quite a few vehicles around most of the time. 5pm is the quietest time.

Ngai Tahu (Michael Skerrett, Philippa Lynch and Richard Ball) 12.10pm

While the submission was lodged by Ngai Tahu, Waihopi Runanga and O' Aparima supports the comments.

If the bullet points in written submission were addressed, we would not be opposed.

Questions:

PG – Interested in getting comment on the mixing of the waters. That is a difficult thing to address - Interested in how that could be mitigated.

MS – It is always a concern with Maori culture in general about mixing of waters. The length of tunnel and volume, these waters are from different sources.

Settling ponds are mentioned, but the leaching needs to be addressed. It is not for us to say how it is done, we just want it to be considered and addressed.

CV – The mixing of water, can it be mitigated or can it only be avoided?

MS – the preference is always avoided. It is not always possible. There has to be development. It is important that the receiving waters are not degraded.

We have never had an archaeological exploration of the area where the spoil will go (Hollyford Airstrip). Anything will get buried. This is something to consider, we don't know what is there.

Robin McNeill #930 12.50pm

A member of FMC for 20 years and has an interest in outdoor activity. Have a deep infinity to this area.

Values to which the areas is managed for - this is not what we had in mind.

Was involved in the Southland Conservation Board – the Hollyford side of Fiordland National Park Management Plan is a 'loop hole. Front Country zoning was there for possible necessary road widening and or changes to the existing road, it was never the intention to allow access to Queenstown via a tunnel. The tunnel was not taken into account during the planning process.

It was well debated through the Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan.

The descriptive and prescriptive parts of the plan cannot be taken in isolation.

The application has been viewed as a tunnel in its own right. This is wrong, the tunnel is proposed to achieve an outcome somewhere else. We already have a tunnel into the power house inside of a national park. If the proposal was simply a "tunnel experience" in a national park, it could go into the ground and out the same way. It wouldn't need to go from Routeburn to Hollyford. The proposal is motivated by a desire to transport people to Milford.

The purpose of the tunnel is to achieve an outcome somewhere else, it is to improve visitor flows and experience at Milford Sound. Can it be taken outside of the park, yes it can. If you need to get there in a hurry you can use aircraft.

Given the cost of the tunnel – the ticket to fly to Milford sound will be about the same as the tunnel. Coach trip – Milford road - access is already available. This activity does not need to be through the national park.

This is a solution looking for a problem. Saying Milford Sound is a disappointing destination apart from the boat trip. The trip in is part of the experience.

If there is a problem, this application is solving the wrong problem.

I do not believe whether the applicant has the ability to undertake the work. No safety plan provided. There should be dual tunnels.

Freedom travellers will not go through the tunnel.

It will potentially not get a building permit from Southland District Council. We know what happens when you undercapitalise tunnels in New Zealand.

Two possibilities - this tunnel will run out of money halfway though, and/or not enough money to mitigate any environmental disaster. They may go bankrupt in which case we have a mess. Project creep happens all the time.

Are these guys serious or not – reading between the lines the applicant will sell this concession on approval. A bond is not going to work, they should put up a personal bond.

This proposal is flawed, it is dishonest. Cannot be carried out as in the way it is intended, it is solving a problem that does not exist.

Questions:

PG – Fiordland National Park Management Plan - how many submission and hearings?

R McN – 2500 submission, half on wapiti and Haast Hollyford Road. We talked through the widening of the road as part of the process.

PG – No talk of infrastructure.

R McN – No the tunnel came up right at the end of the planning process.

Susan Miller #920 1.06pm

I think that it is extremely important that these towns are not taken out of the tourist routes. Milford already has access.

Do not see that the plan allows for this type of infrastructure.

Environmental Report – massive amount of spoil – spread over the land, this has not been properly addressed and impact of this down river if flooding was to occur.

The Department should give consideration to the glut in Queenstown.

Spoil by flood into the river around the tunnel access. Endangered species – long tailed bat. All of these need to be fully addressed.

CV – The officer's report is on the DOC website. This will answer questions you have raised.

Marcus King #184

1.17pm

I am an experienced trumper and climber doing backcountry wilderness trips. I have a high level of experience.

Dismayed at the reduction in wilderness. Putting a large number of tourist buses will be detrimental to the area. Increase in loading of the area by tourists is not acceptable. Tourists who take a bus through that area do not have the same appreciation as us trampers. They do not care for the area.

Wildlife is already under stress from predatory species. I object in the strongest terms.

Questions:

PG – How does the current road fit your take on wilderness?

MK – There has to be some compromises. I don't travel in areas like that.

PG – Do you have a view about those areas in respect of other users/visitors use of those areas?

K – As tourist loadings increased the experience decreases. Regardless of the visitor the experience lessens.

Lee Davidson #1099

1.30pm

Oppose the granting of this concession.

Personal experience – worked and lived in the areas. Research and published in the area of recreation and the values associated with it. Recently published '*Intangible Natural Heritage*' using a case study of Fiordland National Park.

I consider the application is contrary to the purpose of which the land is held. This is articulated in National Park policy. What's proposed is a major engineering project and is a permanent modify the national park – major earth works with impacts that will be evident and permanent.

The noise and visual effects of the portals, increased traffic on the road are detrimental to the national park. The Officer's Report argues that there is already modification in these national parks, but it fails to recognise that this is more than minimal modification.

There is no method to mitigate these impacts. Fails to adequately outline the mitigation methods if this project fails. Cost of the mistake – irreversible and we will have lost the wilderness area forever. This is a huge risk for private gain.

This could be done outside of the national park, this is not the only route, just the shortest.

Long term significant adverse effects. No public benefit.

DOC failing in its obligations if this is allowed. They have obligations to future generations.

Questions:

PG – Your research on intangible values – what areas did it take in.

LD – Fiordland National Park aircraft – providing a service to get to Milford Sound – user impacts. Just published by Rutledge. *'Intangible Natural Heritage'*.

Oliver Hoffman 1.45pm

I have visited the area previously. Glenorchy is a true paradise. I feel they will be shattered.

The construction would have a huge impact on the flora and fauna of the area with a large number of trees removed and the impacts on the long tailed bat environment.

The construction is also a concern with acid leachate into the river, the disturbance to the natural quiet of the area and the risk of introduced weeds.

In summary tourist that have time on their hands to access this very pretty place are rewarded with remoteness, scenic beauty and natural quiet.

The tunnel will create an influx of the wrong type of tourists. We want tourists to linger in these places, this is more economically beneficial.

This is not the kind of economic enterprise that I can support.

No Questions

Robert Bester #1169 2.00pm

Appalled by this proposal and that DOC allowed this proposal to be considered. It is out of step with management plans, and what the public want.

The main users of the tunnel will be overseas visitors to Queenstown who will use it once in a lifetime. This is at the expense of other overseas visitors who value the area for its scenic values, remoteness and peace, which keep coming back for those aspects.

It also ignores the use of the park by ordinary New Zealanders as a destination in itself. The proposed increase in tourist numbers could result in a decline in numbers from those who choose to go to other areas after the decline of the wilderness area.

This is a private commercial enterprise, at the detriment of other users and communities.

There is a financial risk that it won't succeed, it is not commercially viable, and tax payers will need to prop it up.

World Heritage Area – great walks – The construction phase will destroy this iconic area. It ignores New Zealanders and the values we put on it.

Milford Dart suggested that the shelter and the Routeburn is horrible but it should be noted that it is available for everyone not just a select number of overseas visitors.

Conservation General Policy – quote. This is what we should be preserving and DOC is failing in its responsibilities by allowing this application progress.

Inconsistent with the Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan 2011. I hope the Minister does not grant the concession.

No Questions

Trish Fraser #878 also on behalf of the Glenorchy Business Group #876 and Global Public Health #880. 2.15pm

Submission notes provided – docdm-931963

Bruce Gulley 2.30

This is a joint submission with his wife, and sons who are qualified engineers.

This proposal is risky for the environment it is going into.

I am an occupational health and safety officer and I do noise surveys – noise travels – the noise that is going to come from the construction job will cause a significant impact on other users of the park. 85 decibels is very loud – the same as a lawn mower (sound of lawnmower).

The risk of this thing going wrong is extreme. If it is going to be approved then much stronger controls are required. The risks are too high. The conditions need to be higher.

What income are we going to get off this – I hope that we are going to make money out of it because the developers are going to be making money out of it.

Questions:

PG – Thanks, I was interested in the lawnmower one – it helped me understand.

BG – ‘Lawnmower’ – you cannot talk at 85 decibels.

John Robinson #183 on behalf of the Backcountry Ski Alliance 2.45

Backcountry Ski Alliance (BSA) was established in 1996, 55 members and frequent users of the parks.

We are against this proposal going ahead.

Construction inconsistent with the Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan – No new road should be authorised anywhere in the park and that includes front country. (‘Quote park plan’).

Not in the front country zone, so inconsistent. This proposal does not enhance visitor experience to Mount Aspiring National Park and impacts on other users. We are surprised that it has got this far.

Granting a concession of this magnitude with the impacts on park values and other park users is inconsistent with the MANPMP. 'Quote park plan'.

DOC knew about this proposed plan at the time of the Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan was re-issued. If it was mentioned there would have been more submissions on the plan process.

Routeburn possible threats the park plan identifies – Canyoning adventure just up from the road end, and a one day race. If these are threats and impact on park values and other users, then what threat does a tunnel have – so inconsistent.

Adverse impacts on other users of the park. There would be a major disturbance and detrimental impacts during construction – several years of disruption.

Infrastructure – road widening detract from natural values. Routeburn portal is where people go for natural quiet.

Finally – waste of time in the whole process. Application should have been hit on the head early on. Waste of money. Construction of the tunnel should be declined.

Linda Conning #1006

3.15

The application should never have got to this stage – should have been declined on the basis of inconsistent with the park management Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan plan.

Information to submitters is very limited and narrow in what can be considered.

The application is not consistent with the Conservation Act, Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan or the Fiordland National Park Management Plan.

Several other authorisations needed that are not part of the concession but are being considered as part of this application. It complicates and confuses things.

General Policy – natural state – indigenous character.

Conservation Act – aspects of this application that cannot be mitigated – noise.

Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan – the authority considered the amendment to the plan as inappropriate and should be considered in a review of the whole plan.

Roads were given full consideration in the management plan process. As a result the plan provided for consideration of roads in front country area – accessing water supplies and day to day management. That was what the plan provided for, and the Authority considered it very clear.

NZCA sought the Ministers approval before the management plan is approved. The Minister had no comments.

Although the Routeburn is front country and does have a large number of visitors it has a remote feeling, and Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan is used by the visitors as this.

Effects Fiordland National Park Management Plan of increasing visitor numbers, the effects of the increased bus movements, toilet use, untidiness.

Fiordland National Park – there are policy tests that this application applies to the proposal. See written submission. ('Quotes plan'). Limit the number of visitors to Milford, visitor satisfaction; those thresholds have not been reached.

Milford will be busier for more of the time. There should be some quiet times at Milford and this tunnel Fiordland National Park will effect the quiet times.

Visitor numbers at Milford – see written submission. Fiordland National Park implementations complex and were there to increase visitor satisfaction not numbers.

Can access to Milford Sound be done by any other means on land. The Department needs to look more broadly at the frame work of the Conservation Act 1987.

National Parks - We must manage that land for conservation, and allow tourism, that does not effect conservation – roads can only be made in national parks in accordance with the management plans. The widening of the roads needs legislative process.

The assessment of the application has down played the risk – financial – earthquake. See written submission. This is a risk to the Department.

Continued drainage through the storm water has not been considered, and thought through.

These are national parks and are set aside to be protected. It is unlawful. Effects on our national parks will undermine status.

This application undermines the planning documents and the Conservation Act. There will be pressure in the future to make it a public road. This proposal is not consistent with the law for our conservation land.

Questions:

PG – Do you think that you can mitigate against any loss of any intrinsic values at all on any application?

LC – Only in minor ways. Not an application of this size.

Alessesandra and Christhof Menegatti #358 4.00

My area of expertise is geology. I want to make sure that we are aware of the complex geology that we are dealing with at the tunnel site.

All fault lines in this area have the ability to be very active, more so that Canterbury.

It seems a very dangerous place to have a tunnel. If the alpine fault goes there will be a massive earthquake. I don't feel there has been enough work done.

Do not feel that there has been enough consideration on the geology. What about large amounts of water entering the tunnel? What about the rock being too soft? I don't feel that there has been enough work.

What financial support - has the applicant got to support once things go wrong, who picks up the pieces, who will put it back together. As a tax payer I don't want to do that. Not financially viable to make it work.

We came here because Fiordland is unspoiled and reasonably accessible. In Europe you don't find land that is unmodified. If you start chopping it up in pieces it will become easier to modify and people won't come here. You ruin it by overdevelopment. Why would people come here if we are the same as everywhere else?

How well have MDL checked out the geology of the place. Have you consulted GNS, Otago University for example who have done the most recent research?

Application should be peer reviewed in regards to the geology. Independent of the applicant.

Please keep it pristine.

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| Monday 19th March – Tanoa Aspen Hotel Queenstown |
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Paul Green / Chris Visser/ Chris Hankin (note taking)

Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) #945: 10:15am

Lyall Cocks – Councillor, Chair of infrastructure committee, Andrew Edgar – council engineer
Their submission addressed infrastructure issues, understanding the boundaries of what can be discussed today. Two main points to bring up:

Point 1 - Road through MANP – report says this was not a matter of relevance, QLDC disagrees and believes it is.

Point 2 - Report does not indicate any concern about the effects of other access roads if tunnel not viable

They provided notes to expand on their original submission – provided copy. Provided map of alignment of road reserve through MANP

Discussed formed roads vs legally surveyed roads, paraphrased officers report discussion on this.

Point 1 - Routeburn road is managed by QLDC even though not following legal road, while QLDC manages the road, grading etc, QLDC takes account the road is in MANP, and manages as such, e.g. they relax rules on trees by road, treats road as a “NP road”, often on request from DOC
The new road will require much more than just managing a normal road, disagree with officers report that road is not a matter of relevance, as will require work sensitive to the NP even if road follows actual road

If approved – this would mean that any work can be treated without regard to fact that road is in a NP, QLDC disagrees with this. Work on the road must be accommodating of NP issues

Point 2 - MDL estimates 40 buses a summer, average 23 a day, but vehicle movements to portal uncertain. QLDC is concerned about all connecting roads on the way, concerned on 1way bridges,

one land sections. 2 vehicles meet, one vehicle has to reverse, more large buses will require an upgrade of road. No assurances for national funding to widen road. No QLDC planning to upgrade roads. Also delays will occur, this will cause frustration to bus drivers on timetables, knock-on effects to operators in Milford Sound, therefore some buses will still prefer Te Anau due to scheduling certainty. If company is not successful DOC left with tunnel to manage or close. This is a significant impact on conservation estate.

Questions:

PG – has QLDC had discussion with MDL on issues?

LC – No

PG – what is the role of QLDC with respect to tunnel?

LC – none, maybe some resource consents, other aspects no involvement at all

PG – is tunnel safety a QLDC concern?

AE – no, tunnel on private land

PG – who would be roading authority for tunnel?

AE – we would equate this to a private toll road, not sure who would be responsible for looking after a toll road? This project could lead the way. From a national point of view, NZTA may have an opinion.

LC – toll roads up north? – AE NZTA operate these

CV – what is existing maintenance on road in park? Grading etc

AE – respond to issues as they arise, but for general maintenance (and looking at changing), same as any other gravel road, 10 yrs to regrade, every year to grade

CV – current levels of maintenance?

AE - all depends on season and conditions, wet vs dry

LC – this year great example, like to grade when it rains, often done on request from DOC or users/operators, need to balance conditions and what can afford, like to do more

CV – what length of road is maintenance completed?

AE – did not know, would imagine would grade the whole length

LC – bad this year due to conditions and hard to grade as so dry

PG – Asked question about scope of QLDC concerns

LC – Today QLDC sees this as an infrastructure issue, the submission is based on this, not wider pros and cons of benefits and costs of tunnel

Finished 10:35am

Sharon Aitken #191: 11:00am

Thanks for opportunity, as I don't have technical qualifications my submission focuses on spiritual and cultural aspects. SA read out some notes (supplied) In the DOC report it says that MDL undertakes to further consult with Runanga closer to project. However there is no consultation with people of European background. I am a bit miffed we have been left out of this. These mountains have been home to my family for six generations, I feel this gives us a claim to our heritage, has any Maori lived here for this long? Are European concerns a feature of the process?

I vehemently oppose this desecration of the mountains, they are where my heart resides, and boring holes in them is not what I expect to have happened. My grand-father and great-great grandfather all bushwhacked through these mountains, what happens to relics or remains of them, will they be looked after? Nobody gives a toss about early settler "junk", it is not junk, it is part of our belonging to these mountains. I need to know consideration will be applied to European sites as well as Maori sites.

What astonishes me is the contradiction in NPMP, how can the Minister consider this application given the huge effort in NPMPs to prevent roads? We thought it was now law that roading cannot be built into NPs anymore. Access to the portal is a road in the NP, I find it appalling that such a contradiction has happened so early on in the piece, this sets a precedent that will be scary if it goes ahead. I feel the magnificent mountains deserve better than rape and pillage, we have no right to violate them, they are part of the country's identity, part of what attracts people to this place. If we drill and concrete, it will not be a special any more, UNESCO World Heritage Status will be withdrawn if project goes ahead. That's what people come to see, that's why it was granted this status. Good to share this beauty, but maybe this is not the right way. We should make parks harder to access so only people with an abiding interest can visit them, make visits less often. Can we not learn from lessons of Stonehenge, Yellowstone, where they are trying to reverse these problems. Could we ever afford to regain it if we lose this treasure, it's too tender.

Questions:

PG – asked her to summarise her own personal use of MANP?

SA – knowing its there is the whole key

PG – again asked what her use of the park is?

SA – extension of our dining room, family remembrances, hunting, diving, fishing, I hope for children and grandchildren to also enjoy it. We should shut down these things before it gets ruined, there are other ways to Milford. I don't see this a valid reason for violating the whole mountain side. Maintain the unique flora and fauna as it is.

Mary Aitken #192: 11:15 am

MA – would you mind if I give you my submission for my daughter to read – hard for her at 92

SA – As a family with a long history of living off the land, she feels strongly that it should be nurtured and looked after. We have a responsibility to look after local flora and fauna, it breaks her heart that gangs of tunnellers can travel rough shod over the native flora and fauna when her ancestors went to great effort to preserve the fauna. This is our heritage, what we are trying to teach. DOC field workers have put in huge efforts to protect flora and fauna. Perhaps the top brass should work in the field before signing off on big projects that destroy flora and fauna and undo the hard work done by field workers. She would like to see DOC regain its position of respect, but in meantime we will wear her critical bumper sticker (Department of Contradiction).

Ruth-Ann Anderson #847: 1:15pm

Speaking on behalf of her and her husband who was sub # 848

I would like to comment on the Routeburn Area, I much more familiar with this. My involvement is day visitors to area, we don't fill in intentions books, like many others.

We have loads of house guests from NZ or overseas. My husband usually does the escorting. I am a horse trek guide, often need to practice 'ecology 101' on horseback. Our clients often well educated and travelled. All guests love the Routeburn area. They discuss bird species, we receive many comments that Routeburn is like other places where they used to go 20 years ago before they were developed and spoilt. NZ was like going to the ends of the earth. That feeling of driving to end of gravel road, by the time they are at the end of the shelter, they feel like they had a back country experience. The road gives you a feeling of what to expect and what is expected of us as visitors in turn. Our responsibility is to be sensitive. You get that untouched natural feeling, that 'middle-earth' experience. The Routeburn area ticks the boxes, you don't have to walk far to have bird encounters.

We visit ourselves often as off peak visitors, e.g. winter. The area has a certain magic.

Day visitors are just that, they spend a whole day there. The Area is easy to get to, easy terrain, great interpretation, well set up. Routeburn is an iconic destination – both in terms of day use and overnight. They believe the tunnel will destroy this special feeling. The construction phase will make Routeburn an untenable place to visit. Long term, noise, fumes etc will change the area.

Pg 77 of report – ‘visitors to Routeburn may be comfortable with higher level of development’ – don’t agree, we think this sounds like a developers report not a DOC report. Don’t underestimate the UNESCO World Heritage status, it is so important, brings in the visitors. Would UNESCO be impressed by the tunnel?

Submission mentions the impact of earthquakes on tourism business in Sth Island. Then the Pike River tragedy, which stunned the nation with reports of mis-management. We don’t need another disaster related to geology, the damage to our reputation would take decades to rebuild. It is frightening the level of detail on engineering that has not been provided in the submission yet it has come so far.

The proposal has many potential effects on birdlife, bat life, water systems. We market ourselves on our wilderness and wildlife, but we have bad record of spp extinction. Hollyford and Routeburn have several rare species. Lots of endangered spp that are incredibly valuable.

Please don’t discount the recommendation of two conservation boards of expert members – these seem to have had very little weight on what is being decided. They have a lot of discernment, and a holistic view, they are not just looking at park boundaries or dollars. We are opposing the proposal because we love and care for NZ’s national parks, we have a sense of ownership, with that comes responsibility.

Future generations play a big part, we would like to hand over our land (private and public land) in a better state than they are now. GY community has a good relationship with DOC, hard working staff are passionate. We are aware that DOC is facing budget cuts like all govt departments.

We are very concerned about how much this process is costing DOC, should this be better spent in other areas, e.g. species recovery.

We operate our own concession for horse trekking, we cant help but feel are there different requirements for the MDL concession in a much more sensitive environment. The conditions don’t appear independent in nature, did they come from MDL?

We don’t believe proposal comes from mixed ownership model promoted by the government. We believe this is compromising the integrity of DOC.

NZ contains so much wild country, losing this to cheap transport and commercialisation through the schizoid administration of DOC.

Could it be described a Mac Milford? Find it distressing to be here pleading for protection.

Questions:

CV – how long have horse treks been going?

Ruth – treks gone for 10-11 years, she has been involved for 8.

Alison Broad #989: Joan Kieren attended to present her submission: 1:30pm

Joan delivered Alison's submission in person. Joan read her submission.

Questions:

PG – where does Alison live?

JK – Invercargill. I live on the Glenorchy road, I think this is a terrible idea too but didn't put in a submission.

Leslie Van Gelder #250: 1:40pm

LVG – can I ask who makes the decision?

PG – decision maker is Deputy Director General, Operations, Sue Tucker, she is the manager of the 2 conservators involved by this proposal.

LVG – how does our information go to decision maker?

CV – Paul and I prepare a report for the decision maker. Ultimate decision maker is the Minister, but decision can be made under delegation.

LVG – comments to read – obtained a copy

I live near Precipice Creek near Glenorchy, I feel there in my community there is a deep and abiding sense of relationships here, and the tunnel is a violation of these relationships and the trust underneath them. I speak because I can't be a party to this proposal.

I have read and coded all 1200 submissions. I know the frequency of the different comments. I felt like I was reading love letters, and not technical information. I left the US as the community where I lived in, the govt cut down the trees and said there nothing we could do, so moved away from there to live here.

This place is a gem, a beautiful place, the land should be preserved for children, those who want to move slowly through the land. Like school trips to Gunn's camp, New Years days on conical hill. People are so moved by these experiences. Why is NZ risking something so special? Tourists feel like NZ does not have spoilt landscapes.

I looked through the submissions, there was not the passion from supporters, I saw about 375 photocopied forms with peoples names added to them.

A covenant is a moral and spiritual agreement, between NZ and UNESCO. This tunnel flies in the face of that covenant with UNESCO, we would lose this WH status if tunnel went ahead.

There has been a good relationship between DOC and community, we work together to help the bats, falcons, trees e.g. project gold. DOCs credibility as an agency has been severely damaged. We would never think we would have submit against DOC to protect beech trees and the environment? Should we have another agency to do this for us? Don't leave us in the position of having to come out and protest against you. We want people that value time, relationships take time to grow and a moment to destroy.

Why would high speed consumption of nature be brought to you by DOC? We ask for wisdom to care for the communities and nature. I counted 140 submissions from Glenorchy, there is only 200 people in community. We are people that treasure this place and love it, we want others to come and slowly experience the place.

I ask you take those thoughts into consideration'

Questions:

CV – where are you from originally?

LVG – from just outside New York city

Finish 1:52pm

Amanda Hasselman # 304: 2:50pm

Thanks for the opportunity to talk. I'd like to state I have a good relationship with local and regional DOC. E.g bat monitoring, and cooperative project to extend public walkway.

The Mount Aspiring National Park is very clear about no roads being permitted. We all knew that tunnel was a possibility when we participated in the formulation of the Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan. We felt that the Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan process was a clear democratic process, this proposal makes a mockery of the consultation process.

The proposal compromises the intrinsic values of Mount Aspiring National Park for benefits for Fiordland National Park. Concessions should fit in with a bigger picture. Tunnel encourages people to go under park, and not appreciate the park. If you put in a tunnel into the park, what wouldn't you allow in the park? This sets a precedent we do not like. We want more people into the park.

I support legal arguments articulated by Otago Conservation Board – due process has not been followed.

The World Heritage Status is a privilege, not a right, we need to be careful of this, to protect it. But the World Heritage Status is a double edged sword, it gives us value in our mind, but also gives us a responsibility. It is a huge draw card for discerning tourists. If we undermine the World Heritage status we will turn people away.

In NZ we have a huge quantity of public land, we undervalue this. Our conception of wilderness varies. But tourists are looking for genuine soul, not same-old same-old.

I think the Minister of Conservation should consider all of access road as a matter of concern. When you cross the cattle-stop boundary, you have a beautiful transition from the world outside the park to that inside park. You come to respect the place at this point. All the possible changes from the cattle-stop to road end should be considered. It will affect people's experiences.

There are at least 100 mature trees that will have to come down if road is widened, it is a biodiversity hot spot. In the latest bat count – there was such an activity of bats we couldn't believe it.

The road provides a good mindset for entering the park. At the road end yes it's busy, but it's all about entering the park - an appropriate activity. The proposal is for a road end to anywhere, traffic levels will increase enormously. These people will have no intention to engage in MANP, we should be going into the park, not under it.

The construction timeframes are unrealistic, when do effects become more than just a temporary effect and become a serious adverse effect? What is the cut-off point when the temporary effect becomes a permanent effect which cannot be reversed? The Manapouri tail race took 5 years – is this temporary? – it's half the life of a National Park Management plan!

The report is denigrating visitors a little, why would they be satisfied with higher degree of development. Why should they have an inferior experience because they don't know any better?

I go to Conical Hill, Valley of Trolls, Lake Wilson, North Branch, but I don't want to write in a hut book, so I don't figure in DOC's statistics. Routeburn is a great place for kids, they can achieve the Routeburn at early age. Kids have a fantastic sense of achievement. Routeburn has real potential for introducing people to the wilderness.

The landscape at Routeburn End is a natural amphitheatre that will send noise upwards to higher altitudes, particularly in calm autumn/winter – there is an extraordinary clarity of sound. Sounds are easily audible much higher up. Sitting at top of Conical Hill you will hear construction activity far below.

MDL underestimate the length of tourist season, and underestimate winter conditions, so they will be forced to work in fine weather windows and therefore impact other people.

No one has showed why we need a tunnel. There are lots of other ways to get to Milford. The visitor numbers are falling since 2007. Is the outcome worth the risk of such a challenging engineering project in a pristine environment? What if the project is not completed, if only half or two-third finished, we will be left with visual nightmare. A bond is not sufficient. We should have a guarantor not just a bond.

MDL writes in their application they will be engaged with the community, but they have only come to the community once in 2005. We hear nothing much from them except through the media. What else stated in the application will they not do?

The report provides no information on how it will impact the neighbouring community. We have produced our own community plan, public documents that MDL could have referred to in their application.

The future should be about encouraging slower tourism, a more intimate encounter with the "greatest living space on earth". GY is not the easiest place to live, we all live there for reasons.

The ultimate irony is that we have to plead to DOC to look after the environment for us.

Questions:

PG: When you walk Routeburn does the aircraft noise worry you?

AH: Yes, I wish it wasn't there.

PG: Do you think the tunnel could reduce aircraft and have an overall positive effect?

AH: Caples is probably busier in terms of air noise. I am more comfortable with fliers rather than people sleeping in a bus. Why are we in a hurry so much, we should not be encouraging this. People are not engaging with the park, they are just asleep, this beggars belief.

Mark Hasselman #343: 3:15pm

My submission is just a highlight of some main points from my written submission. I have lived in Glenorchy for 35 years, and been very fortunate to be able to farm here. I feel privileged to raise a family, climbed the mountains, well I explored them really, and appreciated their intrinsic value.

This is not an attack on local DOC staff, I have been involved with plantings, pest control, Search & Rescue, and the walkway right around lagoon.

This proposal undermines the MANP plan and the process we undertook to develop it. We participated in the park plan to discuss many issues, aircraft access, filming, tunnel etc. We made submissions in good faith and I expect the minister to respect the plan, this decision may ridicule the plan processes. I believe that once the plan is in existence, nothing in the Conservation Act provides the ability to do something outside the plan.

I believe the widening of the road is a matter of relevance. It is a special wee track.

World Heritage Status is important. The World Heritage Status is a statement of the value NZ places on the site. This places a moral obligation to look after the place, DOC needs to take this responsibility seriously.

The natural quiet is important, the natural quiet, dawn chorus, all add to the overall visitor experience alongside flourishing habitats. I feel strongly about natural quiet. To me the boats, buses, aeroplanes, all these you hear up high. They all impinge on natural quiet of area. Once these values are gone, they are gone forever.

Routeburn Valley has significant ecological values as per Barry Lawrence's report. There are large beech trees beyond human ability to create. Widening of the road is a matter of relevance and significant. This will affect Mohua, who live in little pockets.

Construction timeframes – 18 months, I wish MDL all the best!!! I think they are optimistic, their project will run half the life of the MANP plan. 5 years is not a temporary time, it's quite a lot of time to live with as a community.

In current world economic climate the project might not be completed, we need a guarantor to restore the site if project is not completed.

I was chair of Glenorchy Community Association for two years, including during the production of the Glenorchy community plan. We are pleased to have a Glenorchy community plan. Through this the community identifies its own special character. We don't want to lose the essence of what makes the head of the lake a special place. This special values of our place makes it more vulnerable to development. Development should be well planned, coordinated, focused. Consultation process for the community plan was quite involved - not superficial. Lots of people participated, and we had expert assistance. We feel the plan was quite thorough. The plan identified both township and head of lake district wide issues. We came up with the spirit of Glenorchy. The wilderness at the doorstep, peacefulness, rural atmosphere, history, quality of landscape. We believe decision making should involve the community and be based on maintaining the special character of the area, a rural landscape to maintain unspoilt feeling. Glenorchy should remain an end of the road destination, a gateway to the national park and wilderness. The plan was written 10 years ago, it didn't just pop up for the tunnel. But we couldn't have picked better words now then back then. (Mark then read many of the outcomes in the community plan).

The MDL application has united the community about what's special about this place. 100 people were in the hall to discuss the application. The plan wants an economic base consistent with the vision and values of the community. Activities should fit and be respectful of the environment. The MDL application is not consistent with the Glenorchy communities plan that was widely

consulted and carefully written. If the community plan was revisited you would find not a lot would have been changed.

We haven't seen MDL since 2005.

I am concerned about being asked to compromise values of Mount Aspiring National Park for benefits to Fiordland National Park. How can DOC separate effects on one community by a simple line on a map? The legal aspect is easy to understand, we ask that DOC honour a desire to work with neighbouring communities.

Questions:

PG: Does community plan have status with other plans?

MH: yes, the community plan is an assessment matter for QLDC district plan

PG: did you forward the outcomes of the Glenorchy plan in the meeting for Mount Aspiring National Park?

MH: no, did not come forward, I was looking at Mount Aspiring National Park more of access issues

CV How has Glenorchy changed since the road was sealed?

MH: changed for the better, people live here because they want to live here, with technology people are working and living in their homes. Glenorchy was a backwater, but now a community that is quite dynamic. People are coming for a reason, not just because it's a cheap place to live.

AH: The road changed the tourism dynamic, tourists did come for a few days as it was difficult to get here. People come and go in a day now. We are trying to slow people down and have them spend time here.

MH: We want businesses to slow people down, horse riding, biking

AH: There is more awareness of how things should work together to meet everyone's needs, not just one person.

AH: A community plan is good to hear what everyone in the community thinks, even if they are normally quiet.

AH: When do we know the result of the hearing?

PG: There is no timeline yet.

CV: It is an extensive process, we prepare a summary of submissions for report to decision maker.

AH: Who is decision maker?

PG: Sue Tucker, DD-G Operations, manager of two conservators involved. Probably also a discussion with Director-General. Decision could go higher,

AH: A good process is to communicate via Glenorchy community website, information will circulate through community, including part time residents.

Sadao Tsuchiya #189: 3:45pm

My point of view is the spoil from all the tunnel construction will be put on the Hollyford side. This will put different rocks there that don't belong on this side of the mountains "rock pollution". If washed away by flooding, these rocks are carried away into the river. Rock that shouldn't be there should not be put there. The different rocks may affect the aquatic ecosystems, The report doesn't say anything about that.

My other point is that most of water will flow downhill into Hollyford side away from Routeburn side. If water contains algae, didymo, this will come straight into the Hollyford side. We should do something to protect other side to stop algae from spreading into Hollyford system. Something should be done here.

Questions:

PG: What is your role in this area?

ST: My job is track guide, always watching the scenery from the Routeburn track. The spoil will change the scenery. Tourists will see this. The DOC report should include these effects. Spoil will be noticed not only the people walking, but all visitors to area, planes, climbers.

PG: What do you think what will happen to visitor numbers to Milford as result of tunnel..will they increase?

ST: I don't think so, as tourists shifting to more independent travellers, tunnel not affecting these numbers.

CV: Do you work for Routeburn Track Guided Walks?

ST: Yes

CV: What type of clients?

ST: 30-70 years old, 25% kiwi, 25% Australian, 20% Japanese, rest are British, Americans, Europeans, smaller % are Asian.

CV: Can you see aircraft at Hollyford airstrip?

ST: Haven't seen it used. But when plane or helicopter buzzing we can here that noise.

CV: Do clients react to aircraft?

ST: Some people are quite concerned. Most of the walkers prefer quiet nature. Quite often walkers point out that it's quite noisy.

Finished 3:55pm

Day Two – Tuesday 20th March.

Paul Green / Chris Visser/ Chris Hankin (note taking)

Media Present – ODT and Southland Times (part of day), Radio NZ (first few speakers only)
Observers –Michael Sleigh

Commenced 10:45am

Glenorchy School Board of Trustees #361: Corinne Davies spoke on behalf of: 10:45am

The GBT represented school and parents. The school role is between 20 and 40, age goes to about 13. The community and school enjoys good relationship with DOC e.g. Mohua conservation, project gold, bat survey (1 transect line starts at the Routeburn). Children go up to the shelter to see bats, a great positive experience for kids, especially knowing these animals are endangered

The Routeburn road end is a magical place, grassland areas, trees are growing on the road edge. A wonderful, peaceful place especially in evenings / early morning, it's almost like part of the track itself. When people see endangered species it can inspire a lifelong love of the outdoors. We believe that effects of the project to existing road are a matter of importance – power lines will be needed, large number of trees removed. We are surprised DOC will allow any project that will endanger species, especially with the money spent so far to preserve these animals.

Routeburn River is a pure water river, a world class fishery, and campers have to drink this water. We are very concerned about run off from construction going into the river during construction. There is no information in application on standards of water treatment, and how would the water be monitored.

Our World Heritage Area is one of only 400, Allowing a private company to spoil the area, even for short time, is damaging to this World Heritage status. Corinne provided the example of Lorax by Dr Suess for teaching children the values of trees. How can we tell our young children that national parks are protected and that DOC will speak for the trees that have no voice. A National Park is either a protected area or it is not, DOC must speak for the trees.

We have grave concerns on the impact of tunnel on endangered species, on the pure clean environment, on the impact of buses on park users. The tunnel is unnecessary, unsatisfactory and cannot be mitigated.

Questions:

PG: How do you determine how much infrastructure should there be at Routeburn . It is a National Park so the public can use it?

CD: We should consider if it is necessary, would it be there for the greater public good, does it uphold values of the National Park that are being protected? In the morning and evening it is quieter than middle of day. At these times walking along road is like part of track itself. This is great for people with mobility issues, there is a canopy overhead, mature trees can be touched from a wheel chair. Anything that is done at the road end should be for good of everybody.

CV: Can I ask for clarification of the scope your submission, Routeburn or Hollyford as well?

A: Focusing on the Routeburn side, our concern is Mount Aspiring National Park, tunnel is to benefit Fiordland National Park.

Corinne Davies #369: 11:00

During the plan production we vigorously discussed the issue about having no roads, we can't believe the Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan process was for nothing, the decision flies in the face of the democratic process. This decision overturns 2 conservation boards, the voice of the people.

The tunnel should be treated as a road, being underground doesn't alter the fact.

The 1-lane unsealed track makes an attractive entrance to the park, it's not just a straight line to the car park. Any alteration to the road should be considered. In effect, MDL want a new road for their tunnel.

We advise visitors to Glenorchy of where to visit, and they are impressed with NZ environment. For example, visitors are impressed with bends in the road to avoid trees, not just bulldozing the trees. The National Parks are truly untouched, like stepping back in time. In the US they put in lodges and roads etc, but the visitors like it that here they are really untouched. There is a documentary being filmed in our area "Walking with Dinosaurs" simply because the area is so untouched.

I would like a detailed Environmental Impact Assessment to detail all impacts on the environment.

Is this tunnel necessary, given current economic climate? As motel owner I am aware of the changes in tourist behaviour. Guests are staying longer, the need for a quick journey to Milford will be out of date before its begun. Has an economic analysis been carried out on visitor demand?

They say a reason is to ease congestion at Milford, will that really happen? Visitors will still want a later late start to the day (they are on holiday after all), this will put many buses on the road at the same. What about congestion on the GY roads? Stimulating visitor numbers but easing congestion are running counter to each other? Will the tunnel stimulate visitor numbers or ease congestion – can you do both? What is the real reason for the tunnel?

Visitors are voting with their feet by opting to go to Doubtful Sound instead because its quieter. Visitor numbers don't need to be stimulated, but they need to be managed.

The construction of a tunnel will be an unmitigated significant impact for track users for many years. Dismissing overseas visitors as comfortable with higher development is insulting to them. You need to meet or exceed expectations of visitors to attract them back and have them provide positive word of mouth, GY cannot risk any negative impacts.

If you increase the amount of modification on the environment you reduce NZ's desirability to travel to, and we are further away for people so we are more expensive to get to. We need to be a more desirable destination.

What about impacts on other concessionaires? Allowing the MDL project will have huge impact on these businesses, the MDL operation will undermine the nature of the park that other concessionaires rely on for their visitors. How much revenue will be lost directly or indirectly to other concession holders as people chose not to visit NZ as the pristine image is lost.

Are we in danger of losing the World Heritage Status? This status is an honour and obligation. We are expected to preserve the values. Is this project fulfilling the World Heritage obligation?

Health and Safety is also a concern, the tunnel is being built through a known seismic area. Surely there are significant risks, can we really afford a disaster, no escape tunnel is planned, even a minor accident will be major if it is a long way underground, getting aid quickly to the site is unlikely given it has to come from Qtown. GY is too small for emergency response unit. The tunnel does not seem to be built to an international standard or modelled on any existing tunnel.

Corinne then read a speech credited to Chief Seattle.

Questions:

PG: If people extending their nights stay from 1 to 3, what activities are people doing?

CD: It's gone from just a jet boat ride, to doing a lot more day walks, e.g. to Routeburn first hut, or first part of Rees and Dart, various other short walks. Explore the whole area in greater depth.

CV: Has the type of people changed or same people do something different?

CD: Overseas visitors did travel in campervans, but now people are staying in one spot and exploring it thoroughly rather than a whole trip around Sth Island. This change is more significant last couple of years. You can save money by staying in one place and really exploring it, rather than rushing. People are really enjoying it.

CV: Has there been a shift between overseas and domestic visitors, from your observation?

A: In first couple of years with the Lord of the Rings (LOTR) saga, people wanted to see LOTR sites. Big influx of overseas visitors then, but this has evened out now. Still get some international visitors. Local market a little more important now, locals seeing own country rather than overseas trip.

Thor Davis #370: 11:20am

I have lived in Glenorchy for 20 years, possum hunter, DOC warden, pest control (stoat and weeds). I own and operate Glenorchy fur products and Mt Earnslaw motel. I feel I am aware of the economic challenges in the area. We need very good word of mouth to get people to come back. People enjoy all the day walks of the area.

I believe the alteration to the existing access road is an issue. Thor presented several slides to show his concerns. At the moment even campervans get stuck on narrow bits of roads, most current coach use is 14-16 seater, only a few large buses, maybe the guided walk bus (which is hard to get past if encountered). The road is special, it has a full canopy, the first experience visitors have. It really doesn't look like a road, more of a formed track. The road passes close by trees, not just a straight line. The proposal will remove further trees from the margins, either 1.5 metres either side, or 3 metres on one side. We walked the road, in the margin is about 220 trees, big trees, including old growth, which are ideal bat and bird habitat. The loss of these trees is a considerable effect. There are big rocks with moss, which are also part of the experience. I don't think you should remove these trees. You can't recreate the canopy, impossible to mitigate. Removal of this is a major effect of the project.

The portal area is also significant habitat, a lot of mature trees. Endangered birds, bats and blue ducks are present. Removal of this would remove habitat, a mistake for all time. This is a precedent, a starting point for deterioration of the values of the park.

What about effects to local businesses? The positive effects to the applicant business from outside the park are highlighted, while the negative effect on other businesses outside the park are not considered. I believe it is a deficiency not to consider these negative effects.

Questions:

PG: What's your view of the changing relationship between DOC and community?

TD: It has changed, initially we had our own visitors centre, our own area office, more of a close knit relationship. All decisions came from local office, and more in tune with community aspirations. When they closed visitor centre down removed the front office interpretation facilities, a big loss. The park facilities have got better, the huts not as crowded, there has been more management in reducing the crowded effect on the Routeburn due to bunk-racing!

PG I was thinking of relationship with business use.

TD I believe it's intertwined, as for my business, visitors walk different tracks, ask about the possums. We remove possums from the park. I don't differential GY and the NPark, we are just the front end of it.

CV: Your view of existing development at Routeburn?

TD: Quite a structure, I must admit that there was little consultation with community on the outcomes here. I am taken aback about that and I can't say too much more. I am very pleased they have left the old shelter there, its a good facility in wet weather, has a fireplace. Extra toilet facilities. A nice, quiet wee spot. The new shelter has concentrated people away from old shelter. Locals can use the old shelter a bit more.

Juliette and Greg Larkin #1144: 11:35am

Strongly oppose the proposal. We are recreational users of the area, spent quite a lot of time in the area. We have visited many times, and feel a strong connection. We believe the area should remain in a natural state for future generations.

Juliette read through the submission.

We believe the MDL proposal destroys integrity of area and harms cultural and natural heritage. We believe existing access sufficient, and helps make the area special.

The construction effects are significant. The closure of the airstrip and high number of truck movements per day are negative. It is noisy, dangerous, and unacceptable, and will take at least 18 months.

The proposed mitigation effects are too vague, yet to be finalised. The assessment unreliable as based on inferred evidence.

Applicant ignored the Regional Water Plan for Southland, this plan states that the catchment of the Hollyford River is in a natural state, due to the lack of accurate supporting evidence and large uncertainty in the application it's unreasonable to assess these effects as only minor.

Questions:

PG: As regular users of area, what sort of noise effects do you notice, and how does that sit with you? What do you think of noise issues post-construction?

JL: As an example, from the Dusky track you could hear some trucks on Wilmot Road, quite disturbing. On Hollyford you would hear a constant stream of traffic, I would find this annoying,

PG: What about bus noises once finished?

JL: Not as bad as during construction period

GL: There will definitely levels of noise pollution, but you expect that only in certain times of day. At middle of day, for instance, it is very quiet. With tunnel this would be spread out at all times of day, not just set times.

PG: Do you think any impact on air travel?

JL: I don't think having tunnel will reduce demand for scenic trips.

GL: There might be a little impact with no Hollyford Strip, planes forced to use Milford more.

CV: From your experience do you notice aircraft using strip? And what level of use?

GL: Yes, but times I have been there its pretty quiet.

PG: Have you personally done water testing in Hollyford and Routeburn?

GL: Colleagues from Env Southland have tested these waters, very pristine water, low levels of contaminants. With MDL proposal, the 1% acid mine drainage is just a prediction, even if it went to 15% you can't assess these effects based on information provided.

Kay Crump: John Crump submitted on her behalf: 1:45pm

John submitted on Kay's behalf. He provided notes for her submission.

Her submission is about family. She loves to take family and friends to the Routeburn, and provided several photos for this. E.g. her sister and grandson in winter, her grandchildren from Auckland. MDL says the construction work will occur in shoulder season, but a lot of her visits are in the shoulder season. Lots of other people also visit in the shoulder. If construction was in shoulder this would affect a lot of people.

The loud noises will ruin the feeling of tranquillity of the place. One example was the rebuilding of the foot bridge, this was really noisy but because you knew it was essential you put up with it. I believe natural quiet is an important value, how can this value be protected during construction? On calm, sunny days the noise will be near continuous. There will be blasting 3 times per day for nearly 4 months, who wants to tramp when this is happening? I will be very disappointed if I can't do the track with my grandchildren in peace and quiet.

I also understand some mammals are sensitive to sound, birds and bats could be displaced by the noise. The potential severity of these impacts is virtually unknown.

Isn't the Conservation Act here to protect natural resources? People from all over the world marvel at the beauty and tranquillity of the Routeburn area, they rave about road and it's scenery. What will happen to tourism when the world hears about how what our government accepts in our national parks, what is our reputation going to be then?

John Crump #403: 1:50pm

We have been told not to discuss peripheral effects, which are the likely outcome of a small number of wins for many losses. NZers have tended to be too relaxed on issues that concern them, the reaction to this proposal will hopefully be the end of this attitude. History has many examples of problems of bad decisions in the past, e.g. Christchurch built on sand even when warned about this at the time. What about deforestation by Maori and Farmers, and now we have the erosion problems we are trying to fix. What about our assets sold off in the 90s for quick financial gain, but our overseas debts still exist? What about the sale of Qtown airport – sneaky government deal. Too often govts and council assume an ownership attitude to public assets. EG "DOC owned". Public land is owned by the public, agencies are just protectors. It's like the caretaker thinking he can sell the rugby ground because he looks after it.

National Parks are special places, not to be violated in any way, and need to be maintained as near as possible in a pristine state. It seems these aspirations are being watered down by a government trying to earn money at any cost. MDL not open about proposal, construction times are highly optimistic, details are missing how to avoid leaching problems, especially at the Hollyford end, and now to mitigate the noise, dust, debris, loss of ambience. It's not good business for NZ, not a win-win outcome. I am all for progress but not at any price. For the minister and DOC to allow proposal to get even this far is outrageous, it is at odds with management plans, devalues efforts of people who were involved. The number of people who visit Routeburn each year are testament to area's values.

The project reminds me of Hendo's hole, now an eyesore needing cleaning up. Remember the story of the goose who lays the golden egg, lets not be the greedy owner who kills the goose.

Questions:

PG: You enjoy the park, why are existing roads acceptable but putting in a tunnel not acceptable?

JC: I do enjoy the park, go there to paint, take friends there. Think of the wider problem, what happens if 60 buses on road and a big slip? We live near road and we will have 60 buses a day go by, not pleasant at all. At the park entrance, the ambience up there will be lost with 60 buses. While the tunnel is being built it's going to be havoc. Once the tunnel is complete...there will be a continuous flow of traffic tearing through to get there as quickly as possible. I visit the National Parks because of intrinsic values. The proposal is a small number of people trying to get bums on seats for Milford. Not a necessity for visitors to parks. There is inconsistency in project's story, the estimates for improving the Homer tunnel are at about 160million. But MDL want to tell us that they are going to build a much longer tunnel for a similar cost? The whole things smells of political influence, of moving DOC towards commercial aims, reducing the budget etc. I paint the existing roads, they look good, I don't consider the 2 lane highway as necessary, wont look good.

CV: Are you a commercial painter, what type of people buy your paintings?

JC: I meet a lot of people and talk to them. They are so excited talking about their experiences. E.g. Canadians, say NZ not like Canada as there you cant drive up the valley like here in NZ. In NZ these

visitors are entranced, people are ecstatic. A lot of this will be utterly lost, especially during construction of the tunnel. We lose a treasure for commercial gain.

CV: And your personal use of the area?

JC: I cover the whole area, but not the Hollyford so much as too far. I take groups up to Routeburn on painting classes. I wouldn't take them there if 60 buses going there. I just wouldn't go.

Finished 2:10pm

Nikki Cocks #818: 2:45pm

I have had 3 generations of association with Wakatipu Area. Did own land in Glenorchy for 5 years. I live in Dunedin but my heart is in the Wakatipu. Nikki showed photos of Kawarau Falls and Frankton from 60s – grassy paddocks. Looking at the photos my grandparents had land in Frankton when the area was grass paddocks. As little girls we could run in the grassland. Having watched what's happened to the Wakatipu is sad, and Glenorchy is the jewel of the area. I couldn't believe there would be a tunnel put through the Routeburn, of all the national parks the Routeburn is the darling of them all, especially the Routeburn Flats where the tunnel would go.

There will be a lot of effects from the tunnel. I am not very good at the legal side of things but I can't understand how the tunnel was consented in the National Park. Probably the biggest effect will be change, you can't go backwards, once it's ruined you can't go backwards.

The small road within the beech forest will be done away with for 40-50 buses a day. You will have people who love the area visiting and then you get people in buses who take photos, who have been mostly asleep all day – what engagement is there? This is one enormous effect, taking away the beauty that is there now, the ambience the quiet.

The portal will be ugly, like the the portal at Homer is ugly. The Routeburn is different rock, not granite, its different rocks. The change will be such that we wont be able to go backwards to what was.

With what's happening in the world, the economy is like a stack of cards, so much debt. People wont be able to travel, it's a luxury to come over to here, to this little country.

Another one is the buses, group travel is not the way to see it. I talked to a friend who was on a bus, all the other people were asleep.

I get to the roundabout and I can breathe once I get past Queenstown which has been ruined. We don't need it, what we have is sufficient. We don't need quicker times to Milford, a faster pace of life, just not needed. I have a sense of indignation having to defend what I thought the Minister of Conservation should defend. It's a National Park.

The damage will be to small communities, busloads are not the answer. Small scale is important.

I strongly strongly oppose this.

Questions:

PG: You spend a lot of time up Routeburn, how do you feel about present level of developments?

NC: I have concerns about the visitor centre, its ugly. I went to little old shop in Roxburgh, I think about what Queenstown used to be.

PG: How far should DOC go in preserving access?

NC: What they have is ok, no place for tunnels or big roads like they have to Homer. It's a dead end, it should be kept like this, you go in, and go out, you look after what is there.

CV: Have you visited Hollyford much, or is your experience more the Routeburn?

NC: My experience is mainly the Routeburn, I love it. I disagree with tar sealing of Haast road, slows you down being on a metal road. We can't go back on this, it's done. I just hope the tunnel doesn't happen.

Steve Hewland # : 4:20pm

Wife and himself live halfway between Glenorchy and Routeburn and we would be directly affected by the proposal. Most of the community oppose the proposal, strikes fear in our hearts, We are at Glenorchy for a reason, love the National Park and the end of the road location. The proposal negatively effects the enjoyment of the area and the National Park.

We are concerned about the construction and use of the tunnel. All the reasons why Glenorchy is a special place, an end of the road, subject to change if proposal goes ahead. This values of the area is probably a rare thing, we are keen to see it remain like it this.

My submissions concern the contradictions DOC would be making in granting the concession. A telling response of the 1,200 submissions, about 800 opposed to proposal, 400 for it. Of the 400 for it, 375 were signed forms. But only 125 signed forms in opposition. If you take the signed forms out if it you have 700 vs 25, I think that represents NZ opinions really well.

Questions:

PG: How long you lived where you are and what use do you make of the area?

SH: About 3 years, always wanted a lifestyle block. To take the opportunity to go up there regularly hunting, running, walking, taking friends, walk up to bottom hut, good to relatives. Sylvan a great resource to get to. My father likes this walk. Kayaked up there, a lot of time just being there.

CV: I understand your submission relates to Routeburn side of proposal,

SH: Yes I do have concerns on construction of Hollyford side, particularly ability to manage site during extreme weather events. How can this be managed in a way to remove risk of sedimentation and silt. I am not really clear on risk in relation to leachates, there is a risk, I don't understand this. Good that fill will be out of flood zone, but I grapple with fact we have severe weather events, I am an engineer, there wasn't enough information there for me, as an engineer, to really know what was going in. It's a real risk there, this risk will need to be managed really careful. My role is principal engineer at council. That process would need a lot of scrutiny around it.

PG: As a recreational user how do you see the right level of infrastructure that's acceptable to you?

SH: I think there is a difference between what is in a National Park and what isn't? EG Gondolas up Ski Fields that aren't National Park, tunnels in Europe. But in a National Park isn't appropriate. A tunnel isn't in context in my mind. If it's a track or DOC hut it is in context and acceptable. We are used to this, a tunnel is a long way from the norm.

Elaine Kirkland #1016: 4:35pm

What can I say, as the email says applicant should not present new ideas, a little unsure about this.

My submission is personal, I don't have technical knowledge, just a bit of life experience. I am not opposed to roading in National Parks, I would like to see more access in roads for all people to see beautiful scenery. But this little corner of NZ, I grew up here, and played in a river as a child, lived there all my life. The main issue I have is tunnel will take away all the serenity, the quiet, the reasons why we go there. The plans all look very nice, but still all the extra noise, the people coming through - lots of extra people coming through, could be hundreds. We can never enjoy the place in the same way in the future. The peace and tranquillity is the big thing, what people appreciate. You should go there and sit quietly, individually by yourself and ponder the importance of the area. I feel DOC is losing a bit of credibility as their priority should be to protect the environment, I am not sure all that is happening. It's a feeling that this is the beginning of the end of what we have always known. The whole area is as we knew it ages ago is still the same, there is no road. Despite a lot of people going through there, it doesn't seem to have changed. People have not had much impact on surroundings.

PG: Why don't you like the idea of this proposal when you like idea of roads in general?

EK: I submitted for roads in NP 3 or 4 years ago. There is a place for roads, but not here. A dead end road is one thing, but going right through is another. In long term likely to be a road for cars as well, somewhere down the track, becomes a complete thoroughfare.

CV: Where do you live?

EK: Just where the Rees road turns off the main road, on the hill. We bought in 1972.

Wednesday 21st March

Paul Green / Chris Visser/ Erin Dunlop (note taking)

Media Present – ODT and Southland Times

Observers –Michael Sleigh

Paul Fraser #879: 9.30am

Glenorchy Resident and Ngai Tahu tracing back to 14th Century.

As tax payer, fund DOC to protect National Parks. Disappointed this may not be happening. Door should have been shut on this insane venture some time ago. Glenorchy depends on quiet no buses chugging through.

National Parks are a treasure – shouldn't be touched. Trapping all good, but to be used in this way is not on.

Not necessary to get people to Milford any quicker, and why should National Parks suffer for that. Why should Te Anau and Glenorchy suffer? Businesses don't care about these particular places. Redistributing money from other people's pockets into theirs.

Tourists from China aren't going to want to go to Milford Sound in a tunnel.

Wouldn't like to see Glenorchy clogged up with busy road, why should we suffer that.

This proposal has caused a hell of a lot of stress and anxiety in Glenorchy. Nothing's ever jelled the community like this. I've had a place there for 26 years.

Have doubts about the cost and construction of tunnel I've worked in Mining in Aussie in coal mines underground, nickel mines and refineries. I find it really hard to believe that this is viable.

I also find it hard to believe the destination times getting to Milford Sound in under 2 hrs. I don't think there'll be a chance at certain times of the day.

They may get to Routeburn in 1.5hours, but traffic would have to be ideal.

Mount Blanc has similar distance. I'm an electrician by trade, and know there is a huge amount of electricity needed for this.

Amount of safety stuff – row of pylons to power the tunnel, and ventilation system. Mount Blanc needs 7000kw for vent system. Monitored control points in tunnel require electricity. 156 ppl run it, fire station, escape tunnels, 37 pressurised safe pockets – all at Mount Blanc.

Can't see how applicant can do all this for \$156 million or whatever they are proposing. Can't believe it's viable for 40 buses.

National Parks are treasures and should be left alone.

Questions:

PG: What use do you make of Routeburn area?

PF: Tramping, walked a 3rd of it this year in day walking, wife runs it. Spectacular. We don't want to ruin it. Shouldn't be touching it at all. Opens a flood gates. Say yes to one, how can you say no to the next crazy scheme that comes along. It defies belief. I'm no public speaker but there is no way I would have come here if I didn't believe it was wrong.

PG: As Ngai Tahu have you talked to other tangata whenua?

PF: No. I know Sir Tipene O'Reagan is involved with the application, but I don't know who he is representing.

CV: You said you had a place in Glenorchy before you moved there in 2002?

PF: Yes, I built a holiday house in Glenorchy 26 years ago while electrician in Aussie in mines. Attracted to the beauty of the area. World class, hard to find. Must be protected. DOC should be doing all they can. It's annoying that it's gone this far.

Finished 8.40am

Toby Eglesfield #824: 09:50am

TE: Because I have a lot of points, it's a bit of a grab back of submission.

PG: If you want to emphasise points please do.

The main point for me is that there is a National Park, and the effect of the tunnel on that.

Fiordland National Park, and Mount Aspiring National Park are both in Te Wahi Pounamu World Heritage Area, 400 sites worldwide. Moral obligation in NZ to protect this as part of UNESCO's definition on World Heritage Areas.

I visited the Lake Sylvan Track yesterday, and spent an afternoon sketching – unique forest, and the carpark is 600m from the main road, within bounds of National Park, a swing bridge leads across Routeburn stream and then a forest walk. You can hear a high pitch noise from the Routeburn stream, and the jet boats going up the Dart. I think you will be able to hear the rumble of buses.

Glacial plain, unique terrain with glacial deposits, creating forests as is. That part of forest pretty sure got used for Lord of the Rings. That area got grazed a long time ago, and so the stand of forest is quite open making it quite unique piece of forest.

People feel quite moved when they go in there. Intense solitude when you go in there.

I'm not keen about the silence in that area being compromised in any way.

In a much more pronounced way the silence will be affected at the Routeburn track carpark where portal will go.

People who like to camp at the road end would be affected – noise, nature of the area changed.

Lake Sylvan Carpark to Routeburn carpark – Sugarloaf Track. 5hr loop track carpark to carpark – walk last bit along the road from carpark to carpark. So would walk in coach traffic – this wouldn't work.

Routeburn Valley significant ecological values, priority place for threatened sp. Such as Mohua, falcon, kakariki, Long Tailed Bats, etc, what safeguards during the construction period and after construction.

Bats would be significantly affected by lights at night.

Nature walk at start of RB track, noise would drown out bird sound.

Questions:

PG: Your use is more at RB end rather than HF end?

TE: Yes

CV: You said you were from Frankton?

TE: Yes, I moved to Queenstown in 2003, and go up to that area quite a bit. Mt Creighton Scenic Reserve here but start of Routeburn and Lake Sylvan walk are very easily accessible.

Finished 9.59am

Shelly Guy #883 : 10.10am

I don't think I have anything Stunning to say.

It was interesting process writing this submission. My first concern was the impact on my lifestyle living in Glenorchy.

The more I wrote about, the more I realised I really cared about the National Parks and the Wilderness Area out there.

Living in Glenorchy – that’s the reason why I live there. I look up there every day, and even just knowing it is there it gives me a feeling of peace. Knowing there could be a tunnel up there, it feels like a violation of the right to be there. That Sacred Space.

I spend a lot of time in the Double Barrel ck area – a place to find peace, a spiritual connection to the place. It’s important to have those places where you can go and listen to birds and silence, and have people around experiencing the same thing.

I’m concerned mostly with the Mount Aspiring National Park side, Routeburn road and valley area has been recognised by ecological value. Several Species of endangered birds. This habitat is a major consideration if putting tunnel there.

Then there’s the World Heritage Area status. Big thing to be honoured with that title and have that area recognised. I don’t think we should put that at risk internationally.

Interesting that the Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan recognises that status could result in having pressure because of international tourism. Then it reiterates that the primary obligation is to protect the integrity of the status and the National Park.

My submission quoted a lot of legislation and management plans. To me it’s pretty clear that any concessions granted needs to be consistent with the National Park Management Plan for that National Park.

It’s clear to me that this activity is inconsistent with the objectives for a Front country area. I don’t think this tunnel is essential or necessary so I find it a little strange that the legislation is there, but we are finding ways around it if DOC really wants to.

If the tunnel goes through a lot of people will lose faith in DOC and it will put the legislation into question and the National Park Management Plans. National Park Management Plans become meaningless and all the hard work that went into them.

The Officers Report was vague in a few areas.

The main concern is the adverse effects on the ecological values up there. No detailed information on what some of those might be. Some effects cannot be mitigated i.e. noise.

At least we need to find out more information before we say yes go for it.

Surprised that the Officer’s Report found those potential adverse effects to be minor. It’s such a huge project it could take 2 years or 10 years to build the tunnel.

As with most large developments there will be other issues which become obvious on the way i.e. seismic issues haven’t been addressed.

We need more information such as this before making an assessment to go ahead.

Put all those things together, as well as the uncertainty of what could happen, is it worth the risk for something that is not particularly necessary?

Questions:

PG: How long have you lived in Glenorchy?

SG: Little over 10 years.

PG: Were you involved in management plan discussions?

SG: No.

PG: On personal level what do you do in Routeburn

SG: I tend to take map and compass and wonder around – bush bash and enjoy it. Round Double Barrel creek area, and around the flats around there.

I really like the place and the beech trees, it's quite close to home.

CV: Do you have any views on the existing road end infrastructure?

SG: I like the way the Road End's been left, the very end of the road. The new facilities there, it took me a little while to get used to it. So I think that's enough of a facility to have up there. But a lot of people use that track so it's good to have that facility there for those people.

That construction was an impact in itself, I definitely noticed that when it occurred.

CV: How long did it take you to get used to the new structure?

SG: A year would be about how long it took. I tend to not go up in summer, so waited until the construction was over.

SG: asked about the process from here, who decision maker was and what process would occur after the hearings.

PG explained the process.

Rosie Ferris #1150: 10.55am

Reading from written version of verbal submission – supplied to Chris.

Has been visiting Glenorchy since she was 7. Dad keen mountaineer and deerstalker.

Last 5 years have lived there full time.

Double Barrel Loop Track – as family always gone to visit.

When DOC told them it was not going to be maintained this worried Glenorchy community. Worried this is linked to tunnel application.

The Double Barrel Track is a gentle stroll with birds, really good with elderly and little kids.

An American artist came to Glenorchy to paint an exhibition called Antipodes.

He was guided to paint the Double Barrelled walk. She purchased a painting and showed to committee. This is exhibited in New York in 2 different galleries. This illustrates the importance of the international reputation of this area.

UNESCO World Heritage Area – protect and preserve. We risk losing this very special accolade from the rest of the world.

The tunnel proposal is built on a tourism model that is changing. There are now more freedom campers than hopping on buses. Numbers of people flying to NZ to bus around NZ is changing. People are more likely to come to a clean green NZ rather than travelling with hordes of people in buses.

Unrealistic construction timeframes – therefore temporary effects would change. Therefore total visitor experience would be compromised.

The applicant states the construction would be focused around less busy tourist seasons which illustrates they do acknowledge there will be impacts on visitors at the Routeburn.

There is no analysis of seismic risk. If a private company didn't adhere to safety standards could have backlashes.

Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan 2011, is firmly against anything like this. The plan was a result of public consultation. Increasingly DOC is consulting with public, and DOC has to listen to public. This is something we quite clearly don't want.

Questions

PG: You weren't at meetings about Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan?

RF: No

PG: I believe the Double Barrel Loop track is in a quite different location to where the proposed portal is?

RF: So where is it going to be?

PG: The revised portal was developed after previous discussions, before you get to new shelter, to your left approx 100m before you get to the structure, matagouri bushes.

The original proposal did overlay the loop track though.

RF: Is that why DOC withdrew maintenance of this track?

PG: No, not sure what the background is about this, but it was probably linked to a reprioritisation project the Department undergoes.

RF: The community might want to get involved and help maintain it.

CV: Could you remind me please how long you lived in Glenorchy?

RF: I bought a house in Glenorchy in 1989, extended it in 2006. I have been there since I was 7, and I am 65 in June. People come because it is a restful healing place. A lot of people live there to work remotely with modern technology. People are attracted to live there because of the remoteness.

Kevin Jennings #927: 11.06am

I'd like to clarify that my comments are my own, and not any organisation.

I am opposed to the proposed tunnel project.

My opposition is in no way directed toward the local DOC staff, they work very hard to maintain the DOC estate and my condolences to those staff who dedicate their heart and soul to protect the land administered by the Department.

This decision is also affecting Conservation Boards, and the type of people attracted to join and support the projects.

National Parks should be treated as the hallowed ground, with a set of rules. Commercial parties can be involved in a mutual relationship, without sacrificing those rules.

The Officer's Report suggests more questions than answers. It talks about a number of potential effects or proposed effects.... Interesting to use words "Could" instead of "Will" in report ("could" be avoided as opposed to "will" be avoided).

It's worth clarifying throughout the report, they refer to potential effects. They are real effects. The Department is about to approve real effects. This is important to be addressed.

Mitigation is a magic wand word in the report. There are so many areas left undefined, and we are going to approve it before we have it clear in our minds what this mitigation is going to be.

It needs to be demonstrated that the activity cannot be done outside of the National Park. The report didn't demonstrate that the activity could not be reasonably carried out outside of the National Park.

I work with the Film Industry – we give a location, and if it's not in the right zone, and the plan doesn't allow it, we can't go there. So we go with plan B.

This proposal establishes a very dangerous precedent on how the Department says no to some things and not to others.

I'm sure it's been pointed out clearly there is existing access to Milford Sound.

The issuing of this Concession, will trigger the need to re do the road.

Routeburn road end will need to be widened. The Officer's Report states that the QLDC have no intention to upgrade the road. Approving the Concession would trigger the need to upgrade it.

The road currently lies within the National Park. The Officer's Report states during process of considering application, status of road is complex as the road deviates land status. Some is in National Park, some is not. DOC is landlord of some. DOC is responsible to manage effects on that Land.

DOC is sidestepping this responsibility. DOC must consider this in this application.

How is power going to get to portal – irresponsible to issue a concession without having that clarified.

Hollyford Valley – watered down effects saying construction would take 2-5 years.

Officer's Report: Birds and bats are endangered, and abundant fruit around the airstrip and portal area, yet prepared to lose that habitat. We lack information, possible birds and bats are displaced by the proposed construction, the extent is unknown.

Officers Report does not talk about effects of explosives and the extent of impacts on native endangered species.

Long tailed bats – endangered, only native land mammals, in danger of extinction. Interesting that the Department is happy to wipe out some of their habitat. Incredible.

The species is a high priority for the Department. Localised tree selection has potential to wipe out a local population. The survey carried out in the report, may not be relevant by the time construction starts – mobile roost.

NZ doesn't have many rare, endangered threatened species.

In filming, you can tie a tree limb out of the way with no impact. There is a difference between responsible commercial use versus irresponsible commercial use.

Screening and crushing plant in National Park – deeply concerning. Construction Zone.

Lights – 24/7 operation at both portals. The Officer's Report suggests this might be necessary. This is a definite, not a might.

The report suggests to applicant how to deal with lighting.

Who is taking responsibility for the lighting? The applicant states that if you point the lights down, and do not reflect the light it will not be carried. Applicant does not state any analysis of effects for light pollution at night.

Short term effects – 2-5 years of project estimate. So many unknowns. Department has accepted this optimistic yet unrealistic timeframe. Not responsible of the Department.

The applicant has asked for 15 year Licence when construction is stated to take 5 years.

How does this effect the analysis of effects – does it make the short term effects long term? Does this require another analysis to say if the short term effects are more than minor now?

Repercussions, employees dealing with similar applications will be pressured by the precedence created from this application. Department viewing effects such as these as temporary and no more than minor is dangerous and setting a strong precedent.

These effects are for 7 days a week, for 5 years.

Why is Concession being granted for 15 years? Rumours that applicant has asked to extend this so applicant can sell it? Off shore interest.

Effects on park users. The report fails to address effects of other park users – i.e. airstrip and other walkers on the RB.

The tunnel would result in higher human modification of the environment. This would seriously challenge our clean green and pure message and damage our international tourism market. Visitor expectations are determined and effected by available information – will DOC change brochures to say the Routeburn now includes a construction site?

Has Tourism New Zealand been consulted? To change strategy for attracting tourists.

Leachate. We can't say we can go for it and see what happens. There is no way of turning this off once it starts.

To say the effects are minor, because they only last 2-5 years, is like saying that terminal cancer is minor.

Public confidence in the Department won't ever be restored. We are witnessing the birth of a new DOC. Lets call it 2.0.

DOC 2.0 will not protect plants and waterways, or look after endangered species, maintain WHA status, or maintain the visitor experience in the NP. It will say that if you apply for 5 years you will get 15 years.

Questions:

PG: Are you based in Queenstown?

KJ: Yes.

PG: Can you explain your background?

KJ: From California, been here 25 years. Tramping biking, fishing.

As a NZer you can just go out and experience these things.

For commercialism DOC has policies about managing these. I run the regional film office and I've been quite active in National Park Management Plans and Conservation Management Strategies and commercial use of these parks. Access is getting more minimised, and more difficult to access National Parks through heli landings etc. Responsible Commercial park users where effects are so temporary, are getting declined.

But this 5 year construction site is being approved. How can this happen?

PG: You've explained about the filming industry and appropriate commercial use. Can you give me an idea of the commercial use you support where permanent infrastructure might be provided?

KJ: I believe that if there was going to be permanent infrastructure, there would have to be a demonstration that the park user would benefit from this. It can be appropriate, but not in this case.

Let's say a hut somewhere in NP – which would be used by park users where they can't already stay in that area.

PG: How do you feel about Milford Sound?

KJ: We are flogging that golden goose so long. How do we deal with it because it's so crowded. It gives so many people the opportunity to experience it. I don't think Milford Sound needs any more visitors.

PG: How do you feel about the infrastructure in Milford Sound?

KJ: I haven't really thought about it because it is there. I don't know. I recognise that tourism is an important industry for NZ, and the ability for people to experience that is important.

Lynda Baker #372: 11.36am

Mother of 3, teacher, avid bush lover and nature love.

Read from written version of verbal submission.

I have no technical experience of seismic activity or engineering.

The proposed Hollyford Airstrip elevation will dominate the area and affect visitor experience. Ventilation shafts in the Routeburn area would detract from the natural values of the area.

Travellers short changed travelling through tunnel. The existing road shows villages, Eglington, culture, lifestyle and Environment. Travellers can fly rather than tunnel to reduce time. Still get to see the National Park.

Private profit – not necessary. Could destroy the uniqueness of the place.

Questions:

PG: Commercial developments with infrastructure. Are you comfortable with any infrastructure in the National Parks?

LB: We used to boat in Milford Sound, and you can't lock people out of these areas, MS is fairly saturated. I don't think a tunnel would attract more people to Milford Sound. I'm not opposed to existing infrastructure but don't want cafes in Eglington.

Day tramps in Glenorchy, Routeburn twice. DOC tracks and huts are far nicer than taking a tent. That's all part of progress, a giant tunnel would upset the equilibrium of the natural environment forever.

Glenorchy Road Cycling Club #975: 12.57pm

Katherine Cahill

Reading from written notes of verbal submission

We moved to Glenorchy to 'live the dream' – nature / quiet / remote. Kiwis have an emotional connection to the environment. National Parks belong to people of NZ.

Glenorchy and DOC have good relationship. DOCS job is to protect and preserve our protected areas. I'm not anti progress, but there is a perfectly good way to get to Milford Sound already.

Gut feeling – it's just wrong to put tunnel in National Park.

Cycle club opposed because enjoy serenity and quiet of Glenorchy road. 0.5hr from Glenorchy to Queenstown by bike.

Low levels of traffic to Glenorchy from Queenstown. Main traffic route to the tunnel would change this. 80 movements per day would be bus past cyclist every 5 min.
Cyclists at risk of slip streams on narrow road.

Routeburn road widening and power supply – power supply from Glenorchy end not considered relevant in report.

These should be included in the report and the effects assessed.

Brought up WHA status and the meaning of this and NZ's obligation to UNESCO to upkeep this status.

If this is approved, would open a can of worms.

Inconsistent with Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan, which public had submitted on. Otago Cons Board neutral but had great concerns.

Questions:

PG: Minister is not able to take into account the road and the areas outside National Parks. You mentioned 14 National Parks. Can you describe how National Parks are different to you than other special areas all around us.

KC: I choose to live in Glenorchy because so close to National Park. They are protected areas to be preserved for future generations. It's not the city and you know there will not be further development. 10 – 14 NPs is a lot when you consider how little of NZ is protected. NPs are preserved to keep in current natural state. It's also huge that it is a World Heritage Area and I do believe visitors come to the area to see that.

PG: Do you go to the Routeburn road end yourself? What do you do there?

KC: Yes, it's currently quite busy, but you go there because you know the hustle and bustle you can get away from within 5 minutes. You go there for the peace and quiet and serenity. You don't expect to go there and see a portal to a tunnel.

There is already another very good alternative route to Milford Sound.

CV: Most of your concerns are related to Glenorchy?

KC: I am representing the Cycling Club so only talked about Glenorchy end, but I still care about the Hollyford end.

Heather Rendel and Ewen Rendel #984: 1.33pm

Heather speaking on behalf of her and Ewen – joint verbal submission.

Reading from written version of verbal submission.

Process allows DOC to pre-approve proposal prior to consultation with public. Process needs to be reviewed?

Preconceived idea where money making comes before conservation. How much have hearings cost tax payers?

Proposed tunnel – money making enterprise to benefit a few tourists. No scenic value. Expense of landscape and scenery. World Heritage Area status at risk. Mining through National Parks – inconsistent with Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan.

Water is parks most pervasive sound – not traffic, construction, and service machinery.

CGP (4) quoted. MANMP – 6.7, policy 2 quoted.

Where impacts are unknown or uncertain, applications should be declined....

Where assessing applications accumulative impacts on the area should be considered.

Glenorchy residents like to enjoy the scenery and natural place. Charm and tranquil nature of Glenorchy would be compromised through increased traffic, with additional 80 bus movements per day in peak. Will it stop at 80 bus movements? Or would there be changes to this as more issues arise, and profit margins are expanded.

Irrevocable implications of the project.

Some things that are obvious to me lacking in the report:

Degradation of landscape at both ends of tunnel – portals.

Disturbance to both flora and fauna – permanently damaging habitat.

Major consequences for endangered species.

Power supply and transmission having impacts on land and vegetation and social values.

Electromagnetic Frequency emissions may effect wildlife as well.

Natural integrity being altered at expense of enterprise.

Amenities for construction workers.

Safety procedures – ventilation, fire safety, accidents etc.

Fire risk – construction, Rural Fire Authority (DOC would rely on volunteer fire services to address these issues.

Light pollution during the nights, and in particular during winter in darker months.

Noise pollution effecting people and wildlife in the area.

Seismic activity – dangers for tunnel and users – destabilisation in areas.

Monetary gain to DOC from enterprises like these. Should not have commercial gain in place of mandate to protect Public Conservation Land.

Entrance to RB would be significantly effected – increase in traffic would increase dust movement, and what if the tunnel opens to other users as well.

Road improvements how would this effect National Park?

Vibrations and noise pollution from heavy traffic.

DOC' s responsibility to protect and manage all these implications.

Therefore I object to the proposal and recommend the Department decline.

Questions:

PG: Can you describe your use of the Park?

HR: We hike and tramp and mountain bike in the area. We get outdoors as much as possible and use those areas.

PG: What's your view about commercial operations in parks in a general sense, how do you feel about the need to provide services for visitors?

HR: I generally don't like the idea of commercial operators outside of DOC, depending of course about what it is. For example making money for the sake of making money it doesn't make sense.

ER: Putting a hole through the mountain is not helping the tourist out at all. Not enhancing the visitor experience, its just desecrating the start of the National Park. It's not adding to the tourist

experience at all. If the services are managed well and the numbers are kept down and there is respect for National Park, but this proposal does not respect National Park, and somebody just wants to make some money.

Some friends wanted to cut their trip shorter so were going to fly to Milford Sound but were clouded in. So instead they had to take a bus trip, which they ended up thoroughly enjoying it and flying back by helicopter. Once they had done the trip, they didn't mind about how long it took because it was one of the best trips they had done in the world.

Don't think the time MDL are proposing are accurate as we have timed from Queenstown to the entrance, and from Hollyford back to Queenstown.

I haven't done the boat trip in Milford Sound since I was a kid so I couldn't comment now. I don't see the experience in Milford Sound being a bad thing for NZ, if they are done in such a way that our beautiful places are not wrecked. Just to get more people there doesn't make sense.

I don't think we should be sitting here at this point as once the tunnel is there it can't be undone.

MDL don't want to do this for the benefit of other people. They want to do it to make money. They are not thinking about livelihoods of people in Te Anau.

PG: The Minister cannot take into account matters to do with the road outside of National Park.

HR: The road from here to Glenorchy should be considered by DOC, because there are adverse effects on the wildlife in adjacent Public Conservation Land. If there is more traffic, this will have more of an impact on wildlife. Wildlife does not distinguish between the National Park boundaries, so we think the effects of the road on wildlife should be considered.

The process is not very democratic we feel.

This project can't be undone once it is done. If you could mitigate nearly all of the adverse effects, it still doesn't change this fact. It will never be the same again.

Ewen pointed out that in the 7 Mile Delta hearing, DOC didn't address some points that they should have and relied on the RC process, and the RC relies on the Concessions Process so they feel like some important points don't get addressed.

CV clarified that the process is cost recoverable and is not costing the tax payer.

Viv Shaw #282: 2.01pm

From Te Anau

Opposing proposal.

Regular user of Fiordland National Park and Mount Aspiring National Park. Live adjacent to Fiordland National Park but holiday every year in Glenorchy.
Also a member of Southland Conservation Board.

Tramping in both sides of proposed tunnel. Takes visitors particularly to Key Summit. These visitors can't believe this proposal.

Routeburn valley and Hollyford Valley would be changed forever if proposal is granted. This affects the experience of thousands of people using those tracks seriously.

A lot of people who walk the Routeburn perceive the Routeburn as a remote experience, even though the Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan does not classify it as that. The effects of the tunnel would detract from this feeling of remoteness.

Cannot see how effects can be mitigated, and be anything other than major.

Let's not stuff up the experience of the thousands of visitors to the Routeburn.

I am a member of the Southland Conservation Board for 5 years, familiar with Fiordland National Park Management Plan, Conservation Act, General Policy for National Parks and Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan.

Conservation Board already made a submission but personally I was shocked the report stated that the Conservation Board submitted a neutral submission, when it was careful to provide a very balanced recommendation to the Department. This is not neutral.

What concerns me at a personal level is that the Department appears to have ignored the Board's advice. We put in a huge amount of voluntary effort and our advice appeared to have been ignored. We all know the Fiordland National Park Management Plan was subject to a lot of public submission, and the Board's role is to oversee the management of this review.

The application is inconsistent with the plan in so many ways, that the intention to grant a concession should not have been considered in the first place.

The board's view is to preserve the National Parks in perpetuity ... etc.

I feel the Department is under a lot of political pressure to grant applications such as these. I feel it is up to the people of NZ now to stand up for these values where the Department is not.

Questions:

PG: What do you expect the visual impacts to be from the Key Summit Track?

VS: I was referring more to the noise effects at Key Summit, and there are already noise effects there and this will be so much worse with the tunnelling effects of the noise up the valley.

PG: What about the view from the Routeburn?

VS: You look down into the Hollyford Valley, you can see the airfield. That is going to be more visible so you can't mitigate this with plantings and it will stick out like a sore thumb.

CV: You said you had a business?

VS: We have a consultancy business in marketing and international business. I have done some work for the Department with Great Walks such as the Routeburn.

I speak on behalf of myself not any organisation I am associated with. I am an engineer, civil, electric and mechanical. Chartered professional engineer. Trumper – 40 years.

We use frequently the Hollyford and Routeburn valleys for access.

Conservation Volunteer, Guardians of Lakes, Value the relationship with DOC hugely. These trusts benefit hugely from our relationship.

In my experience, decisions made by DOC are based on research, modelling, and data analysis. Decisions made by a sound analysis of this data and a sound decision is made.

The Department has taken the application as having no more than minor effects, as stated in the application. The Department has not looked at this with a critical eye and assessed the details of this. There are key aspects which have been omitted from this critical analysis - - seismic for example.

The Officers Report does not acknowledge expert peer review taking place.

Flaw in Officers Report – large number of howevers:

Noise effects:

Drilling, blasting power generation, and processing.

Mitigated with NZ standards. Research showed these standards are not applicable in this case they designed to mitigate effects in an urban environment. Not blasting tunnelling etc.

Those mitigation measures are invalid. No evidence presented in the Officers Report or available to the Decision Maker.

Runway:

The Officers Report says it will be less visible. Of course it will be built up and be more visible. Particularly from the Orchard.

Access to the Park not addressed in Officers Report.

What are the effects on people using the Hollyford? Users of track not being NZers so won't mind? NZers use these tracks.

Groundwater:

Decommissioning the tunnel should this be necessary. It's the 3rd tunnel race effectively. It will change the ground water for the life of the tunnel. It does not travel naturally through an 11km tunnel.

Those are just some examples of things not included in the report or lacking in terms of analysis.

Officers Report is insufficient and inadequate. There are effects which cannot be adequately mitigated.

17U(6) Lease: Proposal fails to satisfy this clause

For those reasons, I would say there is insufficient information to the Minister to make a sound decision.

Questions:

PG: Visual Effects in your mind, can they be mitigated?

CS: I don't think the visual effects are the problem. The airstrip is a tricky one. Getting rid of the spoil is an issue. The engineering aspect of it by developing environments. I'm not opposed to that. I think the effects on airfield can be slightly mitigated but it is tricky to know how that will be carried out with information available.

I would like to see due process carried out to see what the effects actually are and will be.

Let's challenge and debate what these effects are rather than take them directly from the application.

Catherine Stewart #1132: 2.44pm

From Tauranga – flew down.

Speaking from written notes on verbal submission

I have a tourism background – escorting group coaches around. Done some walks on Routeburn and Hollyford. I walked the Hollyford December 2009 – truly amazing. Hollyford would be subject to tunnel discharge if tunnel proceeded.

Private access under Concession which could be on sold in future. Conflicts with World Heritage Area status. Private enterprise impeding in National Park.

Opposed due to following reasons;

World Heritage Area – special consideration

Adequate Access already

Unique Flora and Fauna – glacial landscape. Runanculus.

Earthquake / Landslide Risk / Soil Disturbance / Loss of Habitat

High rainfall and seismic activity combined to increase erosion risk.

Inconsistent with National Parks Act – S5 and 49, General Policy National Parks S.4 and 10, and Conservation Act S17U and 17W.

Area of outstanding natural beautiful.

Questions:

PG: Can you explain to us about your involvement in tourism?

CS: I sold travel, then I took groups away on cruises around NZ, Aus and S Pacific. I wrote guides and took coach tours around NZ. Did many day trips to Milford Sound.

PG: What change have you seen in tourist expectations over time?

CS: Tourists are looking for authentic tourism. Come from man built environment and want natural beauty and to experience things they haven't seen before and natural beauty in its pristine environment.

PG: What will it mean if we move to quite a focus to Chinese and Indian markets – what would that mean for us in terms of expectations.

CS: There is an increase in those tourists, might get one or two tourists that would want a quicker option but most people appreciate the experience of getting there and learning on the journey before you get there. You don't get the whole experience unless you experience the whole experience.

Olivier Matthews #1050: 3.23pm

From Glenorchy.

Why? Milford Sound is one of the great attractions to NZ. Pure natural beauty – natural being key word.

Untouched. Spectacular drive – one of world's most scenic drives.

I am a horse trekking guide. In contact with a lot of tourists and bounce ideas off them. We base on Rees and Dart river flats. We have views over Routeburn and Dart valleys. Majority of people feedback stunning, breathtaking, natural, unspoilt scenery. A stones throw from Queenstown, and there you have that stunning scenery.

That is what attracted me to live in NZ (English). And what is so attractive to many people.

I started my travels in the North Island, then travelled down to the South Island to apply for job I now have. I originally thought Queenstown was a tourist centre and didn't really like it. Then went out to Glenorchy and realised this is why I came to NZ.

Paradise is amazing. Not only the scenery – that'll be there if tunnel there or not. It's the ecology, the flora and fauna that will be affected by the tunnel.

With 50 or 60 buses going through town, that will change nature of the place. Peaceful and quiet, and within 15 minutes you can be in Queenstown.

Tourism is a big part of it, but many people come to experience the country because it is so natural, untouched, unspoilt.

Tunnel one project, but will it be the beginning of something else and a growing number of other developments.

A lot of people want to escape the rat race of England, and come here to escape that. The whole naturalness of the area is important to retain.

Some people at home (England) ask me "why do you want to go to NZ there's nothing there"? But that's the strong attraction to NZ. My parents think NZ is comparable to England 50 years ago is what her parents think, although they haven't been to NZ.

World Heritage Area and 2 National Parks. No legal obligation to maintain that, but there is a moral obligation to maintain World Heritage Area.

What effect will that have on tourism? It would be all over news and headlines.

National Parks status – legal obligation to maintain that area.

In particular S.4 of National Parks Act.

The need to leave flora and fauna in it's natural state in its own right.

Humboldt – seismic fault. Tunnel going through seismic zone – is this going to be safe?

What will tourists think about this potential danger? They may not want to use tunnel due to the great risk.

Thank you for opportunity to be heard.

Questions:

PG: Your experience as a horse trek guide at Glenorchy – how do you think the applicants proposal would differ from other coach customers?

OM: At least 75% of my customers have been or are going to Milford Sound. When they learn about the tunnel they say they allow the day to see Milford Sound and are happy to do that. And then they add what's the point in the tunnel, because they know what they are getting themselves into and are fine with that.

The tourists I have had experience with this trip have said it is a day well spent.

PG: How did you feel about your trip to Milford Sound with the existing road to Milford Sound and the facilities of MS

OM: It was only May Last year. I thought it was great. I didn't do it with a big tour company. I was with a Stray bus and we did quite a few stops. The drive is broken up so you get a chance to stretch your legs, and you forget about the drive because the scenery is so awe inspiring. It's one of those drives that are long, but it doesn't feel long. Spectacular views. View that sticks in my mind is just as you come out of Homer Tunnel.

We stayed at Gunn's Camp that night, and if that is going to be passed by busses it will ruin the atmosphere of it.

PG: What did you enjoy at Gunn's Camp?

OM: Original state, original huts, out in the middle of nowhere, limited electricity, original charm. A lot of the people I stayed there with loved it because in England there is nothing like that left in it's original state. It's just great to find something that has been kept and maintained.

CV: How long have you lived in Glenorchy?

OM: 9 months. Planning to stay at the moment. Only planned to stay for 1 winter. Sponsored but I need to see what happens with my visa.

Mary and Jack Turnball #1057: 3.42pm

Supplied some written notes which she read from.

Apologies from husband.

There are two different types of travellers – the types which do everything quickly and do not appreciate Milford Sound more than the other sites they saw within NZ. These are the types who would use the tunnel.

The other type are the ones that appreciate Milford Sound as being special and take the time to travel to Milford Sound. It is this group that are at risk of losing their unique experience in NZ if the tunnel goes ahead.

IF the tunnel does increase tourist activity in Milford Sound, then Milford Sound becomes less of an iconic Milford Trip.

Economic risk if development is not completed.

Family love tramping and experience the natural beauty of the place.

Find jet boats spoil the peace and tranquillity. The tunnel would in turn increase noise pollution.

Questions:

PG: Do you visit Hollyford area?

MT: Not so much. We've been to the Milford Sound area several times. We live in Queenstown and have a place in Glenorchy too.

Christine Byrch #1114: 4.15pm

Read submission with a few additions

I enjoy walking, climbing, ski touring and hunting.
We live in a material world and we as humans are the largest impact on that world.

Botanist, PHD in business and sustainable development, environmental consultant.

DOC obliged to preserve integrity of National Parks. The proposed development is in contradiction to National Parks Act. Preserving in perpetuity for intrinsic worth....

3 points:

1. Humanity doesn't have a good record for managing the environment. History teaches us to expect the unexpected. Human behaviour illustrates an incapacity to manage the planet.

2. Tunnel is not for benefit of the public. Minister should consider this. Who benefits from this? Tourists who don't want to get too tired for the long bus trip? Not a valid point to build a tunnel in the National Park.

3. If area has once been considered to deserve National Park status, what has changed to consider this is not important anymore? We have a finite area of Wilderness in NZ. Once its lost it cannot be recreated.

Mount Aspiring National Park is under threat by activities on the margin such as aircraft assisted hunting, aircraft, jet boating. More development cannot be justified by some existing development.

Quote from MacGibbon.

DOC may consider that it's managing the National Park to best of ability.
Is management what is called for – humanity doesn't have a good track record of this.

We should study history to enable us to manage the world today. We can have no assurances that this will be okay.

How DOC can consider the effects of this large scale activity to be no more than minor.
It is inconsistent with the legislation.

Development is a one-way street. MDL proposal will set a precedent for others to propose other large activities.

Think very carefully – DOC's first responsibility is to National Parks not to Concessionaire.

DOC cannot consider the effects outside of Public Conservation Land. Local councils do their bit.
Who looks at the overall effects of the project?

How can you let a proposal like this occur without considering the end effects?

Questions:

PG: In giving your view of wilderness and the benefits of being in a National Park, what's your position with determining what visitor services are appropriate if visitors are going to use these areas to their benefit?

CB: I understand that different people will want a different standard of huts etc to enjoy the wilderness. I love the wilderness and love to go places where there are no huts or tracks. I recently walked the Cascade and Shotover saddle. There was a large number of overseas tourists that were there because of the tracks. I wonder how those tourists would have found the touching the experience rather than just looking at the place.

Couldn't believe seeing the DOC ranger trimming the tussocks either side of the track to prevent getting feet wet.

Walking RB track late summer, early spring helicopters bombing small avalanches and closing the track while doing this.

If you want to go into National Park for the day, there is a lot of stuff to walk past before you get into the natural environment. In places DOC does manage the land which is suitable for people not as experienced as her, but in her view a nature experience is without those facilities.

Gilbert van Reenan #1076: 4.32pm

Connection and affinity with area goes back a long time.

First visited lower Hollyford 30 years ago. Gunn had just drowned. First 1965 trip to Big Bay before National Parks status. Ascended Mt Tutoko. Numerous ascents of Darrans. Lots of experience on Dart side too. My emotional and physical well being due to these places.

I have been a member of Otago Conservation Board.

I'm convinced DOC's got it wrong, and proposal is completely inconsistent with the spirit, intent and body of the Fiordland National Park Management Plan, the Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan and the National Parks act and the Conservation Act.

Many Concessions don't get past the first stage of processing, and this one shouldn't have.

Recommendations made by the report writer - so how can you be objective when hearing the submissions? (Paul explained that he is chairing the hearing process.)

The Department has been dismissive of opinions of the Otago and Southland Cons Boards. Affinity and feelings of the area are not considered. The DOC report is clumsily put together.

Carbon footprint. Peak oil. Sustainable use of energy. Major issues in a holistic manner.

How will the process run from here?

PG: we do an analysis of submissions, then the Conservators in Otago and Southland will put a proposal to the Decision Maker – who is the DDG operations. That person need not make that decision and may push it up one level manager.

Gilbert seemed to think this was too vague and not transparent. Scary even.

GV: No references provided in report, or any discussion of methodology coming to conclusions.

I hope the opinions of the Conservation Boards were considered more than the 10 minutes they were heard for.

Questions:

PG: Can you explain your understanding of the Conservation Authority endorsement of the Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan?

GV - The authority has approved the MANPMP which negates the possibility of the tunnel. So I haven't been able to get the minutes, they are a bit obscure. I have tried to get that information but it's all a bit vague.

PG- What's your view of how we provide facilities for the range of people who have an expectation to enjoy our place.

GV - It's a thorny one. I was involved in gazetting the Olivine Wilderness Area and the Red Hills as Wilderness Areas. In my early days of being in the mountains I experienced the real remote real wilderness environment. This really enhanced my feelings of well being and my perception of the world today.

People's opinions these days are very different 30-40 years on. We have a balance and need to take kids into the wilderness areas, and that sets kids up for life. We need to have places we can take them.

There is also a problem with the number of tourists. Mostly foreigners, we are on the world map to enjoy that Wilderness Experience. We've got to make it appropriate for them, but we have to be careful to have zones.

I think the Department has it right with places like the Routeburn – was involved with the proposal to put units with ensuites into the Routeburn. We were persuaded that that was okay. But at the same token, the Haast road, some of the tracks to the waterfalls etc there are wheelchair access. This is also necessary.

We need to make these sorts of developments careful and considered decisions.

I don't go to Milford Sound when I know there will be loads of people. CSIRO wrote the report on the carrying capacity of Australia and gives a realistic view on water and land capacity. One of main Concessionaires in the area has stated that the input of extra people into the area would seriously hinder the experience of people in Milford Sound.

Feel Doubtful sound is becoming like Milford Sound is now. Feel the increase in tourist activity has degraded the MS experience – noise of planes, buses, boats etc. Hearing planes coming over Routeburn Track etc is very degrading for the experience.

I know how much pleasure flying over some of those places can give people. I am a pilot myself.

Stn Lakes Deerstalkers Assoc. #1111: 4.49pm

David Ryder

Fundamentally a misuse of the National Parks Act Section 4, parts 1 and 2.

I don't recall seeing anything in the application from the effects of heavy metals from the spoil. I am a geological engineer, and would like to see any projections of soil and mineral content and how they are proposing to mitigate any leaching or runoff in high rainfalls how this would be managed.

Public shall have freedom of entry I'm not sure how exclusive access arrangement will allow that to happen. An excavation of this sort with a change in use of the area is clearly inconsistent with the NP Act and how it is directed to be managed.

Part 2 NP Act. - Indigenous resources shall be preserved...

This application clearly doesn't meet this part of the act.

To receive in full measure the recreational.... From hunting perspective it is a very good resource. Impending imposition on the game council to shift deer from a pest animal in a change of legislation.

That level of development at the portal area would significantly impact on recreational and hunting use of the area.

Questions:

PG: Deerstalkers must support provision of roads to be able to go hunting?

DR: We do within the provisions of the NP Act, but this road is not consistent with the NP Act.

We love access through heli access to designated areas.

Familiar with both valleys Hollyford and Dart. A lot of circuits through Greenstone to Hollyford and Routeburn.

Current access is more than sufficient for our needs.

Thursday 22st March - Aspen Hotel Queenstown

Paul Green (Chair), Chris Visser, Erin Dunlop (note taking)

Media Present – ODT and Southland Times

Observers –Michael Sleigh

Vladka Kennett: 9.49am

Her submission was signed on behalf of family members so she is supplied a copy of her notes.

Thank you for opportunity to be heard. Glenorchy resident, tourism specialist – B+B owner and private guide on various tracks in the Mount Aspiring National Park.

Glenorchy is a progressive, dynamic community who rely on existing conservation values. The tunnel would affect them and the way they live.

The Routeburn is high in flora, fauna and recreation values. This would be affected by widening road, noise, habitat destruction etc.

Emergency generator – fuel storage, high risk with tankers going into area.

Proposal a spit in the face of the people who have worked hard to bring the NP to the standard it is now.

Many people come to the Routeburn to experience the beauty or mana of the place. Spiritual feelings of the place – what Maori call Mana. This is significant and not very common these days. I thought National Parks would be protected or tapu. So not sure how this has come about this far.

NZ might be only country in the world with virgin untouched nature. You have wilderness, or civilisation – rare to have both. This makes NZ a very attractive destination. People from Europe come to experience this which they do not have at home. There is nowhere in Europe where you can experience untouched feeling. Important to maintain this feeling for future generations.

If we remove the World Heritage Area status, there is no going back.

Quality tourism of the new age traveller, people want to see something unique. Milford Sound good example.

My travel business has existed since 2004 and Milford Sound has grown since then. People would rather choose Doubtful sound over Milford Sound to avoid crowds. Milford Sound marketed over the world, and what tourists see in marketing and not actually what they see when they come and visit. Factory – boat after boat, crowds and buses.

Easily accessible is not actually what tourists want.

I'm from the Czech Republic – the proposal in it's stage of approval reminds me of communist process as there are lots of ideas that were massaged into the people to make them think it would be a good idea and then they never happened. (the 'benefits' never eventuated)

I am a member of Search and Rescue. In Europe there are loads of tunnels in alps. High density of tunnels, and rescues can happen quite quickly.

Tragedies do happen. From Glenorchy rescues cannot happen so quickly – delay in travel to get there.

I'm not against progress. I just don't have interest in raping one of the last wilderness oases in the world.

If the tunnel goes ahead it would be a precedent for the future. Stop it while we can, and show NZ stands strong with it's principals.

Questions

PG: How have you seen the visitors expectations change over time in regards to Routeburn side of park?

VK: These areas are less accessible all over the world so they really want to see what they can't have in EU. Some people want more comfortable hikes and others really want to have low impact walks where the nature cannot be touched or spoilt.

Our B+B guests use us as the start or finish of the track. They don't mind to travel longer, they just want to see what they came for. Untouched nature, tranquillity, quietness that's what they want to experience.

Glenorchy end of road, it means a lot to them. In front of you there is the land of nature – nobody in front of you. It's psychological to know that is there.

CV: As a tour operator what sort of people do you deal with?

VK: Czech republic with tours, and all over world with B+B. I really have feedback from various countries. Prototype of client mid age, well situated couples, people who really want to have good experience and don't mind paying for it. Don't want to be compromised by mass tourism such as Milford Sound.

We went to Milford Sound but I was so disappointed – so many people it was horrible.

Wairaurahiri jet boat – more pristine, quiet, remote experience. Don't want to be a part of that factory.

PG: Where do you guide?

VK: In the National Park. Routeburn day walks, lower Dart, Invincible, Lake Sylvan, Schelite Mine.

Jason Law #1173: 10.35am

Provided a copy of his presentation notes and a calendar he raised \$12,500 for Pike River Coal disaster families.

Landscape photographer – professional full time job. Passionate about outdoors and in this area particularly. Travelled the world and this is where I chose to live. Routeburn is favourite place in world.

Nature is my world through photography. Has a stall on Saturdays at Earnslaw Market. Amazing spectrum of people go through markets from all parts of world, all age groups. Been down there for a year. People in market place talked about this proposal over the past few years.

Mechanical Engineer – was for 8 years for Fisher and Pykel, also for a Fuel Company in Alaska, and drones for military was part of a team to design team. Understands design process is always more complicated than it seems.

Struck a chord when heard Minister's intention to grant before any assessment had been done of technical information.

Had thought the process was flawed to have reached this decision without consultation or assessment – maybe because of the new government?

Looked up URS proposals, and became very concerned – primarily there was not much design or effort put in place to look at constraints and deal with them. Tunnel Geometry is critical. Standard bus or coach will not fit in this tunnel. It may fit but it won't be safe. URS have proposed a customised bus just for this tunnel.

This is concerning. I spent so many years of my life designing a fridge. How many years will it take to design a bus?

There's no sprinklers, no turning bays or anything in this design proposal. No air proof bays, no ventilation shafts.

Reminds of Pyke River disaster. A lot of similarities with Pike tunnel – geometry size, the process for DOC to approve the tunnel which was not safe.

Infinite amount of questions for engineer.

10th longest road tunnel in world, and by far the smallest. The size of an escape route for a regular tunnel. The size is far too small.

I can understand the way the tunnel is the size it is – to reduce debris in National Park to minimise impact. But that negates a huge part about what makes any tourism industry profitably and that is safety.

Big Questions I have:

Who will insure this project after Pike River disaster?

Such a scale doesn't stack up economically – risks are so large.

Tunnel Geometry – why there are no turn around bays, general lighting, sprinklers, air tight safety rooms?

Assumption there will never be a fire? Fires in Homer tunnel. Accident in Belgium – in much smaller tunnel.

This proposal simply hands off all the safety issues to this black box which is a customised design for a bus.

All I see in URS document is drilling a hole, and deal with HUGE risks later – with designing the buses.

End up with piece meal project where putting out fires.

Designing the fire proof bus could be a huger project than drilling the hole. Doesn't think it's possible to design a fire proof bus – thinks it is laughable.

Regardless of conservation values, recreational and natural, road effects, effects on Glenorchy and so on.

Bennett's Bluff will become the new look out. What happens when 2 buses pull over – safety issues. Cost of developing that road – diabolical concept. Huge safety risk and cost.

\$160,000,000 toward this project. Has anyone seen a breakdown of these costs?

I look at this and it doesn't stack up. I can't see a project of this scale costing so little in a remote area. This doesn't take into account tax payers money which contribute.

Then they get benefit of 50 year lease.

Some tourists may get benefit of an extra hour or two in Queenstown, but it does not weigh up the extra cost on roading, safety, for the benefit of \$10,000,000 a year for MDL.

MDL so focused on drilling a hole, they are losing sight of the bigger picture.

The tax payer would end up paying more money than MDL.

Most tourists probably don't even want it.

What is the purpose of this tunnel – is it to benefit NZ economy? How can it?

Not many tourists talk about how bad there bus trip was to MS as it currently is. The journey is part of the destination.

Showed photos of bus tragedy in Switzerland. That wasn't on the tourist trail but made international news. Imagine the press that would affect NZ if there were 50 killed in an 11.6km tunnel.

Why are we putting our tourist's lives at risk?

If there's any smoke or fire at all in that tunnel – death trap. Even in Homer people get hospitalised because of smoke inhalation in 1.7km tunnel.

With dimensions of tunnel, you couldn't walk past the bus. Too narrow. How do you escape?

It's ridiculous.

These are the issues, by DOC looking at now, rather than palming off further down the track, need to look at this now.

Is DOC willing to risk the lives of our tourists?

I open up the front page of the Calendar – 49 Pyke River deaths. I hope I never have to make one of these for the tourists in the tunnel. This is realistic in my book.

Questions:

PG: Are you familiar with the Hollyford side of proposal too?

JL: Yep, I have taken lots photos in Hollyford Valley. I don't see NZ in this proposal, I see men with suits and dollars behind this, and I feel sad that the Department is even looking at it. That is what I want to put forward.

Ross McFadgen #1196: 11.02am

From Bannockburn.

Engineer, now retired.

Has experience in mechanical marine engineering firms – gold mining, sluice and spill gate. Exploratory drilling on West Coast. Oil drills off coast of NZ.

Tramping, alpine climbing, and fishing in National Parks. Have had input into geological Surveys and publications. Big interest of native birds within the Routeburn area. Also familiar with the Hollyford side and the native birds life around this area.

Thank you for opportunity to submit.

Concerns:

Widening of Routeburn road – will it be sealed, if not why not? Who will play for forming, sealing and upkeep of this.

Entrance to National Park dramatic entrance on the road.

Disposal of spoil at unspecified site – at night?

MDL and directors – how are they guaranteeing completion of this project?

Manapouri took 10 years to construct, how is this to take less?

Tunnel boring machine – where are the geotech results?

Livingstone fault and alpine fault. Where is the seismic reports?

Power supply from Glenorchy – who will pay for supply? MDL or people of Glenorchy?.

No public discussion over number of years proposal taken to put together. Need for public consultation now rather than a ‘fait a complit.’

Area of construction site concern. Bush wrens and kaka, and bat would be highly affected through the construction site – what mitigation has been proposed???

204,079m3 spoil. Haul road construction to haul this spoil out.

Surface of airstrip will not be planted to avoid leachates.

Effect of traffic in GY and Hollyford.

Nothing put forward by MDL to minimise effect of increased traffic on GY.

PG clarified that matters which could be considered by the Minister of Conservation were limited to those on Public Conservation Land.

Questions:

PG: as a regular user of parks how do you look at the need to provide facilities and infrastructure to the general public for example how do you feel about the facilities provided at the moment?

RM: If there is any amount of publically owned land that can be used for tunnel construction. National Parks should be completely sacrosanct.

Many people don't want a quick loop. They want to take their time. I've sailed around Australia and NZ. I feel that people would appreciate it more if these journeys were incorporated into having a break rather than shortening the trip.

I don't think anybody will lose out by that approach.

I have reservations on the geological questions around here.

There should be public benefits from a proposal like this, not private benefit.

The current drive allows people to see a very special part of our country.

Matukituki is another example of this type of access.

It's pristine Wilderness in many cases.

Routeburn has had historical grazing, introduction of EU grasses. Same with Caples and Greenstone. I appreciate that given time these places will regenerate and should be guarded in order to do this.

Jillian Whitfield #1261: 11.18am

I am actually rather annoyed that I wasn't actually given speaking times. It was only because I saw in the paper that hearing are being held. I went out of my way to enquire which I am not happy about. I hear I'm not the only person which is a matter of concerns.

From Invercargill so would have liked to have gone to Te Anau but missed it.

I appreciate the outdoors and especially the Routeburn area and the Fiordland National Park. I opposed this proposal.

I have lived here for 45 years. When I first moved here I was blown away by the pristine area. Large proportion of its appeal is the remoteness. Always impressed her how NZ looks after there remote areas. Was so pleased when received World Heritage Area status.

How could DOC entertain the idea of this development when it could put the WH status at risk. Should have never been considered.

If I could just outline in brief the consideration of the proposal is incompatible with the mandate of the Department of Conservation. I would question if it is even legal in terms of the National Parks Act.

Threat to native endangered birds and bats.

All day congestion and could deter visitors looking for the tranquillity aspect.

Upgrading Hollyford road and effect on changing that area.

Associated costs of upgrading the roads in GY and Hollyford.

I'm sure the tourist operators are looking at own interests rather than tourists interest.

Public need clarification on whether or not the private company can sell Concession to overseas interests?

Explored many parts of Fiordland and feels there is nothing to compare with those experiences. Take many friends form over seas to Milford. Nobody has ever complained about the length of the journey Invercargill to Milford Sound.

I don't think the journey needs shortening. My view is shared by lots of other people. Area should be left untouched also construction of tunnel creates large impacts.

Impossible to quantify the risk to endangered wildlife i.e. Mohua and Long Tailed Bats.

Construction phase would be more of an ongoing concern, not just short term.

Suggestion that tunnel would even out the trouble at peak time, she feels that this would exacerbate the congestion along the Milford Road and at Milford Sound. Large part of the trip to Milford is to enjoy the feeling of remoteness and tranquillity. This tunnel could kill the very reasons why people go to Milford – the remoteness and tranquillity.

Widening the Hollyford Road has loads of practical difficulties as well as the economic.

Near the river and the land on the other side can be unstable. Slips on one side, river on other side. How are you going to work with this?

What if there is damage to road – could cost millions to repair. Cost to tax payers.

Tunnel concept including changes to Hollyford road together is an intrusion into the rights of the users of the area. Totally unacceptable for the people who are the owners of this area. Shouldn't be pandering to the tourist operators at the expense of the recreation users of the park.

New Zealanders have an expectation that DOC is there to preserve the natural areas and preservation in natural state. I am really concerned about the World Heritage Area. Should not even be looked at to do anything in that park.

What will be next – Kingston Flyer through park?

Recreation users have a right to be able to use that area in the state that it is in now, as a conservation area.

National Parks, World Heritage Area and Conservation Land – such a contradiction with this application.

I urge you to deny this application. Unwanted and inappropriate.

Questions:

PG: As a visitor to Fiordland for 45 years, you must have seen some changes – what are positives and negatives?

GW: 3rd of those years I was visitor not recreation user. As I explored further I wondered why I never did it before. Changes aren't apparent as you are travelling through. As you are tramping you realise the facilities are very good.

The changes at Milford Sound make it difficult to take a photo of Mitre Peak to get a picture without heads in the way. More people are seeking an experience which holds peace and tranquillity. More buses would lead to bustle and busy.

If people don't go to Milford Sound, they will seek more remote places. Are we wanting to make money from Milford Sound or are we wanting to share it for the beauty of the place.

Independent travellers all know they need to get away from Te Anau before the buses to avoid the crowds at Milford Sound.

PG: So was sealing of Milford Road a negative in your case?

JW: No probably not negative, but it changed it from a fun experience to a less adventurous one. I don't see the need to have another road to rush people through from another area.

I will be horrified if you do it. I won't be the only person either. I will look for other areas to go to rather than to go to that area.

CV: Are you much of a user of the Routeburn Side?

JW: I have been through Routeburn 3 times. I am not as much of a user of the Routeburn side. I have had bad health for the past few years, but am about to launch into it again.

Even if I never personally went to these places again, I would not want this experience to be spoiled for my own children and grandchildren.

I have always admired how NZ looks after its National Parks.

The drive from Queenstown to Te Anau is so unlike anything in any other country. I know a lot of passengers sleep through this part. But they will fall asleep anyway.

I enjoy sharing the area.

What's going to happen next – hotels along the road?

Finished 11.40am

Jenny Davies #913: 1.04pm

Thank you for opportunity.

I'm full time Glenorchy resident, mother of 2. Dart stables. Held Concession for 10 years to run this.

We have respect for DOC in Glenorchy and Wakatipu.

Love Glenorchy and get emotional about the proposed tunnel. Come from London so very different – really appreciate what we have out there. Glenorchy has had stronger pull than back home in London. Peacefulness, remoteness.

Tunnel would ruin this for our community and our future generations.

Reasons

Glenorchy road widening. Accommodate 2 lanes.

Big yellow sign – suitable not for campervans as not wide enough.

15,000square metres destruction of habitat.

Peace and enjoyment at Lake Sylvan and Routeburn tracks and road end would be ruined.

Last few winters took kids up and went sledging at no cost. Winter wonderland. Used by other families in the area.

The Park is a year round destination and it is under threat.

Understand that this tunnel puts World Heritage Area status under threat. Embarrassment to NZ.

Dart river jet and Dart Stables use World Heritage Area in their advertising. If we lose that status it would harm our business and Dart River Jet.

Increase numbers to Milford Sound – people are increasingly choosing to go to Doubtful Sound as it is too busy at Milford Sound. Numbers have dropped since 2007 in Milford Sound, maybe that is why.

Doubtful Sound is the increasing preference at Dart Stables customers.

Those choosing to visit Milford Sound, would just accept that it is a long road trip and the journey is part of the attraction. Making it a quicker journey would decrease the appeal of going there.

We've had two power cuts this week how will this affect tunnel?

Inconsistent with National Parks Act, Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan. Goes against the will of visitors, and users of National Park.

This is all happening at the costs of our nationally treasured and internationally treasured World Heritage Area.

Business gain is not guaranteed. But loss of our integrity of our National Parks is guaranteed if this goes ahead.

Questions:

PG: how much infrastructure do you think should be built in National Parks like Mount Aspiring National Park to give tourists access?

JD: The road system currently gives them the experience and people are already using the existing road network if you so wish to go there. There are alternatives such as Doubtful, and more and more of her customers prefer to go to Doubtful. Tourism is good but not at the detriment of the visitor experience and the reason for actually going there in the first place.

Lived in Glenorchy 11 years.

PG: What type of people do use Dart Stables?

JD: English and American market dropped away. Get more Asians – quick and easy cheap. Australians. Mostly women, mid 20s through to 40s. Families. Mostly Australians and Americans coming back more recently. We are tapping into the Asian market which we don't know much about.

Aussie and English market would not be interested in using the tunnel.

Peter Davies #948: 1.16pm

Lived in Glenorchy 17 years, operate horse trekking business, both kids attend Glenorchy school.

First time ever speaking at hearing. Ridiculous proposal. Why are we even here? Should not, and cannot happen.

We are only supposed to mention the areas mentioned in the submission. 15 issues narrowed down to:

Routeburn road widening to accommodate buses, threatening already threatened flora and fauna.

Threaten World Heritage Area

Otago Conservation Board doesn't support proposal

Inconsistent with Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan – no need for tunnel.

Power required supply when Glenorchy already under pressure.

What happens with 25,000m³ fill?

The overall effects are huge, benefits minimal and no guarantees it will work.

Negative effect on tourism. My business will be ruined. Buses would destroy the reason for people wanting horse treks. We would have to withdraw our Concession.

Milford Sound – how many people can it sustain daily? Already people talk of going to Doubtful instead to get a better experience.

Not necessary, and even if it was it wouldn't be worth the risk to the detriment of our environment.

Asks that DOC don't continue with this proposal so that we can continue on with our lives and reduce stress and money expense for us.

Rise of the river flats is where business is based. Been there since 1992. You can hear a car from about 5km in Glenorchy. I can't sell a product I don't have faith in. Jenny and My passion for the business is based on this integrity.

The outlook, noise, one 10m point would affect our rides. We would cease to operate if it goes ahead. People wouldn't want to come.

We are a unique business, because these operations can't exist in other countries where not as much continuous space i.e. gates and fences etc.

People also come to use other tracks in National Parks.

The gravel road was good for our business – was hard when the road got sealed.

Remarks from visitors such as English etc, that little bit of extra development would affect it.

DOC has deemed any adverse effects minor and temporary – how can anyone and DOC say this?

It's going to be an absolute change for GY and the NP. Long term.

You can't just change people's lifestyles like that and the park.

Questions:

PG: You were talking about the tourist market. What do you see as some of the key things that people coming today are looking for?

PD: Queenstown is a fantastic town and those who want t bit of NZ, can travel 48km down the road to GY. We were the mini Milford but now we are closer by. A rural bit of NZ, a compliment to Queenstown.

I would rather see all the noisiness in Queenstown and keep Glenorchy as it is. You won't be able to allow this to be granting this.

This has cost us heaps and we don't want to go through years of this.

Patricia Ko #169: 1.30pm

Supplied a copy of her written notes and showed a slideshow of photos.

Come from Holland originally, husband Kiwi - guide for Ultimate Hikes on Routeburn.

Bring children in winter to Lake Sylvan even in winter. Son learnt to ski here.

Putting aside the rules which were put aside to allow this to happen will send out a message to our children.

Questions:

PG: Your comment about the road having a negative effect on the tourist can you expand on what you think about this?

PK: I get a lot of visitors from all over the world who don't go deep into the NP area, and they play more on the outskirts. If we say that the tunnel would be there, it says that as NZers we don't really care about the natural resources that we have. We advertise NZ as 100% pure, and this tunnel says that we don't believe this.

She wants to ask MDL some questions and talk with him. Not allowed through Submission process.

She asked Mike if they could come and talk to our community in GY.

She asked what the process would be from here.

We having sleepless nights over this and are really stressed out.

Brett Martelletti #157: 3.11pm

(Walked up the hill on his crutches)

Expand on some points in written submission:

Amendment declined in 2007 by NZCA, and he feels the proposal hasn't changed since then. Therefore the negative effects are still applicable.

Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan – preservation. Keep from being damaged, changed or ended. Tunnel and roadway would create damage, change and end the park the way it is.

To approve is totally ignoring that part of the plan. Perpetuity – means forever. These words are written for obvious reasons in the plan.

If we start making changes in the National Parks then the next people will come in and say they can do that as well.

That way the whole plan is thrown into disregard. The plan is put there to keep the National Park intact.

Capital gain is not mentioned in the Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan.

Milford Sound already easily accessed through Te Anau. Milford Sound is its own tourist destination so people will not stop coming to Queenstown without the tunnel.

Tunnel is not of any benefit to Queenstown, users of the park, Glenorchy, or New Zealanders, only a benefit to MDL.

To ruin part of National Park and destroy that enjoyment of people would destroy the attraction for people to come to the park.

Loss to NZ tourism energy, users of park, and to our ancestors who had the foresight to create the National Park.

The past generations which created the National Parks and put the plans in place to protect it. To alter the National Parks and disregard the Management Plans would completely change the park forever.

Questions:

PG: Can you explain your use of Routeburn, Hollyford Area and how this might impact it.

BM: Tramped Hollyford from Gertrude, to Adelaide down into Hollyford. Cycled to Homer Hut. Tunnel would detract from that whole trip.

That road would no longer be gravel, it would be sealed with buses and vehicle. Visual impact would be quite obvious from Darran Mountains. Visual scars are there permanently.

Not just entrance to tunnel, it's also what you do with spoil. It's not going to get trucked out it's just going to be dumped.

Huge scar on landscape and not part of the landscape that the NP are known for.

PG: There is a wide range of people using the park – how do you cater for larger numbers in park in your view?

BM: Our National Parks are accessible to all able bodied people. Tracks like Routeburn developed to cater for people with disabilities. Enough roading already to provide access to those parks. Building tunnel is not providing anyone to access National Parks but it is providing travel through the park. No appreciation for the park.

For those who want to enjoy the park, the tunnel does not provide anything to them. Milford Sound is a destination, and if they wanted to get there quicker could catch a plan. I think people would enjoy Milford Sound more if travelled through Te Anau. That route is 25-50% of the experience.

CV: Routeburn – do you use that recreationally?

BM: Yup I travelled through Routeburn, Caples, Greenstone. I have plans to do trips up Bryant Glacier, Scott Ck, a lot of routes around there which are accessed from the portal area. These trips of major importance as they access backcountry remote area. These areas will be affected for their natural quiet values. The noise from the portal would detract from the backcountry remote experience.

Matt Belcher #7: 3.26pm

Is this lip service? Will these statements have an effect?

PG: Yes. It's part of a process.

MB: What is the percentage for and against for oral submissions?

PG: 2 in support and the rest have been against.

MB: Right so overwhelmingly against.

Provided written notes for oral submission.

Can't think of anywhere else in the world where you can be in a World Heritage Area and not hear any traffic or see any other people.

All people going to National Park from Glenorchy side will be affected, as currently there is no extra traffic which are going to any other destination other than the Routeburn road end.

The tunnel would not improve the experience travelling to Milford Sound. Concession holders such as Revolution Tours limited – his company are all affected by this proposal.

These areas after the tunnel built would no longer have tranquil remote experience. All visitors to area will be affected.

I understand you are both from Christchurch? (to MDL).

From my experience as a Glenorchy resident I recommend you cut your losses and put your money somewhere where it might work.

Glenorchy residents will fight to the bitter end.

The tunnel would become a white elephant in park for DOC to deal with.

Questions:

PG: what sort of tours do you do with your company?

MB: 4 day tour – luxury cycle tour, rail trail – Earnslaw, cycle side of lake, Kinloch, paradise, walk Routeburn track (past portal), day walk Routeburn paradise, walk into Dart than bus out.

Clients are city dwellers from North Island, average 50, groups and families, more kiwis than overseas visitors.

1 day trip, get more people from states, Hong Kong, NZ, Australia, not many from Asia.

Target market New Zealanders and Australians.

1 night Kinloch Lodge, 2 night Glenorchy Lodge.

Can't come to NZ if don't go to Milford Sound – a lot is missed by going through a tunnel. Be a shame to miss the lakes.

I think the passengers were overwhelmed by how beautiful the trip was to Milford Sound.

Philip Stanford #176: 3.55pm

Suggestions – with the CD of submissions, it would have been easier to categorise them into for and against. That would help make it clearer for submitters trying to clarify who is for and against.

Thinks most New Zealanders feel quite strongly about this. Tried to sift through the ones that were for the tunnel and they were mostly coming from the angle of the length of the trip and to visit Milford Sound.

It is very clear to me that in the Management Plans it states that any roads will not be developed. The existing access is already adequate and is a beautiful trip. Plenty of air access. Just spent \$4million on flood protection in Milford Sound to cater for airstrip. Access already exists.

I go regularly to Milford Sound. This could spoil the goose that laid the golden egg.

They won't build it for \$160 million. Will cost more.

It will be detrimental to the experience of the visit. They will probably go bankrupt and have to sell to overseas investors.

Construction process: Will be long. Took longer to build Manapouri Power station. Longer than 3-4 years.

Not easy country – earthquake, landslide, flooding risks. Can mitigate as much as like, but the realities of the situation is that the proposal is unsustainable.

Long and short term issues with both portals. Flooding, earthquake – to major fault lines. Can't mitigate earthquake risk. More roadwork's in Hollyford. Congestion problems when arrive onto Milford Road. They will hit together, and timing will not mitigate this problem.

Removal of existing podocarp forest at Hollyford end. Not huge numbers of trees, but it is still native trees. Beautiful river and beautiful area.

Great for hunting, tramping, families. Dart – beautiful area. These are all part of the National Park. Traffic – buses - no one will want to walk through all that traffic.

Spill – Manapouri built 40 years ago. Still have effects 40 years later. It does provide electricity but this tunnel doesn't provide anything at all.

Routeburn and Hollyford tracks outstanding walks. Fiordland steep and difficult. But these walks are easier for older, younger, less able groups. It would be a shame to spoil this for those users. They are the only walks in Fiordland which cater for these groups other than the Milford.

There is adequate access by bus routes, and planes – why change it.

National Parks belong to everyone – all New Zealanders. Not to an organisation or department or group. Visitors will want to come to NZ and National Parks until we spoil it and the things it has to offer such as hunting, tramping, birdlife, nature etc.

The first National Park was Tongariro donated by a Maori Chief in 1987. He realised how important natural areas were, and we need to adopt those values.

DOC worked hard, and understand that DOC has been gutted lately and doesn't deserve it.

Worked hard to preserve a part of our wilderness but if we say yes now it will affect it forever.

I live in Queenstown, work in Invercargill, Te Anau and Queenstown. Majority of people against live in the area who are opposed to application.

The general feeling amongst New Zealanders is that the proposal shall not go ahead and that the National Parks should be sacrosanct.

I will be submitting against the Monorail project too.

Unspoilt beauty, uncluttered nature is what attracts him. I feel there is adequate access.

Sees people taking pictures of deer farms and sheep when buses stop on road from Queenstown to Te Anau and Queenstown to Invercargill.

People do sleep in buses – that's tourists for you. We shouldn't be pandering to them.

The premise is access, and I feel the existing access is adequate.

No Questions

Helen Ritchie #1084: 4.30pm

Phone call from Wellington on loud speaker.

Thanks for doing the work, lots of work.

I'm a Wellington Councillor, the longest standing Wellington Councillor.

I'm a New Zealander and passionate about this part of the country, particularly the extraordinary beauty of Fiordland and the Mount Aspiring National Park and the fact that it is part of a World Heritage Area.

I was a guide on the Hollyford and Routeburn.

Very concerned about this proposal – concerned that DOC has got to this point, as I understand they have supported this because there could be mitigation of some kind.

I refute this.

I would consider that even though the Minister has the power to approve any activity which is extraordinarily broad, I would consider it an abuse of power to exercise her power to grant this.

Not only would it be an abuse of power, but in itself would cause irrevocable desecration of the World Heritage Area.

My concern that the Minister has this wide ranging power. If it was granted that it would flaunt the key purpose of the Department's functions and the mandate of the Conservation Act.

If it went any further, the granting could cause a sig precedent – what else would be able to be granted in our precious areas of NZ through this legislation which the Minister is able to exercise.

The application is quite contrary and inconsistent with the Conservation Act, National Parks Act, Management Plans and it is really hard to understand and is very disappointing that DOC has allowed this threat on our intrinsic values in the National Parks.

To draw out legislation to this extent there is no mitigation, and no remedying of effects. Unlawful.

Questions:

PG: public access. Where do you think the test is or boundary for providing access so people can enjoy parks of this nature, whilst providing adequate infrastructure.

HR: Sufficient infrastructure and access is in place at present. This is a reason for declining.

We are in danger of ruining the golden egg. Completely spoiling the area so why would you then want access to it.

The answer lies with existing infrastructure. Putting in many more buses into an area which is already challenge would put more pressure on a pristine environment.

Industrial dump sites outside portal in Hollyford would irrevocable change the environment and the integrity of the National Park.

Section 17U(4) quoted. Existing structures...

Already existing access to Milford Sound by land, sea and air therefore the application is inconsistent with this section of the Act.

PG: FYI there was a media person here from Southland Times – Grant Bryant arrive 2/3 of the way through.

PG: Thank you for taking the trouble to be available to talk to us.

HR: The main jist of my submission is that I consider that if the Minister would grant this, this would be in my view an abuse of her power. And would set a precedent in an area that we hold dear in our country.

The advice that is given to the Minister by yourself, I would ask that you recommend a decline, due to inconsistencies with 17W, 17U, the National Park Management Plans and the application is in direct opposition with her mandate.

Thank you very much for listening, I hope you come to the right decision.

Friday 23rd March – Tanoa Aspen Hotel Queenstown

Paul Green / Chris Visser / Erin Dunlop (Notes)

Media Present – ODT and Southland Times
Observers –Michael Sleigh, Tom Elworthy

Astraea Miller #941: 09.00am

Came down from Greymouth to be heard.

19 Years Old, studying diploma in Outdoor Recreation and Guiding at Tai Poutini Polytech in Greymouth.

Study preservation of environment, and installed into us really high appreciation about rivers, mountains around us.

Started course because I love NZs approach to preserving everything and showing it off.

I was horse trekking guiding in Glenorchy, and the tourists were amazed at just the scenery, and I didn't have to do much guiding. People like how Glenorchy is a no exit place. People make a conscious effort to actually get there.

The proposal is within one of the World Heritage Areas – this is a huge deal.

Bird songs, protected species. I was in North Thailand – no bird song, made me appreciate what we have back home.

I had a few people on my horse trek tours talking about tunnel. People were saying they wish they had a quicker way, they weren't saying they wanted a tunnel, they actually wanted more time off their crappy job.

NZ tourism strategy – is about future generations, and you already know that not many people my age have turned up. Not many people my age get to turn up, because they don't know how to have a voice. It's not because they don't care.

Damaging the native birds and plants etc is irreversible.

Kiwi Conservation in Westland – people from overseas are backing the preservation of these animals, it's not New Zealanders because it seems the culture is starting to change.

It makes me wonder why New Zealanders are in the tourism business to start with.

Questions:

PG: What's the course you doing?

AM: Diploma in Outdoor Instruction and Guiding at Tai Poutini Polytechnic in Greymouth.

Horse Trekking in Glenorchy was part of a work placement. Was working for high country horse trekking.

PG: Is there anything from the NZ Tourism Strategy 2015 you have learnt on the course that you think we should take on board?

AM: Part of course: NZ Tourism Strategy 2015 – manaakitanga and kaitiakitanga – guardianship for future generations.

Doing this seems to be for economic gain, and this proposal is not fitting in with that strategy – not for overall NZ approach. Such a conflict that if it did go ahead, the people for it wouldn't be very happy about it because they wouldn't even benefit from it.

But if we protect the area people will keep coming back.

We did the Routeburn when I was in primary school.

I think it is a great walk but I think less people would do it if it was more populated and the tunnel went in.

You have to make a bit of effort to get in there, and it already is a hard time trying to get time out to yourself on the track. This is why people go onto the track so you don't want to spoil it.

Jennifer Lacey #373: 09:10am

I'm not a permanent resident of NZ, but was living in Glenorchy for 2 years, with some friends of ours in Lower Rees – Temple Station.

Was working in Blanket Bay and then started guiding in Hollyford Valley.

Working for Hollyford guided walks now – returned and now living in Queenstown. Would walk over Routeburn to go to work.

I have a good idea of how this will effect Gunn's Camp, Hollyford and Routeburn.

Alterations to the roads leading to tunnel would be absolutely a matter of relevance to the application. Will completely change the effect of the drive to those areas, and the flora and fauna in the area too.

Lots of threatened wildlife, beech forest, water ways with important eco values.

All the users of the Routeburn track in report were lumped into one category, that everyone walks W – E and that people are less able etc.

This rules out local users who use it for day walks, people who run it, and more experienced hikers who also use the track.

People use the area as it is accessible, and beautiful. DOC has graded tracks in terms of accessibility, but that doesn't mean it is not a beautiful environment that we can all enjoy together.

Can go up Valley of Trolls etc too to get more secluded, But if there is a tunnel you would be completely aware that it is directly underneath you which detracts from the experience.

You would be able to look down into Hollyford and see the airstrip, and the impacts on the road. That would really detract from the view and the experience on that spectacular part of the track.

World Heritage Area – not something to take lightly. We should be really proud of this.

Regard that the National Park is the mountains – not just the surface.

Noise and mess created – huge damage effect on peoples' experiences and to animals.

Proposal said it would be open and engaged with the community, but this hasn't happened since 2005 – feels closed off, and Glenorchy have plans and directives of where they want to go with the place, and would appreciate an open dialogue with the applicants.

NZ tourism in general is meant to be going down the slower, more interactive visitor experience. Want people to stay longer and move slower. There are and will always be people who want to do it in a day, but to build this for the benefit of exclusive bus companies is not at ease with the NZ Tourism strategy for NZ. It's not what we want to see tourists enjoying in our country anyway.

Questions:

PG: What's your view on providing a range of facilities to a broad range of visitors?

JL: There already is quite a range of facilities – you can go into Milford Sound. People can go there and not do any physical activity, can do cruise, can do more extreme things if they want to as well.

Huge range of walks – short walks and 10 day treks as well.

CV: Can you paint a general picture of clients on Hollyford Walks?

JL: Half kiwi, quarter aussie, and the rest other nationalities. Ave age 50-60, but get young kids and elderly too.

Yesterday somebody finished trip, and was so stoked they wanted to give a speech to the group about how great it was. Once you get to Martins Bay it feels really remote.

We fly out to Milford Sound so people get to see Milford Sound too. We have jet boats too to avoid the Demon Trail.

Otago Conservation Board: 09:27am

Susan Stevens and Gary Nixon

Gary: Been on board for 7 years – Deputy Chair. Spent a lot of time on Rburn, used to work on Routeburn as a student.

Our written submission explains all the detail I won't focus on now.

As a Board, there is nothing we have struggled with as much as we have struggled with the tunnel. IT's taken up so much time, money and energy, and most of this has been around process.

Process of Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan consultation – the Board has important role in ensuring the plan is adequately implemented. Board recommended a decline.

That's only occurred two other times I can remember.

Why hasn't the board's advice been taken? When we received the Officers Report, we can see more clearly how he or she arrived to that conclusion, but I have to say we are more concerned about the decision after reading the report than we were before reading the report.

What's the procedure for Otago Conservation Board in receiving applications? We have a list of triggers – and if any Concession application meets those triggers our advice is called for.

This application was brought to our attention twice, once in relationship to the original portal entrance, and then it was brought to our attention in relationship to the new portal quite hurriedly and rushed to us. Our opinion hadn't changed.

The first process is around role of Management Plans. We believe the Management Plan is pivotal in assessing whether or not to grant a concession.

Where a relevant plan exists and it is clear on the issues, the Minister has to decline the application if the activity is inconsistent with that plan.

To say the Minister is not bound by the plan is one thing, but this application was not consistent with the plan as it is written.

We spent years on this plan, thinking of each of its provisions in great detail – very clear on its intent. How can any reasonable reading of the plan could come to any conclusion other than the application is inconsistent with the provisions and overall intent.

Undeveloped and remote character of Mount Aspiring National Park – alpine national park. Everything in the plan follows from this – remoteness, wilderness values, remote quiet.

The Officer's Report ignores this completely.

Conservation Board defines itself in the National Park Management Plan system – the National Parks affected by this proposed development are remote enough to be of national significance.

Lower Routeburn is one of 3 biodiversity hot spots in park. Most visitors will encounter these endangered species. Barry Lawrence report deserves the recognition it was written for.

Back Country Zone – the Officer's Report describes the area as Front Country Zone. The application is clearly within the Back Country Zone.

It's not up to the report writer to decide this. It is the authorities involved in the plan putting together. While some facilities such as huts and tracks are allowed for in the Backcountry – the facilities should be low key.

The private nature of the project is another issue. This is not another Homer Tunnel. This proposal is for a private facility for applicant and its client. Development of private structures in plan is not appropriate.

These types of developments should be in Front Country only if they have to happen.

The Management Plan clearly states facilities and roads privately owned should not be approved in the National Park. Surely a private bus park and tunnel would fail this test.

Roading and tunnel was on the mind of the people involved in the development of the Plan. This was despite the fact that the tunnel was in the minds of the Department.

The provision for roads in the Management Plan was solely for the provision of DOC to construct a road to a visitor facility.

There was only one submitter and this was the applicant (MDL) who was in favour of amending the plan to include the provision for a new road in the National Park.

The Otago Conservation Board resisted the push to allow for this provision. Our job was to enlighten the plan in light of submissions. NZCA took even tougher line. In response to the application, they sought to tighten roading provisions even further.

This Concession application repeatedly fails to respect the roading provisions in the Plan. There is a reasonable expectation of the boards and people who submitted on the Plan where all involved that the Plan is adhered to.

For many the Routeburn is the destination, like Milford Sound is the destination.

I can remember as a child the old shelter at the road end of Routeburn.

Untouched natural beauty, natural quiet, landscape, birds, for many these are the ultimate wilderness experiences at the road end. The plan seeks to limit development and to preserve this feeling of quiet in places like the road end. The application would have a huge effect on the Routeburn road end.

The Management Plan seeks to limit activities which would have far less impact such as aircraft, and jet boating.

Routeburn Road – The Officer's Report wants to ignore the impact of widening and realigning the Routeburn road. Land status is unclear and there are parts of the road outside of National Park – not good enough reason to exclude.

The park plan shows that the road is within National Park. The Department cannot wish away its responsibilities. There is a formal process to carry out that sort of action, until then the Department needs to consider the effects of the activity on this area.

The impact on Mohua and Bats – Barry Lawrence’s report was very concerned about the impact of road widening and realigning on these species – halo effect.

Overall intent of Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan is to retain Mount Aspiring National Park in its natural state as it is now.

This is clear throughout the whole Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan.

People are entitled to enjoy the park on nature’s terms.

Decline the application.

Some provisions are should statements. Even should carries strong expectation. Only exceptional circumstances can express to overturn the shoulds and the board should have a strong say on when this could happen.

Both the Southland Conservation Board, and the NZCA tell us there is already perfectly good access to Milford Sound – no new infrastructure is needed.

Section 4 National Parks Act, public shall have freedom of entry into National Parks. Exclusive use of Concessionaire and clients – will not improve the public access as intended by the act.

Conservation Estate is subject to many people’s conservation interests. Anyone being involved in hearings will know this. The most important interests are the non human ones. These must apply and be seen to be applied clearly to everyone.

If you grant this concession you will ultimately undermine the plan.

If MDL’s tunnel is approved it will open a Pandora’s box – whole new pressure to maintain consistency. It would be the turning point of management of Conservation Estate as we see it.

What will you tell film operator or sight seer if they want to land in Mount Aspiring National Park. Or the tramper who wants to camp within 500m of RB track.

These are all should not statements in the Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan.

What are you going to tell all people who submitted on the Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan and did not get what they wanted. Was due process actually followed?

Questions:

PG: When the Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan was approved, I understand the procedure is that the NZCA approve the plans but also pass the plan to the Minister for the Minister to make any comment. Are you aware of any feedback from the Minister or any concerns expressed to the authority during that course of action?

GN: The only issue that was expressed was heli-hunting. As far as I am aware none of the other provisions were raised as concern to the NZCA, Conservation Board or the Minister.

PG: There was quite a fundamental change in position from the Otago Conservation Board in regards to roads and the Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan. Was it a real focussed discussion on the need for the change?

GN: We spent a lot of time discussing process. At those very early stages when the proposal was first presented to us we didn't formulate a view on the merits of tunnel. The way it was presented to us by the Conservator was that we didn't have the relevant info to form a view on the merits, the Plan was old, and we shouldn't stand in the way of this proposal to be considered so the formal process from here was to allow for the application to be considered through the Concessions Process.

The Board as a whole accepted this process. On the basis of that we decided to recommend an amendment to the Plan to allow for the Concession to be considered to the Authority.

Authority came back to us and stated the Plan was above the Concessions process and the Amendment was overturned. Since then we have been through a National Park Management Plan review process, and that is how we have come to where we are today. That decline to amend was influential in the more recent Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan review.

Geoff Thomson #940 and Southern Lakes Heli #1208: 10.15am

Anderson Lloyd Lawyers – Maree Baker-Galloway

Submissions tabled.

Legal submissions, engineer witness in Auckland on speaker phone, then Geoffrey and Lloyd will give evidence, then Dr Thompson give evidence.

Legal Submissions:

She read out from handout of legal submissions (**attached as appendix**).

No photomontages and landscape projections as is usually required for an application of this scale and nature.

No surveys they undertook themselves of visitors perceptions, major piece of missing information.

Maree acts for a gold miner in Reefton. *West Tai Poutini Coast Conservancy* requires them to supply far more info for a Conservation Area, and this is for the National Park and should require more information.

It is standard practice for many applications to be subject to construction plans but that needs to be dovetailed with sound judgement and assessment of plans and effects.

National Parks are where the mandate is preservation. Rather than other Conservation estate where there is more allowance for sustainable use.

You can't assess benefits in Milford Sound of increased bus levels when you don't also consider the effects of increase buses on Hollyford Road.

Urge to read the landscape architect Alan Petrie who projects the size and scale of Spoil Dump. Size of dump has been underestimated in the minds of many experts.

Dr Thompson is going to talk later about how there has been no surveys on the perception of users in the Hollyford included in the report. You would expect comprehensive surveys of users and their perceptions before drawing conclusions to make recommendations for the decision maker.

The last State of Conservation Report on UNESCO for Te Wahipounamu was October 2002. Overdue for one as every 6 years.

International environmental law: 'Precautionary principal'. Where insufficient information, should err on side of caution.

Failure to demonstrate need for exclusive possession of tunnel – inconsistent with 17U(6) and (7)

"Should Not" defined in Schedule 1 of Conservation General Policy: Strong expectation.

Questions:

PG: Freedom of access – do you accept there are areas in National Park where freedom of access doesn't mean that somebody is actually allowed to go onto the site unless they have actually paid to the person holding licence or lease.

MBG: Yes there is a high threshold for which that privilege is granted to an individual.

PG: Given the preservation value to National Parks and World Heritage Areas that are in place, are you saying that in any circumstances it is inappropriate to construct a road in World Heritage Area site?

MBG: No - if you are going to have a net negative impact on those natural values there needs to be very good justification for that. There is strong evidence that the impacts would have a footprint – again there is a strong need for more justification for this application.

In certain circumstances it could be appropriate, but to preserve the antiquous conservation values of the World Heritage Area, a road could degrade that.

Evidence:

Chris Bremner – Professional Engineer

Spoke on phone – questions only as PG and CV read written sub night before

PG: Code of practice for tunnels – can you actually tell me what the Code of practice is and who administers it

CB: I understand that we use the Australian Code of Practice, I haven't read it myself I just go along with what's put in front of us when we do a tender. To my knowledge there is not one here (NZ)

Transport work is with NZTA – there's not a lot of tunnels built and they are the ones to administer the design.

PG: What about tunnel for water extraction or private tunnel?

CB: I've got no idea at all. My work of late has mainly been in the transport industry as such and that's probably been several years since I done any hydro work.

A practice they tend to use the European Code of Practice and the American Code of Practice quite a bit and it runs from trends. When we had a terrible accident 20 years ago, they were all rescuers hindered to be able to get to the accident they illustrated if you could build the tunnels to allow emergency access then you should.

It's a really big thing.

PG: So the code deals with both construction and operation and maintenance?

CB: The Code deals with construction in first place but they would say in there's got to be things like ventilation and lighting and that would be administered probably in Auckland by NZTA and all the various other agencies in NZ and so forth.

PG: So are you saying the Code has a minimum design size or can you apply to have an exception to the Code and have it considered?

CB: Thinking of tunnel design minimum size if you have a controlled tunnel and have traffic go one way can design standard be different to what might be a traditional design.

First principals – if single way design, still need ventilation, lighting, emergency access. Don't know any tunnels designed without being a twin tunnel. They just don't do that. A single lane tunnel of this length shouldn't be allowable.

15m diameter, alternative access would be concrete shaft where can control ventilation. When project went out for tender, they were going to do a twin tunnel and under floor access was found to be inadequate.

Geoff Thomson – Operates NZ's biggest NZ owned and operated hotel chain.
Read from Written Evidence

Sealing the Milford Road resulted in a net loss of one day on average tourist stay in region.

Changes in Tourist industry in terms of expectations:

Economic downturn affected number of people coming.

People come back to bar after being to Milford Sound on a rainy day so the park is still very much out there as something special and that hasn't changed over 22 years I've been in industry.

From Hotel guest point of view – people are cleaner now and there is a real demand and need for that clean green status.

We haven't received many submissions from Queenstown whether they support the shorter trip to Milford Sound or not.

It's been discussed a lot in this industry and it is viewed that it is a ridiculous idea that won't fly so why should we bother putting any energy into it. That's the general feeling we get and it's quite bizarre.

How many people from Queenstown would choose to use the tunnel that would currently travel through Te Anau

I think it would be a hard sell, because people got scared from Homer Tunnel fire. They could get out only just with a bigger diameter shorter tunnel so people will be aware of the risk and not want to enter the tunnel.

He runs distinction Hotels.

Lloyd Matheson – Southern Lakes Helicopters

Read from written evidence

PG: Public demand is met by aircraft to get to Milford Sound quickly?

LM: It's not to capacity; there are still aircraft on the ground that could provide more. You can only get so many aircraft at Milford Sound airport, which is a limiting factor.

PG: What number of visitors undertake scenic flights traditionally also on bus tours to Milford Sound?

LM: Fly and Drive coaches – we can only go by the numbers of landings at Milford Sound, but then it is hard to monitor the drive section.

DOC needs to do surveys on who flies and who drives.

I've just been in the Ministers office arguing that there has been an impact of aircraft noise on visitor experience. The impact has reduced, still working through Fiordland National Park draft, about 1000 landings at Milford Sound has halved to 600 landings allowed at Milford Sound – so noise has diminished.

PG: So do you think the tunnel would reduce noise impact?

LM: There will be a roar of engine noise in tunnel. I think people who fly will still fly – they will still experience the tunnel then fly back because they won't have seen anything on the way through.

The ones that want to fly want to see from above. Kayakers will fly, and people get pissed off at seeing kayakers in sounds.

Milford Sound airstrip was there at the time of the World Heritage Area listing. This is a new proposal during the time the area is a World Heritage Area. So key difference that World Heritage Area was considered with scenic flights in there already.

More time for flight with tunnel, but people probably won't want to take tunnel.

Questions:

CV; Are Southern Lakes Helicopters a user of the Hollyford Airstrip?

LM: use Hollyford strip for Search and Rescue operations. We have to use it for refuelling around Martins and Big Bay flights. We are either using the Hollyford strip for DOC management – gravelling Routeburn etc, servicing guided walks facilities, support jet boat operators who want to use the lower Hollyford and Routeburn. Milford Helicopters is similar.

There's about 2 of us maintaining the Hollyford Strip. \$32,000 to repair last flood damage. We don't have heaps of funds to maintain it but we are. Once you raise strip a few feet off the ground, and not sure how CAA will put restrictions onto that, which is a concern to us.

No discussion with applicants.

MDL had discussions with Air Fiordland who have since sold. Air Fiordland have been replaced by Fly Fiordland at Manapouri. But they don't have concessions in the National Park. They are negotiating with Air Fiordland to get access into the park.

Heliworks service Hollyford visitor facilities.

Dr Anna Thompson – tourism and recreation research.

Spoke from written evidence supplied.

Has had involvement with surveys directly linked with visitor use of tunnels in countries throughout the world. A lot of these such as point K page 3 are available at Lincoln and Otago University and not many people know about these unless you are in academia world.

Magnus Kjelsberg has had experience managing tunnels within National Park setting throughout world, based in Norway now.

Refers to Hollyford and Routeburn Valley users.

Survey data in report was from a select audience, not a representation of general public.

Data in application centres on visitors to Milford rather than Hollyford / Routeburn.

Peer review of visitor market research made by BECA were undertaken by engineers lacking in qualifications and experience in marketing and tourism.

Need more robust sample size and more research in Hollyford and Routeburn valleys rather than Milford as has been focussed on in research in application.

Host communities such as Glenorchy and Te Anau can become hostile which creates negative impact on the activity occurring within the park.

Comparable to hydro scheme developments in small communities where some people will integrate but others won't.

Slow travel increasingly more popular.

Alluvial fans talked about in report are active as determined by Simon Cox of GNS Science.

Cost benefit analysis missing.

Impacts on Ngai Tahu interest – pounamu serpentine removal.

Surveys will determine perceptions of wilderness or natural values in respective valleys, satisfaction values etc.

This work should be carried out by Southland Conservancy, NZTA, Tourism New Zealand etc to inform application.

Construction is inconsistent with World Heritage principles which led to designation to start with. Suggests that in order for the tunnel to be constructed safely, a greater amount of spoil would need to be removed, which would hence increase impacts in the Hollyford Valley.

We need to acknowledge international tunnel safety standards and avalanche risk management because the international visitors will be expecting the same level of quality.

P. 133 lack of sufficient information in the area of visitor experience impacts, therefore the Minister may decline the application.

Unaware of any Environmental Impact Assessment peer reviewed by suitably qualified people to support application.

Should undertake cost benefit analysis alongside community, Runanga, Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu and Otago / Southland regional Council.

Questions:

PG: During your various research works – have you ever looked at how to mitigate social impacts on users?

AT: It is possible and DOC are already using these through Milford Track – travelling one direction, carrying capacity having caps in terms of visitor numbers etc. Ultimately you have to look at your planning practices which are informed by public and plans.

Mitigating aircraft noise as a result of working with Aircraft – Aircare Code, arrival times, use of airstrip, when flights operate.

Mitigating tunnel noise would rely on international best practice. Direct to look at work undertaken in Norway – transport economics which specialises in cost benefit analysis for tunnel proposals. Newly constructed tunnels built with best practice in terms of human use of tunnels.

This tunnel is very narrow and aligns with hydro tunnel construction. Lack of escape bays, ventilation, trained rescue professionals close by. This is critical where DOC has a responsibility to avoid being charged with negligence again.

The international market knows more about these facilities than we do here in NZ.

This proposal describes a tube not a tunnel – narrow, dark. Applicant's idea of augmenting the visitor experience needs to be tested with research.

Need to have options such as undertaking visitor research and offer them options of either using tunnel proposed or other options.

PG: Is your assessment that numbers will increase in MS due to tunnel?

AT: I think there could be displacement. It's informed by tourism resource consultancy work for applicant – 3 scenarios of how the visitor increases in Milford Sound.

Lack of robust data and until that data is available it is difficult to make an informed decision. So can't say if the tunnel would increase Milford Sound demand due to tunnel.

CV: Is it possible to build a methodology that would accurately assess visitor experiences with construction in World Heritage Area?

AT: Research needs to be not only with visitors, but with communities, stakeholders, Runanga etc.

History of visitor research that has informed the Management Plans. Samples used have been specific.

Chaz Forsyth #283: 1.45pm

On phone from Dunedin Deerstalkers Association.

Main concerns –National Park Management Plan inconsistency

Civil engineering not as much of a concern. Southland Conservancy provided information on recreational visitor use on the facility, provides background into the before use.

Fiordland National Park Management Plan – made comments, but not for the Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan. Yet to make comment on Conservation Management Strategy.

Questions:

PG: In terms of your rec use of the area, what kind of things have you done in area?

CF: Routeburn and Glenorchy more recently visited and back to 60s. If this proposal is to seek public financing I would have thought that was dodgy. Should be a private venture.

Needed to clarify where location of portal exited on Hollyford side.

There will be effects on recreational hunting.

Glenorchy Journeys #829: 2.00pm

Ingrid Temple

Provided written notes for statement

Destination management framework – relevant consideration. Should take into account the history of community. Glenorchy Community Plan. - brought up DOC's destination management framework – greatest living space on earth!

If we keep pushing back our front country in time we'll have nothing but marginal strip between destinations. Meeting people's expectations also adds to quality of an experience.

Questions:

PG: how long has your business been operating?

IT: 5 months.

Guided walks, Routeburn and Lake Sylvan – we have a concession to do that.

New business but we have associated with the area for years and years and that's why we wanted to start a business here.

Visitor expectations: they want access to our natural habitat and landscapes. People overwhelmed at the scenery and walking quietly and listening to birds – particularly bush robins.

It's about the experience. Everyone has a diff expectation, but it's always about the quietness and that means the distance away from traffic, other people and built up infrastructure.

CV: What nationalities are your clients?

IT: All over – a lot of New Zealanders, but also Australians, Singapore, Hong Kong, French, USA.

CV: How do you market your business?

IT: Website – presented to DOC offices, local Glenorchy business also support us, I Site centres. Still have long way to go in terms of marketing.

Sharon Aitken spoke on behalf of Erin Martin #1146 : 2.09pm

Supplied a copy of notes.

Appreciation of Gunn's Camp and heritage of the area. Concern around after and during construction.

No Questions.

Glenorchy Community Board: 2.15pm

Pete Reid - Chair of Community Board.

Unanimous community. Message clear – don't want the tunnel.

The proposal is non compliant with Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan. New roads and public facilities are not provided for in the Plan.

Road and tunnel in minds of submitters when Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan was reviewed. Many locals were involved in this process.

DOC's website explains how decisions were made – Proposals have to be consistent with purpose for which land is held, consistent with Management Plans and have no adverse effects on environment.

Impact on ecology – Mohua, bats, rock wrens, whio, falcon etc

Routeburn is important for community and all New Zealanders, a lot of hard work by DOC and community to develop Routeburn and Dart valley as habitat for these endangered species.

Remedial action not possible once action is made. Airflow created by canopy gaps is not able to be mitigated as a result of widening the road.

How can DOC take this attitude towards ancient forest which is home to many of our endangered birds when so much effort has gone toward protecting them?

Gets more remote the further you go in to the valley. This integrity will be lost if project goes ahead.

Power – to tunnel from Routeburn road, does not get included in Officers Report – significant part of the application.

Seismic Activity – regular earthquakes in the area. Some reach 7+ in last 10 years. Alpine fault 33km west of Hollyford – could cause rockfall and landslides. Risky in this environment.

Emergency services based in Glenorchy wouldn't be able to cope with a reaction to any emergency in that tunnel.

Proposal changed since 2006 when MDL first came to us.

Concerns about effect on environment if tunnel is not completed if run out of money. Visitor expectation? Bond? Pretty large scale.

Assumptions in Officer's Report in regards to tourism – those who use Routeburn are not all from overseas or inexperienced trampers wanting quick emersion. This is dismissive of many Routeburn walkers and the track and park in that area. Unsure guess at what overseas visitors would be likely to see.

100% pure selling point for Glenorchy.

World Heritage Area – allowing infrastructure into park that has World Heritage Area status – can DOC seriously consider this? Considered worldwide for wilderness values.

Impacts watered down to be minor in Officer's Report because they are temporary. This is assuming MDL's timeframes are accurate.

Real impact on visitor experience and local wildlife would be more than minor.

Improved public access has a benefit according to MDL but Conservation boards do not see a need for more transport options. Some travellers avoiding Milford Sound already due to overcrowding. This proposal puts independent traveller and trampers second, and bus travellers first.

Visitors don't need to speed up travel – we need to slow down to encourage more interaction with NZ and its communities.

MDL proposal tramples on those that live here. Liaison with community – none since 2005. Plans has changed sig since then.

DOC may not see this as a problem but words don't meet actions with this applicant.

We have unique culture of our own – QLDC district plan. This states Glenorchy to remain an end of the road destination to retain uniqueness and quality of the serene environment.

This plan was prepared in 2001 before MDL proposal.

Questions:

PG: Is the Community Association open to anyone in Glenorchy?

PR: Yes we meet first Thursday of every month open to anyone to come and have their say. Committee of 7 and they represent the community at matters throughout the year. We always open with wider community to try to get the best outcome as far as the rest of community goes.

We'll quite often have one or two disagreements but we go with the majority in general agreeing.

Over 100 people turned up to our MDL meeting.

Purpose of group is to be a spokesman for the Glenorchy head of the lake area to the Council or anyone else.

Incorporated Society.

CV: Beyond Glenorchy does it get a lot of use from people from Queenstown area?

PR: Day traffic up there quite consistently from out of Glenorchy area stopping and checking out the area. Through the Concessions process we can only submit on the environmental side of things. Glenorchy feels this is wrong as this has so many implications on the Glenorchy community which we can't submit on at this stage. That's a big worry to us as well.

Forest and Bird #951: 3.00pm

Susan Maturin

Supplied copy of verbal submission

I have also been involved with the formation of the Conservation Act, Resource Management Act, Conservation Management Strategies and many other mandates.

Proposal fails all of the tests under the Conservation Act and National Parks Act therefore should be declined.

Section 5 and 55 National Parks Act wasn't addressed in the Officer's Report.

Legal advice – Section 5 requires Minister written consent before destroying any native flora and fauna.

Shall – minister has the duty to not grant consent where activity is inconsistent with the Management Plan.

The Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan and the Fiordland National Park Management Plan do not provide new roads except in front country zone. Roads are not required to provide for front country facilities.

Section 55 – removal of several large Beech trees will only be considered for management purposes where the removal is essential for management of the species.

General Policy National Parks – constitutional role of Minister where competing considerations, the Minister needs to take both the Management Plans and the other matters into consideration in making a decision.

Constitutional role involves duty not discretion. There are no competing considerations in regards to this application. This application is inconsistent with the Mount Aspiring National Park Management Plan.

None of these points were discussed in the Officers Report and should have been.

Section 49 – reference to Part 3B Conservation Act.

Before granting concession – Part 4 National Parks Act is required, before Part 3B comes into effect.

Activity can not permanently affect the rights of the public to the National Park (part 4).

Section 17U shouldn't be used to determine if Section 4 can be met. Section 4 should be analysed prior to any analysis of Section 17 U takes place because the activity is occurring in the National Park.

The proposal has to pass the section 4 gateway test.

Wildlands reports refer to specific potential adverse effects at Hollyford Portal Site – 6 large trees. Habitat for critically endangered bats and kaka.

Forest and Bird consider road widening should be considered as part of the application as it passes through National Park.

Wildlands consider the impacts of road widening could be considered significant as removal of 90 trees approximately on the Routeburn side.

Sedimentation, habitat removal, spill over in large rainfall events.

Risks of flooding not adequately addressed or quantified to mitigate effects as illustrated in BECA report.

Road and tunnel major engineering structures providing for significant and new activities. Mount Aspiring National Park is a largely undeveloped alpine National Park. Activity would detract from public rights to enjoy the values of National Parks.

Times set aside in Milford Sound to manage aircraft and concessionaire activity are very valuable. Federated Mountain Club and Forest and Bird fought hard to get those into Fiordland National Park Management Plan.

Increase in visitor numbers may detract from visitor enjoyment at Milford Sound rather than add to it.

Kay Booth study – perception study for overcrowding in Milford Sound when Fiordland National Park Management Plan was being drafted. Since then tourism numbers dropping.

26% viewed far too many visitors in Milford Sound.

Proposal does not pass test of Section 49. If does pass Section 4 test, then the application has to pass Section 17W Cons Act. Section 17U matters need to be considered.

17U(3) – purpose for which land is held. Which is Section 4 National Parks Act.

Wildlands note it's not possible to mitigate for the loss of mature forest ecosystems.

Construction operation of structures and facilities.
Trade business – transport route to Milford Sound.

Operation of buses and tunnel is integral to the operation of the tunnel. There is no need for this therefore doesn't meet the test.

Long term visual impact will be larger than suggested in report due to earth instability and slips.

The area is also a Statutory Acknowledgement Area, and assumes the Department will turn its attention to that and follow due course.

Effects are more than minor, cannot be avoided, remedied or mitigated to a point where they are considered no more than minor, and despite all that it fails to meet the gateway higher level tests as well as the effects of the road widening should be considered as part of this application.

Focused attention on auditors and officers reports which raised a lot of concern for her.

No Questions.

Kate Scott #344: 4.00pm _____
Just flew in from Rotorua.

Glenorchy has a distinctive culture and identity as road end destination where people choose to visit rather than pass through.

Feel like the vision of people that live in a place should have a voice in a process like this.

Disappointed DOC ignores the well being of the gateway community to a project like this.

Section 55 National Parks Act states no new roads in National Parks.

Glossing over road widening needs and disregarding the effects on flora and fauna. The road provides for a meaningful transition into a Wilderness Area.

Value global community bestows on area making it a World Heritage Area.

Increase in traffic density and loss of environment value. Moving stock on road – in danger of bus impacts.

Benefits from operation are accrued outside of the park to bus businesses.

Want visitors to stay longer and appreciate Glenorchy and surrounds.

There is no future for faster tourism in NZ. Globally isolated country – don't want a fast journey through once they have travelled to NZ.

Travelling in a dark underground tunnel through beautiful scenic area. Dubious way to treat visitors.

Apparently benefits are to overseas visitors? Many travellers deplore they are being used and abused and name is taken in vain as they don't actually want this at all.

Locals feel they are being abused in the process.

I haven't been to Hollyford end much but Routeburn is very popular place to take visitors and it is very accessible to take people to dapple their toes in the wilderness.

Ease of which you can take people into that backcountry environment.

She is a 4th generation Glenorchy local, farmer.

No Questions

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| Right of Reply for Milford Dart Limited 10am Friday 21st Apr 2012 |
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Paul Green (Chair)

Chris Visser ,Claire Lenihan (Technical and legal support to Chair)

Michael Sleigh (MDL), Jo Appleyard (MDL legal representative), Andy Carr (Abley Transportation Consultants Ltd)

Paul Green introduced the hearing.

MDL explained their Engineer (Mr Fleming) was "red carded" out of their building, therefore missing some engineering evidence that would be provided later. The missing engineering information will be available for 4th May, and available for anyone to see it, could this be the website?

PG Yes we will do this

JA introduced how MDL would run their right of reply process.

She then largely spoke to hand out

Some ad hoc additions:

- A concession is just a way of giving consent under s55(2)
- Correction for Section 42: last bit should read "lay" submitters
- Did not read defn in para 54: Summarised that if a road has been created and the public use it, then it's a public road.
- Width of Road: There is number of culverts being constructed in the road corridor at the moment

JA: Provided another handout for Michael Sleights statement

JA Notes that a member of the gallery was filming the hearing, JA asked why the filming occurring and asked why consent was not sought beforehand? JA objected to the filming

The person filming said she is a member of GY community and this is a public hearing

JA: I do object to filming as I have no ability to control how the film is used afterwards

Gallery: But this is a public hearing?

Gallery: Asked the panel don't you record the submitters by tape? Does this not set a precedent?

JA I object personally, and do not give consent for this to occur

PG asked the filming person why film when there is a written copy of what is said?

Gallery But this is in the public domain?

PG: Adjourn to discuss issue among Panel and with MDL.

PG decided that filming should not occur. There were accredited media at the hearing and these people have professional responsibilities to use the information. The public don't have the same constraints on the use of filming?

Gallery Is this legal opinion? Should we adjourn the hearing for a legal opinion?

PG I have made a decision, I have a responsibility to run the hearing, I had not been asked about filming previously so I am unable to obtain legal advice

Following this was continued discussion between the Gallery and MDL reps. Gallery asked if MDL has anything to hide?

JA reinstated that the public are not subject to the professional rights and obligations to the media, e.g. whether the film would be used in whole, or used in part / subjectively

PG asked any dissenters to leave the room as he would continue the hearing on the condition there was no filming.

MS Largely spoke to written submission

Ad Hoc additions

- My comment is on tourism demand, why JA commented on need.
- "We are all aware of the issues that arose when DOC suggested a cap on flights to Milford Sound".
- Para 22 spelling error should be "relieve"
- Frana Cardno is a key submitter that the tunnel risks WHA status though she also supports Haast to Hollyford Road
- Tunnel stability: An example of how tunnels are safe is the Lyttleton Tunnel in Christchurch where I live, one roof tile broken in June earthquake
- Bats: What does that written info mean.. people who know about bats know that bats roost in a different tree each night
- Kiwi in Cleddau project: 2 kiwi were removed from the Cleddau village site before construction, again it's been done
- Construction time: this is likely to be less than the new visitors centre
- Para 68 We engaged a consultant for advice on managing the road should the determination be that the road is NP (though we disagree with this legal opinion and ask that the road is not in NP).
- Currently council is installing culverts and water table works on Routeburn Road

PG adjourn to 11:50 then Andy will present his paper, questions after this.

AC from Abley Transportation Consultants: My report is not in form of evidence so will not read verbatim: The information has been prepared as independent advice:

The scope of the report was to look at potential improvements required on that section of road in the NP. It is constrained to Routeburn Road and not Hollyford. It is not a full transportation assessment.

AC reviewed the report. The 1st pg identifies background information. I (AC) visited the site last weekend, and colleague visited previous week. You need to stand on road for full appreciation of what's going on.

Pg 2 draws on key transportation considerations for the road. No new information, summary of available information. In traffic engineering terms the road is lightly travelled.

Pg 3: A plot from an accident database. Crash history of area around Routeburn Road, 2007-2011. Number of accidents have occurred, 2 accidents on Routeburn Road itself. 1 was newly qualified driver losing control, another was a corner being cut and crashing into a car from opposite direction

Pg 3 then describes road environment, turned to first A3 page and explained this. Road varies in width, 4 to 6 m. Road is unsealed. There are grass verges, sufficient for two cars to slowly pass side by side they you move over.

Pg4 shows pictures of road to view width, with cars and buses on the road.

The council has standards that must be adhered to, but the current road with current level of traffic falls below these standards. To meet standards the road must be sealed and 6.25m wide. However there is no requirement to upgrade the road to meet standards. Even if you build the road to the current standard, you would not have to improve it again to next standard with only 80 extra buses. But even if you did improve it further, it would only be another 0.25m in width. Not a major change.

We estimated the increase in vehicle numbers: an additional 80 bus trips per day. From a traffic engineer perspective this could be easily provided without any significant change in level of service to the road. There is no requirement for a wholesale improvement to road.

Routeburn Road has 125-150 vehicles a day. At the moment 1 chance in 11 of encountering a vehicle in opposite direction, Add 80 bus trips the chance is 1 in 10, not that different.

However there is a case for some improvement to the road, in my view. The problem is when a bus and car encounter each other. Some improvement for this would be good. My proposal is to have some sections widened and other sensitive sections to remain a single lane. Council standards allow this, subject to minimum conditions.

AC then explained A3 map and how some sections of road would have different widths. For sections marked D you could widen the road without losing large trees. Some sections of road will need a guard rail to meet council standards.

3.6m wide is sufficient for 1 lane car or bus, plus if have grass verges then enough to pull over

5.6 metres wide allows two coaches to pass very slowly. If you make it wider, people perceive the road to be faster and this creates a safety hazard.

We suggest the road is kept unsealed, as drivers go slower on these roads, unsealed will maintain a low speed environment. Furthermore QLDC confirms there is no current plan to seal the rest of the Routeburn Road, they may seal the current intersection with Kinloch road by 20-30m.

When we get into detailed design there will be some changes.

Which direction would have priority on single lanes stretches? Our view is that this should change, to smooth out flow and avoid frustrated drivers.

A3 long section. There are some locations with quite sharp crests. Some of these need taking out to improve sight distances. Further refinement once topographic data provided.

Overall, road doesn't meet council standard, but no reason to improve it as a result of this application. Certainly there is a case to widen the road in places, but to minimise this, and keep single lane sections. Also keep the road as a loose metalled surface.

JA: I need to say this information by Abley Consultants is MDL's fallback position if our case that the road is not NP is not accepted by DOC. The Abley report is just further information to say that, even if the road is assessed as being part of the NP, the effects on road will be minor.

PG Are you saying that any alterations to the Routeburn or Hollyford will be within the 20m boundary?

MS Yes

PG Have you had any discussion with bus companies on this new information?

MS No. Once we are in detailed design we would talk to operators. There are currently buses using full coaches on the Routeburn Road, e.g. Ultimate Hikes. To me, some passing bays would seem to be a good idea even with current level of use.

PG Will the constraints of single lanes be acceptable to operators using the road for a daily service.

MS When you design any road in NZ you don't consult with anyone who owns a car? You use engineers advice. Are QLDC consulting with existing bus operators on their existing maintenance?

AC My view is that there is no feature of the road environment that would preclude buses from operating in a safe manner.

MS: Discussed potential upgrades to Kinloch road, road of similar width. Mr Carr's information is similar to what is used on Kinloch Road.

PG Have you considered similar solutions to Hollyford Road?

MS Good question, we will now. Our original advice was to seal the road for 2 lanes, but in response to public submissions we wanted to make sure if 2 lane sealing was really required. It was a surprise to us that Mr Carr advised it didn't need to be sealed, and yes you could operate it with several passing bays and single lanes. We think this reinforces the Kinloch report to council. MDL will be happy to propose a similar solution to the Hollyford Road.

PG What does this change mean to you projected travel times to Milford Sound?

MS: Very good question, the travelling times we estimated did not factor faster speeds for sealed roads. We based it on current timings. In either case, we have just over 2km of Routeburn and Hollyford Road, even some slowing down would add just minutes to overall time. This change may be virtually immaterial

PG Moving on to tunnel, for buses overnighting in Milford, would they be able to use it in the morning?

MS Again very good question. This tunnel would operate like a rail tunnel, the buses are like trains. Similar in concept to Otira tunnel. Everything had to be scheduled for safety. This overnight bus in Milford would be booked in to travel through if there was space. This is a bus tunnel, not an open access tunnel. The fires in Homer Tunnel were underspecified buses overheating on way up to tunnel. Our tunnel is totally different, very controlled.

PG: Safety responsibilities?

MS: The Department of Labour (DOL) is responsible for safety in this tunnel, responsible for all workplaces in NZ. MDL is responsible for people coming into the tunnel, as it will be a business premise. DOL apply codes of practice, use best practice worldwide.

PG: Legal question from submissions. Will crown have responsibility for risk associated with leaching / collapse beyond the term of existing lease?

MS: This situation exists in other places, e.g. Mines generating discharge after closure. MDL considers it won't encounter minerals to be of a risk. We acknowledge there is a bond which would not be released if crown wasn't satisfied about residual risks. We are confident that leachates will be minimal and manageable.

PG: You stated about risk of WH status being removed? Are you aware of provisions for sites in danger?

MS: Yes, there are 4 or 5 sites in danger. The info is public, these sites are again all very extreme cases. MDL is opposite end of this spectrum. In terms of effects the Cleddau Village protection works would have greater effects than our proposal.

CL: Page 5, about the Minister cannot disable herself or authority adopt a fixed policy or rule. Have you seen relevant cases?

JA: Doesn't know of any in this context.

CL: Page 6, Para 20, are Resource Management and National Parks Act different contexts?

JA: I don't think this makes any difference, I was focusing on the words in the phrase "in accordance with", making the general point you should look at document in whole. Just a comment on the approach, not context.

CL: In relation to roads, did any cases you cite involve NParks?

JA: No

CL: What is your view of Sec 11 NPark act, land can only be removed by an act of parliament?

JA: A bit of circularity here, the road issue already in an act of parliament – Nparks Act. Under s55 - not in ministers jurisdiction. In my evidence I meant to say not in the ministers jurisdiction.

CL: Uncertainties of width of road, have you anything to say why it should be 20m?

JA: All we have is standard practice that has been longstanding, can't see any reason why to deviate from this. The issue has been argued in lots of other areas.

PG That finished our questions. Wrapped up on next steps. We will receive by 4th May the response from the applicants engineer. Submissions and comments then summarised by Chair. May ask for more information. Department then drafts a report, send this to applicant for comment, then final report to ministers decision maker, who will consider the final report. Submitters will not get to see final report to decision maker. Submitters may seek a copy of final report after decision under OIA.

CV Update website when clarity on timelines reached. Will also post on the website copies of evidence provided today.