SOUTHLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL
Te Rohe Pōtae o Murihiku



Agenda

Southland District Council

Wednesday, 8 April 2026, 10am
Te Anau Bowling Club, 26 Luxmore Drive, Te Anau

Mayor	Rob Scott
Deputy mayor	Christine Menzies
Councillors	Jaspreet Boparai
	Don Byars
	Phil Dobson
	Paul Duffy
	Sarah Greaney
	Julie Keast
	Tom O'Brien
	Brian Somerville
	Jon Spraggon
	Michael Weusten
	Matt Wilson

Southland District Council
Te Rohe Pōtae o Murihiku

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What is important to us?

Our strategic framework is a big picture of what Council is planning to achieve for our communities in the next three years.

Council vision

Together, with our people, for our future. It's our Southland!

Council mission

Working together for a better Southland.

Our focus is

Strategic priorities

Connected and resilient communities - we collaboratively engage with our partners and communities, along with investing in agile and sustainable practices, to support a vibrant and thriving Southland.

Ease of doing business - we transform the customer experience through partnership, technology and continuous improvement.

Providing equity - we enable all residents to be able to access the same services and tools as part of a fair society.

Robust infrastructure - we deliver innovative and sustainable community focused infrastructure and facilities for the future

Thinking strategically and innovatively - we look for solutions outside of the norm and are not afraid to do something that we have not done before, and we think long-term about the solutions we are providing, while having the flexibility and agility to change direction as necessary.

Our goals for the LTP 2024-2034 are

Outcomes

Social - communities that are connected and have an affordable and attractive lifestyle.

Cultural - communities with a sense of belonging for all.

Environmental - communities committed to the protection of our land and water.

Economic - communities with the infrastructure to grow.



1 Opening

The Mayor will open the meeting with a Karakia Timatanga.

2 Apologies

At the close of the agenda no apologies had been received.

3 Leave of absence

At the close of the agenda no requests for leave of absence had been received.

4 Conflict of interest

Councillors are reminded of the need to be vigilant to stand aside from decision-making when a conflict arises between their role as a councillor and any private or other external interest they might have.

5 Additional agenda items

Any additions to the agenda must be approved by resolution with an explanation as to why they cannot be delayed until a future meeting.

6 Confirmation of minutes

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 01 April 2026.

Confidential Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 01 April 2026.

7 Public participation

Requests to speak should be made by midday of the day before the meeting. Further information is available on www.southlanddc.govt.nz or phoning 0800 732 732.

8 Reports

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8.1	Submissions hearing for a proposed Licence to Occupy on Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau	7

9 Closure

The Mayor will close the meeting.

Summary of reports

	Report name	Purpose	Report type	Page
8.1	Submissions hearing for a proposed Licence to Occupy on Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau	The purpose of this report is for Council to receive written submissions on the proposed Licence to Occupy for a commercial floating sauna activity on Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau, and to also hear from people wishing to speak to their submissions at a hearing that is proposed to take place during this Council meeting.	Decision	7

Submissions hearing for a proposed Licence to Occupy on Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau

Record no: R/26/3/106941
Author: Megan Cowley, Senior property advisor
Approved by: Sam Marshall, Group manager customer and community wellbeing
Report type: Decision

Purpose

1 The purpose of this report is for Council to receive written submissions on the proposed Licence to Occupy for a commercial floating sauna activity on Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau, and to also hear from people wishing to speak to their submissions at a hearing that is proposed to take place during this Council meeting.

Staff recommendations

That Council:

a) notes the information contained in the report.

b) notes that the matter or decision in this report is assessed as being administrative but not significant based on Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.

c) determines that it has complied with the decision-making provisions of the Local Government Act 2002 to the extent necessary in relation to this decision; and in accordance with Section 79 of the act determines that it does not require further information, further assessment of options or further analysis of costs and benefits or advantages and disadvantages prior to making a decision on this matter.

d) receives the written submissions and hears oral presentations from submitters on the proposed Submissions hearing for a proposed Licence to Occupy on Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau

e) notes that all feedback received in the submissions and hearing will be considered at Council's meeting on 13 May 2026, where it will deliberate on the submissions received.

f) thanks submitters who have spoken to their submissions at this meeting.

Executive summary

2 Floating Sauna Ltd have applied for a Licence to Occupy under the Reserves Act 1977, to operate a floating sauna on Lake Henry in Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau.

3 The requirements of the Reserves Act 1977 specifies a month long public notification process with the ability for the public to be able to submit written submissions on the proposed licence, along with a right for the public to be heard on their submissions.

4 The public consultation period ran from 27 February 2026 until midnight 26 March 2026.

5 210 submissions were received during the public consultation period.

6 Of the 210 submissions received, 20 submitters are requesting to be heard.

7 Council must give full consideration to all of the received submissions in their capacity as the administering body.

Context

8 In October 2024, Council's property team received an 'application to construct on Council land' and a supplementary application to seek a 'commercial lease' along with supporting information from Floating Sauna Ltd. The application information along with the site plan, floor plan and renders as supplied by the applicant is included in attachments A-D.

9 This application followed on from a presentation to the Fiordland Community Board in 2023 to which the board subsequently provided a letter of support to Floating Sauna Ltd dated 11 September 2024.

10 The proposal is for a floating sauna pontoon to be located on a portion of Lake Henry in Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau.

11 Ivon Wilson Park is located at 117 Manapouri Te Anau Highway, Te Anau and is legally described as Section 1 SO 384696.

12 Under the Reserves Act 1977 (Act) this land is classified as a recreation reserve and is vested in Southland District Council. Therefore, Council is defined as the 'administering body' of this reserve.

13 Upon receiving legal advice, staff confirmed with the applicant that a Licence to Occupy (LTO), as opposed to a lease, would be the more appropriate documentation to use under the Act.

14 A copy of the proposed draft LTO is included as attachment E.

15 Floating Sauna Ltd indicated in their application that a resource consent application was concurrently being submitted to Council's resource consent team. This resource consent was subsequently granted on 4 February 2026.

16 As part of Council procedures for the LTO process, staff sought feedback from the Fiordland Community Board in February 2025. In their feedback, they recommended Council grant a LTO for part of Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Park to Floating Sauna Ltd.

17 It is a requirement under section 52 (2) of the Act that before granting a licence that "the administering body shall give public notice…specifying the licence proposed to be granted and shall give full consideration…to all objections and submissions in relation to the proposal received"

Discussion

18 Staff initially placed a public notification of its intention to grant a LTO and calling for submissions in the Southland Times, Council's Facebook page and Council's website on 27 February 2026. Other notices followed in the Southland Express (5 March 2026) and the Te Anau Trader (6 March 2026).

19 The final time and date for submissions to be received was midnight 26 March 2026.

20 Submitters were not provided with any specific questions/topics or forms to complete, rather they were asked to provide feedback in relation to the LTO more generally. The only specific question related to whether they wished to be heard on their submission.

21 Following requests for further information from some members of the community, supplementary information was subsequently posted on Council's website to support the original

public notice. This included the draft proposed LTO, the Ivon Wilson Park management plan, and the applicant's application to Council.

22 Council received 210 submissions, and 20 submitters have asked to speak to their submission. Two submissions were received late and therefore cannot be considered.

23 All the submissions received have been included within the submission booklet provided in attachment F.

24 Out of the 210 submissions received, 170 (81%) were objections and 37 were in support (18%) and 3 questions were asked (1%).

Options

25 The options are limited to receive the submissions as per the requirements of the Act.

Recommended option:

26 Staff recommend that Council receive the written submissions and hear the submitters attending this hearing. The advantages of this option are to further understand community views on this matter. There are no known disadvantages associated with this option.

Option 1 – Receive the submissions

Advantages	Disadvantages
• follows the legislative process and ensures legal compliance • provides community views for Council to consider.	• none identified

Legal considerations

27 The proposed LTO relates to a commercial activity within a recreation reserve managed by Council, the requirements under section 54 of the Act, "leasing powers in respect of recreation reserves", therefore apply.

28 Subsequently this requires that the basic provisions applicable to leases or licences of recreation reserves, under Schedule 1 of the Act be applied.

29 As this LTO is also not contemplated within the current Reserve Management Plan (RMP) for Ivon Wilson Park, the statutory requirements are for public notification under section 119, and to consider all objections and submissions received under section 120.

Strategic alignment

Strategic direction

30 The decision to receive and hear submissions on the proposed LTO align with Council's strategic direction by upholding its commitment to transparent, community centred governance and meaningful public engagement, as emphasised in the Long Term Plan's (LTP) focus on doing the basics well and responding to community priorities.

31 It reflects the community outcomes within the strategic framework, such as supporting belonging and protecting local natural spaces, and is consistent with Council's community leadership and environmental services activities, as set out in the LTP and Annual Plan.

32 The process also follows the consultation requirements of the Act by ensuring decisions about reserve land are informed by community views.

Policy and plan consistency

33 The existing RMP for Ivon Wilson Park does not contemplate commercial activities such as a floating sauna.

34 Because the proposed activity is not contemplated for in the operative RMP for Ivon Wilson Park, the Act requires that Council follows the public notification and submissions process set out in sections 54, 119 and 120 when considering whether to grant a licence to occupy recreation reserve land.

Financial considerations

35 At this stage, there have been no consideration of financial costs other than that of the costs of calling a meeting of Council.

Significance assessment

36 The decision for Council to receive submissions and hear from submitters is a procedural step and does not decide whether the licence to occupy will be granted. Whilst at this stage, it does not change how Ivon Wilson Park is used or affect services, facilities, or community access, this step is considered administrative under Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.

37 Even though the decision itself is considered administrative, the type of engagement required is set by law. The Act requires Council to publicly notify the proposal and then receive and hear submissions because the activity is not provided for in the current relevant RMP. Council's Significance and Engagement Policy requires that where legislation sets specific consultation requirements, this must be followed.

Level	Likelihood of engagement
Some importance or administrative	Council is not likely to carry out any engagement.
Moderate importance	Council may choose whether it carries out engagement, which may be targeted to directly affected individuals or groups.
Significant	Council will engage with directly affected individuals and groups and wider community engagement is likely, unless there are reasons under policy not to.
Critical	Council will engage with directly affected individuals and groups and wider community engagement is highly likely, unless there are reasons under policy not to.

Community views

38 Staff sought the feedback from the Fiordland Community Board in February 2025. The feedback was to recommend that Council grant a LTO for part of Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Park to Floating Sauna Ltd.

39 Community views submitted during the public notice period are recorded in the submission's booklet attached to this report.

40 20 submitters elected to be heard in relation to their submission:

	Submitter name
1	Nigel Reeves
2	Tammy Magness
3	Carrie Skilton
4	Vanessa Horwell
5	Nick Keizerwaard
6	Chris Morison
7	Lee Smillie
8	Edith Jones
9	Dr Ian Griffin
10	Wendy Holder
11	Murray Wilans
12	Shirley Mouat
13	Bill Jarvie
14	Rosco Gaudin
15	David Fortune
16	Madeleine Peacock
17	Shaun Cantwell
18	Erin Keeble
19	Jim Loose
20	Helen McFelin

Climate change considerations

41 There are no climate change considerations associated with Council's decision to receive and hear submissions.

Risk and mitigations

42 There are no significant risks associated with the procedural decision for Council to receive submissions and hear from submitters, as this step does not determine whether the licence to occupy will ultimately be granted.

43 However, there is a regulatory risk related to the broader process. The proposal is subject to mandatory public notification, submissions, and hearings under the Act because the activity is not

already provided for in the existing Reserve Management Plan for Ivon Wilson Park. Ensuring full compliance with these statutory requirements helps mitigate potential legal or procedural challenges associated with the later substantive decision on whether to grant the licence.

Next steps

44 On 13 May 2026, Council will consider and deliberate on all of the submissions received to decide whether or not the proposed LTO will be granted.

45 If the decision is to grant the LTO, then to also decide whether there are to be any amendments to the proposed LTO document.

Attachments

A Supporting Information for Lease and construction Application - Floating Sauna Limited - Lake Henry, Te Anau ⇩

B Site Plan - Floating Sauna Limited - Lake Henry, Te Anau ⇩

C Floor Plans and Elevations - Floating Sauna Limited - Lake Henry, Te Anau ⇩

D Renders / Mock-up of structure - Floating Sauna Limited - Lake Henry, Te Anau ⇩

E UNSIGNED - PDF - Proposed Licence to Occupy Agreement between Council and Floating Sauna Ltd, Ivon Wilson Park - February 2026 ⇩

F Submissions booklet - proposed Licence to Occupy - Floating Sauna Ltd ⇩

Reference	23.019
Date	18th October 2024
Location	Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve, Te Anau
Legal Description	Section 1 Survey Office Plan 384696 held in Record of Title 370592
Applicant	Floating Sauna Limited – Nigel and Debra Reeves
Territorial Authority	Southland District Council
Proposal	Approval of Southland District Council, as owner of Ivon Wilson Reserve, is sought to establish and operate a floating sauna on Lake Henry A commercial lease is sought to enable the establishment and operation of the floating sauna as a commercial recreation activity

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This application is an application for Council approval to construct a building on property owned by the Southland District Council. This application also seeks a commercial lease of the Council owned land in order to enable the establishment and operation of a floating sauna as a commercial recreation activity.

1.2 An application for resource consent is being made concurrently with this landowner approval and lease application.

2.0 LEGAL DESCRIPTION

2.1 The application site is legally described as Section 1 Survey Office Plan 384696 held in Record of Title 370592. A copy of the Record of Title is attached as **Appendix A** to this application.

3.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

3.1 The application site is the Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve in Te Anau. Please refer to the location plan in **Figure 1** below.

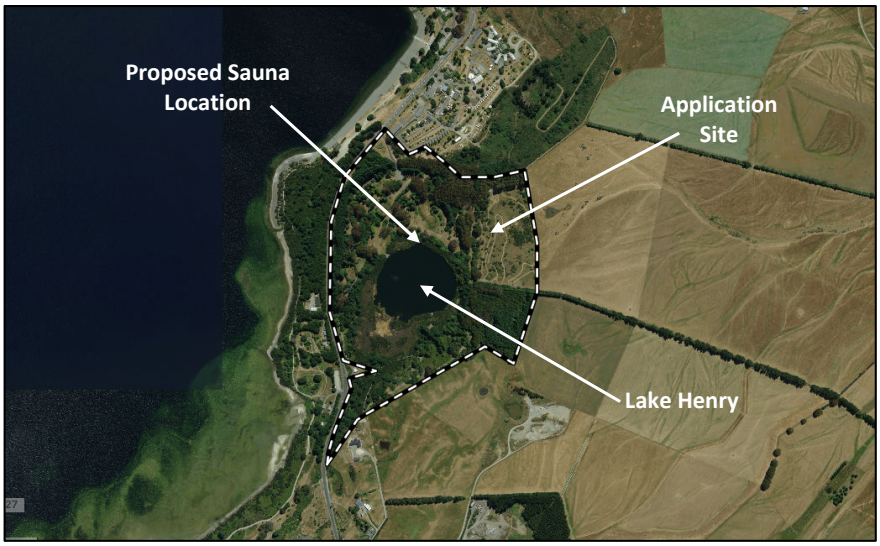

Figure 1 : Application Site

3.2 Lake Henry is a circular 3.7 hectare lake located 700m to the south of the township of Te Anau. There is a viewing platform on the north-western side of the lake, as well as two smaller docks on the southern and northern ends of the lake. Lake Henry is located within the Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve, which is managed by Southland District Council. The reserve is 35 hectares in area and irregular in shape. The reserve is vegetated with a mixture of re-introduced native and exotic plants and has a number of paths throughout it. It is a popular location to go fishing, walk dogs and play disk golf.

3.3 The location of particular relevance to this application is the existing platform at the northern end of the lake. The platform is a relatively small, open sided structure located on the northern edge of the lake and is accessed by way of a timber boardwalk that leads from the open grassed areas at the northern end of the reserve through a stand of native vegetation to the lake edge.

3.4 The surrounding environment is comprised largely of rural land to the south and east. A bird sanctuary is located to the west with Lake Te Anau beyond. There is a holiday park located directly to the north of the reserve.

4.0 PROPOSAL

4.1 The applicant proposes to establish and operate a floating sauna on Lake Henry. Copies of the proposed site plans, floor plans and elevations and visual simulations are included as **Appendices A, B** and **C** to this application. The proposed sauna is to be located adjacent to, and accessed via, the existing platform at the northern end of the lake.

Buildings

4.2 The sauna structure will comprise of three small buildings on a floating pontoon. All three of the buildings, comprised of two saunas and a change room, will be 3m by 3m, 9m^2 in area. The saunas will be constructed of timber and have gable roofs with the apexes reaching 4.3m above the water line. The changing room building will have the same dimensions as the sauna buildings but will be clad in Danpalon to enable natural light into the building.

4.3 The three buildings will be constructed on top of a floating dock that will be 10.2m by 7.7m, 78.54m^2 in area. The two saunas will be positioned on the southern side of the dock with entrance doors opening to the middle of the dock and glazing facing out over the water. The changing room building will be set in behind these buildings to the north and will include four enclosed changing rooms and a long seat on the south side of the building where people can wait for their turn to go into the sauna as well as cool down during their session. A fireplace is proposed to the east of the changing room building on the dock.

4.4 A hardwood fence would be constructed around the northern, eastern and western sides of the dock with entrance enabled by a gate. Additional seating is proposed alongside the western fence. A ladder on the southern side of the dock between the two saunas would provide access to the water.

4.5 The dock would be connected to the existing platform via a gangway and will be anchored to the edge of the lake with ground lines.

4.6 The floating dock and sauna/change room structures will be constructed off site before being carried to and assembled on the lake.

Operation

4.7 The proposed activity (which comprises a commercial recreation activity) will offer a sauna and cold plunge experience to small groups of guests. Each sauna can accommodate up to 6 guests

and sessions will be available on the hour. While private bookings (whereby all six slots are booked by an individual or smaller group) will be available the sessions will otherwise be booked on a shared basis.

4.8 Bookings will be available online only with the booking software set up such that sessions are grouped to run continuously. Once a session is filled on any given day the sessions either side of that initial session will open up for booking and so on. Managing bookings in this manner will ensure the sauna sessions are run efficiently, minimizing the hours that staff and guests will be on site and reducing operational costs by avoiding unnecessary heating of the saunas.

4.9 The sauna will operate seven days a week during daylight hours only. Sessions will begin no earlier than 7am and cease no later than 9pm (with seasonal variations to operating hours to reflect the available daylight hours).

4.10 It is anticipated that at least six part time staff will be required to operate the sauna activity. Of those six staff two will be responsible for bookings and marketing, two will deliver and supervise the sauna sessions and two will be engaged in servicing and maintenance.

4.11 Customers would arrive to the sauna pontoon prior to the booked session and change in the changing rooms provided. Customers can then wait on the seating provided if they arrive early. These seats also provide seating for the people using the saunas if they wish to take a break and sit out in the cooler air rather than take a cold plunge. Additional seating is provided to accommodate guests where sessions overlap.

4.12 All sessions will be supervised by appropriately qualified and trained staff. Patrons will be screened online when purchasing sauna sessions as well as upon entry for swimming ability, intoxication, and other physical or health issues. Every session would commence with a safety briefing. There will be St Johns ambulance medical first aid kit, emergency beacon and defibrillator on site. There will also be life rings connected to the pontoon with rope.

Servicing

4.13 The saunas will be wood fired (using dry firewood only for efficient heating and to reduce smoke) and given that the activity will only operate during daytime hours no lighting or electricity connection is required. Similarly, no fixed line telecommunications connection is required.

4.14 Guests will be encouraged to bring their own water however potable water will also be supplied with regular deliveries along with the delivery of firewood.

4.15 Toilet facilities are available within the reserve and guests will be encouraged to use those facilities (if required) before each session.

4.16 Firewood will be delivered daily to the sauna in order to minimise the volume of firewood that needs to be delivered and stored at any one time. The firewood will be transported to the parking area and then carried in crates to the dock where it will be stored.

Access, Parking and Maneuvering

4.17 Guests will be encouraged to bike or walk to the floating sauna. However, in the event they want to drive, there is parking within the Ivon Wilson reserve, approximately 160m to the north.

4.18 From the car park or track alongside Lake Te Anau, customers will walk through the reserve to the lake's edge. Directions will be provided via the online booking system and as such no directional signage will be required.

Landscaping / Vegetation Clearance

4.19 No clearance of vegetation will be required in order to deliver, construct or operate the proposed sauna activity.

Ownership, Maintenance and Insurance

4.20 Floating Sauna Ltd will retain ownership of the building once constructed and will be responsible for all maintenance and insurance required in association with the commercial recreation activities. Should the commercial lease cease in the future the building will be removed from the reserve by Floating Sauna Ltd.

5.0 STATUTORY AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Reserves Act 1977

5.1 The application site is a recreation reserve and is subject to the Reserves Act 1977. Section 17 of the Reserves Act sets out the purpose of recreation reserves being for the provision of:

"areas for recreation and sporting activities and the physical welfare and enjoyment of the public, and for the protection of the natural environment and beauty of the countryside, with emphasis on the retention of open spaces and on outdoor recreational activities, including recreational tracks in the countryside."

5.2 Section 17(2)(a) of the Act states that the public are to have freedom of entry and access to the reserve, subject to the powers conferred on the administering body by Sections 53 and 54 of the Act. Section 54 of the Act is of particular relevance to the consideration of the proposal, relating to leasing powers in respect of recreation reserves.

5.3 Section 17(2) of the Act also requires that the existing features (e.g. scenic, historic, archaeological etc) of the reserve are managed and protected to the extent compatible with the purpose of the reserve (s17(2)(b)) and that the qualities of the reserve that contribute to the pleasantness, harmony and cohesion of the natural environment and the better use and enjoyment of the reserve are conserved (s17(2)(c)). Section 17(2) also requires that the value of the reserve as a soil, water and forest conservation area are maintained to the extent that is compatible with the purpose of the reserve.

5.4 As outlined above Section 54 of the Act is of particular relevance to the consideration of this application. Section 54 conveys leasing powers to the administering body whereby, with the prior consent of the Minister, the administering body may lease to any person or body an area of the reserve for (among other things) baths or other facilities for public recreation or enjoyment (s54(1)(a)) and grant leases for the operation of a business within the reserve that is necessary to enable the public to obtain the benefit and enjoyment of the reserve (s54(1)(d)).

Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan 2008

5.5 The values of the reserve and the objectives and policies that are intended to guide it's maintenance and development are set out in the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan 2008. In summary the reserve offers a combination of scenic, recreational, ecological and educational opportunities. The vision for the reserve is set out as:

"To build on Ivon Wilson's dream of creating a parkscape of trees that attracts people and wildlife. With Lake Henry as its focal point, to further develop the park in a manner that makes it locally and regionally recognised for its exceptional interest and enjoyment to all visitors."

5.6 The following management objectives are intended to achieve the vision for the reserve:

(i) To promote and facilitate multiple use of the Park based on identifiable recreation activities compatible with the character and sustainability of the resource.

(ii) To enhance and maintain the scenic values and attractions of Ivon Wilson Park.

(iii) To as far as possible maintain Lake Henry and surrounding bog in its natural state.

(iv) To foster public appreciation of the Park, facilitate public access to, and recreational use of the area.

5.7 The management plan goes on to set out a range of management policies intended to achieve the above objectives. The policies of particular relevance are set out and discussed below:

Vegetation Management – Policy

(ii) To as far as possible maintain the indigenous vegetation surrounding Lake Henry in its natural state.

(v) To prohibit the removal of any tree, plant or shrub other than in accordance with desired management outcomes.

5.8 The proposed building and associated commercial recreation activity will not result in the removal of any tree, plant or shrub and any existing indigenous vegetation will be retained in its natural state.

Fauna Management – Policy

(i) To protect all indigenous fauna.

5.9 The proposed building and associated activities will not threaten or adversely affect indigenous fauna.

Fishery Management – Policy

To allow the Southland Branch of Fish and Game to periodically introduce trout into Lake Henry to maintain fish stocks at a suitable level for the enjoyment of junior anglers.

5.10 The proposed building and associated activities will not preclude the introduction of trout into Lake Henry should Fish and Game wish to do so. The propose building will occupy a relatively small portion of the lake and will not compromise the use of the wider lake for fishing. Consultation has been undertaken with Fish and Game and no concerns have been raised.

Water Quality – Policy

To manage the Park in such a manner as not to impact negatively on Lake Henry water quality.

5.11 The proposed building and activities will not result in any discharge to the lake or to land surrounding the lake. It is therefore considered that the proposal will not negatively impact water quality. Given that the proposed activities would utilise the water resource water quality is integral to the viability of the activities and the applicant would have a vested interest in ensuring that water quality is maintained.

Fires – Policy

(i) To prohibit the lighting of fires in the Park other than in barbecues that may be provided by the Council.

(ii) To take every reasonable precaution to prevent the occurrence of fire in the management area.

(iii) To extinguish any fires occurring within the management area.

(iv) To co-operate fully with the Southern Rural Fire District (SRFD) in its administration of the Forest and Rural Fires Act 1977.

5.12 Being wood fired the proposed saunas will involve the lighting of fires within the Park. The fires will however be contained within specifically designed, fully enclosed fire boxes and all flues will be fitted with spark arrestors. The proposed saunas will be located on the surface of the lake and will be separated from any vegetation by water. Fire extinguishers will be kept on the sauna platform at all times and staff will be appropriate trained.

5.13 While the proposed activities are inconsistent with fire policy (i) the operation will comply with fire policies (ii) and (iii) such that the risk of uncontrolled fire occurring within the reserve will be minimised to an acceptable level.

Recreational Use / Facilities – Policy

(i) To maintain and improve the quality of facilities to encourage increased usage of the Park.

(ii) To allow development that is appropriate for and generally acceptable for a reserve of its natural – additional projects will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

(iii) To keep the number of structures on the reserve to a minimum.

5.14 The proposed sauna will be a high quality addition to the recreational opportunities available within the reserve and will encourage its increased usage. The sauna will be available to locals and visitors alike and will be priced to enable and encourage return visits (i.e. it will not be a one off attraction for tourists that provides little recreational value to the local community).

5.15 The proposed activities are considered compatible with the character and purpose of the reserve and aside from the pontoon and sauna buildings themselves (which will be located in a relatively discreet corner of the lake) the proposal will not add further structures to the reserve such as signage or toilets.

Motor Vehicles – Policy

Except where they are involved in fire fighting, other emergency purposes or essential management, vehicles are to be restricted to defined access and parking areas.

5.16 As outlined in the description of the proposal above guests will be encouraged to walk or cycle to the sauna. Where guests arrive by motor vehicle they will be directed (as part of the booking process) to park within the existing car park and walk to the sauna.

Litter Disposal – Policy

To keep the management area free of litter and encourage visitors to retain and remove their own litter.

5.17 The sauna will operate on a zero waste basis and does not include any retail component that would generate waste (i.e. snacks and drinks will not be made available). Guests will be encouraged to bring their own drinking water in reusable bottles.

Signs, Interpretation and Education – Policy

(ii) To keep sign numbers to a minimum and encourage the use of multi-functional signs wherever possible.

5.18 No signage is proposed as part of the development.

Leases and Temporary Use – Policy

(i) To permit leasing under the requirements of the Reserve Act.

(ii) To grant leases when they are considered to be in the public interest and in accordance with the reserve's purpose, objectives and policy.

(v) To require all lessees to act in accordance with this Management Plan.

5.19 It is considered that the proposed lease is in the public interest and is in general accordance with the reserve's purpose objectives and policies. The lessee will operate in accordance with the Management Plan (and any future revised Management Plans).

Buildings and Structures – Policy

(ii) When upgrading existing or constructing new structures and buildings to use materials and colours that are in harmony with the environment.

(iii) To restrict the number of buildings, utilities and structures to a level which facilitates the safe and appropriate use of the reserve.

5.20 The proposed buildings will largely be constructed using materials and colours that are naturally recessive and in harmony with the environment. While the proposed changing room structure will be clad in Dampalon, being a semi-opaque polycarbonate, it will not be highly reflective, will not be internally or externally illuminated and will be set behind the proposed sauna structures such that it will not be highly visible from the wider reserve.

5.21 The proposed buildings will enable and enhance the use and enjoyment of the reserve and are considered appropriate in terms of the number of buildings on the reserve given the contribution they will make to the recreational opportunities available.

Development – Policy

(i) To undertake such development as is required to achieve the objectives, and implement the policies, contained in this management plan.

5.22 It is considered that the proposed development is generally consistent with the policies of the management plan and overall will enable the public to access and enjoy the reserve in a way that has not previously been possible. The proposed activities will enable the public (both residents and visitors) to provide for their health and well-being with the sauna providing a year round recreational opportunity and attraction. It is therefore considered that the proposal is consistent with the objectives and policies of the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan 2008.

District Wide Reserve Management Plan 2003

5.23 The District Wide Reserve Management Plan 2003 (the DWRMP) provides a policy framework for the management of all reserves within Southland District. The objectives of the DWRMP are as follows:

1.2.2 Objectives

Management objectives provide a framework in which management aims can be achieved. The objectives are:

1. *Provision of adequate number of quality reserves and facilities for organised sport and active recreation.*
2. *Provision of adequate number of quality reserves for passive recreation.*
3. *Preservation of the natural character of indigenous vegetation and native wildlife habitat on the reserves and open spaces of the District.*
4. *Preservation of significant historic and cultural features on the reserves and open spaces of the District.*
5. *Maintenance and development of existing recreational facilities and environment.*
6. *Management of reserves and open spaces in such a way that their recreational qualities will contribute to and enhance the enjoyment of the people of the District.*

5.24 The proposed buildings and associated commercial recreation activities will provide an additional high quality recreation facility that will provide for the health and wellbeing of the District's residents and visitors alike. The buildings and activities will provide this without compromising access to or passive enjoyment of the wider reserve.

5.25 The proposed buildings will not require the removal of any indigenous vegetation and will not compromise native wildlife habitats or any significant historic or cultural feature.

5.26 The proposal represents the development of recreational facilities that will enhance the enjoyment of the people of the District.

5.27 The policies of the DWRMP provide finer grained policy guidance on specific activities within reserves. The relevant policies of the DWRMP are contained in Section 3.6 – Buildings and Structures and Section 3.17 – Leases and Licences to Occupy and are as follows:

Section 3.6 – Buildings and Structures

Reserves are created principally for the provision and preservation of open space. However, some buildings such as changing rooms, toilets and clubrooms can be considered necessary for the enjoyment and full utilisation of the reserve.

3.6.1 All new or major changes to existing buildings and structures on reserves in the District shall require prior formal approval from Council and shall conform to Council's 'Policy for Buildings or other Structures Situated on Council Property'. Refer Appendix 7

3.6.2 Building consents under the Building Act 1991 will be obtained for all new buildings and structures where this is required due to the nature of the building or structure.

3.6.3 The number of buildings and structures on reserves will be limited to a level which facilitates the safe and appropriate use of each reserve.

3.6.4 The open space and natural amenity values of the reserves will be protected and managed by allowing only those buildings and structures which complement the purpose or classification of the reserve.

3.6.5 The design of any building or structure on reserves will be subject to Council approval.

3.6.6 The building or structure design will be in keeping with the surroundings and be designed to enhance and complement the landscape. This will be achieved through innovative style and colour. This is particularly important in rural and coastal areas or areas with indigenous vegetation, where the natural environment plays a large part in the character of the reserve.

3.6.7 Buildings and structures will be maintained to a high standard and where practicable designed to limit the opportunity for vandalism.

5.28 The proposed buildings will enable and enhance the utilisation of the reserve for outdoor recreation and enjoyment. The formal approval of Council is hereby being sought for the buildings in accordance with Council's 'Policy for Buildings or other Structures Situated on Council Property'.

5.29 The applicant will obtain all necessary consents (building consent and resource consent) associated with the buildings.

5.30 Given that the proposed buildings will contribute to the enjoyment and utilisation of the reserve it is considered that their addition to the reserve is appropriate in terms of the number of buildings within the reserve. The open space and amenity values of the reserve will not be compromised by the proposed buildings or the associated activities.

5.31 The proposed buildings are of an appropriate and high quality design. The bulk and form of the buildings is relatively modest and exterior colours and materials will generally be recessive and consistent with the existing character of the reserve. The lease application process provides Council with the ability to review and approve the design.

5.32 The proposed buildings will be constructed and maintained to a high standard by the applicant.

5.33 It is therefore considered that the proposed buildings are consistent with the DWRMP policies relating to Buildings and Structures.

3.17 – Leases and Licences to Occupy

Leases and Licenses to Occupy are often an important and intricate aspect of reserve management. They provide an opportunity for sport organisations, private enterprises or community organisations to provide recreational facilities for the public. The Reserves Act 1977 clearly indicates that leases and other occupation rights must be considered in relation to the primary purpose of the reserve and the rights of the public.

3.17.1 Council may enter into formal lease agreements on reserve land when suitable and appropriate reserve land is available, and a clear requirement for consistent use or service is shown.

3.17.2 Management responsibilities of the lessee will be clearly identified in the lease agreement.

5.34 As outlined above the proposed buildings and associated lease will enable and enhance the utilisation of the reserve for outdoor recreation and enjoyment. The proposed buildings will occupy a small area of the reserve and the lease and associated commercial recreation activities will not adversely affect the public's access to, and enjoyment of the wider reserve. The

applicant expects that the lease agreement will clearly identify management and maintenance responsibility and is happy to work with Council on these requirements.

5.35 It is therefore considered that the proposed buildings and associated lease are consistent with the DWRMP policies relating to Leases and Licenses to Occupy and will contribute to achieving the objectives of the DWRMP generally.

Overseas Investment

5.36 Floating Sauna Limited is a New Zealand Registered Company and while Nigel and Debra Reeves reside in Australia they have a strong connection to Te Anau, Debra having been born and raised in Te Anau. Being a NZ Registered Company the leasing or licencing of reserve land by Southland District Council to Floating Sauna Limited complies fully with the Overseas Investment Act 2005.

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 Consultation has been undertaken with the Te Anau Community Board and a letter of support has been provided and is attached as **Appendix C** to this application.

6.2 The applicants have also been in consultation with Bill Jarvie of Fish & Game New Zealand. We understand that Mr. Jarvie has provided verbal confirmation that Fish & Game New Zealand no longer have an interest in Lake Henry as a fishery. Written confirmation of this position is awaited and will be provided if/when available.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 The approval of Southland District Council (as landowner) is sought for the construction of a building, being a floating sauna, on Lake Henry within the Ivon Wilson Park. An associated commercial lease of the Council owned land is also sought in order to enable the establishment and operation of a floating sauna as a commercial recreation activity.

7.2 Having assessed the proposal against the provisions of the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan 2008 and the District Wide Reserve Management Plan 2003 it is considered that the proposal is consistent with the relevant objectives and policies of those plans. The proposal will enable the enjoyment of the reserve in a way not previously possible without compromising the enjoyment of the wider reserve or its qualities. The proposed commercial recreation activity will provide a year round opportunity for residents and visitors to provide for their health and well-being. It is

therefore considered that the proposal is appropriate and can be approved under s54 of the Reserves Act 1977.

11.4 Therefore it is respectfully requested that landowner approval and the associated commercial lease is approved as proposed.

Yours faithfully,
Edgar Planning Ltd,



Scott Edgar
Planner



patch
landscape ■ architecture ■ urban

Reference : PA24808 IS04

Scale: 1:2,500 @ A3

0 25 50m
SCALE = 1:2,500 AT A3

Lake Henry Floating Sauna
Base Plan
23 July 2024



patch
landscape ■ architecture ■ urban

Reference : PA24808 IS04

Scale: 1:2,500 @ A3

0 25 50m
SCALE = 1:2,500 AT A3

Lake Henry Floating Sauna
Site Plan
23 July 2024



patch
landscape ■ architecture ■ urban

Reference : PA24808 IS04

Scale: 1:200 @ A3

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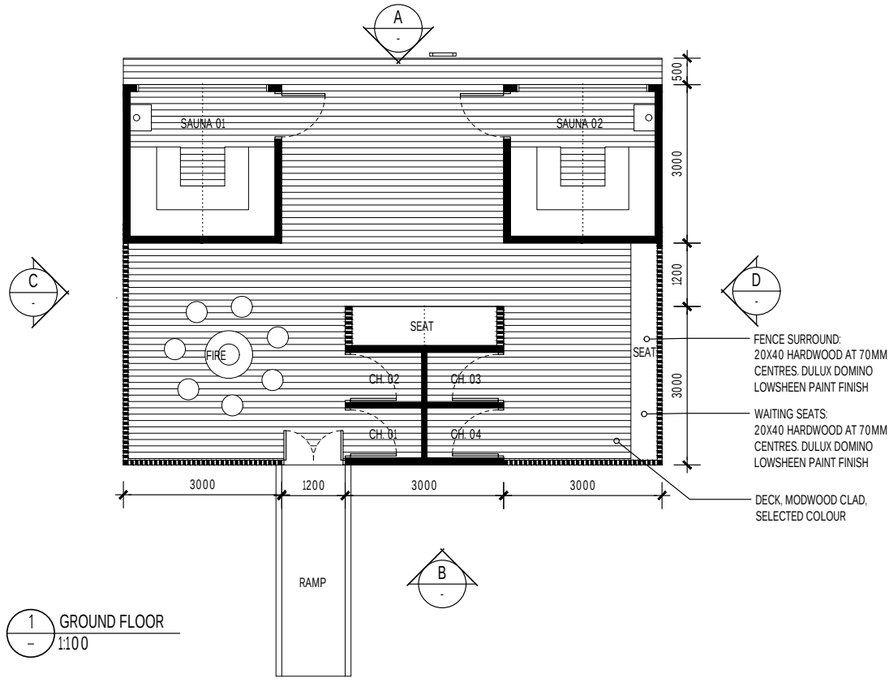
SCALE = 1:200 AT A3

Lake Henry Floating Sauna
Concept Plan
23 July 2024



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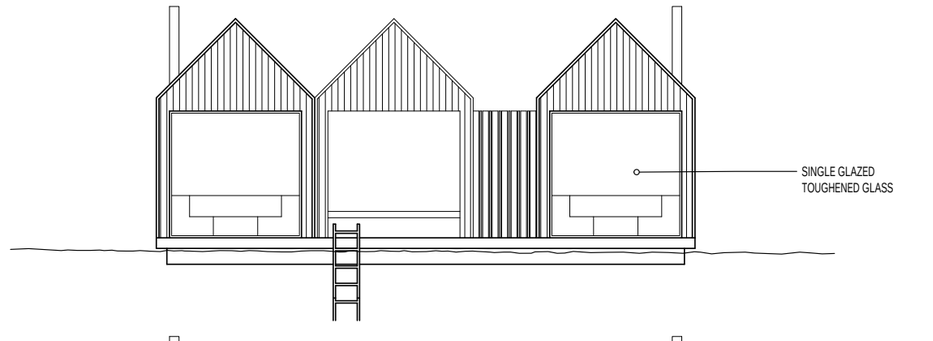
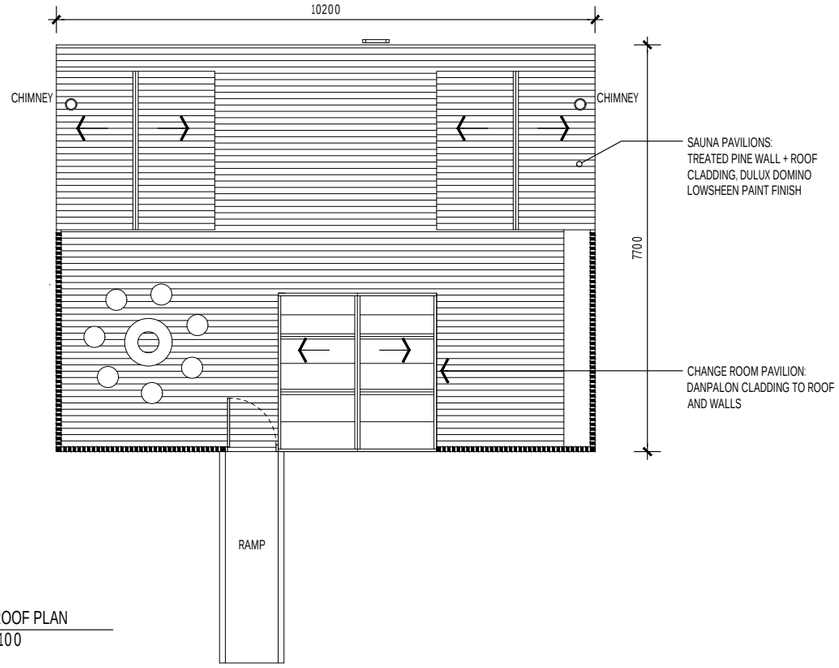


3 – ELEVATION A 1:100

4 – ELEVATION B 1:100



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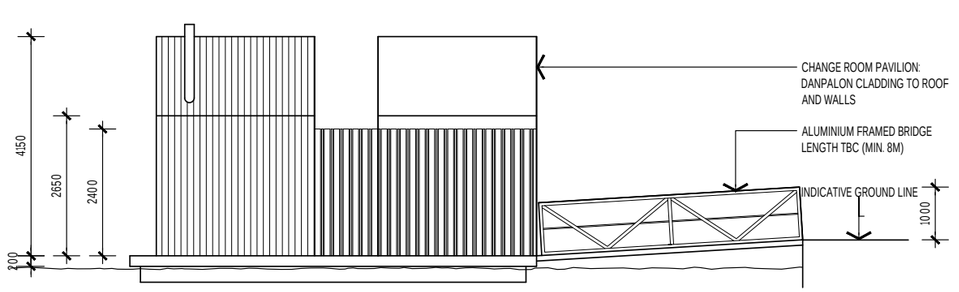
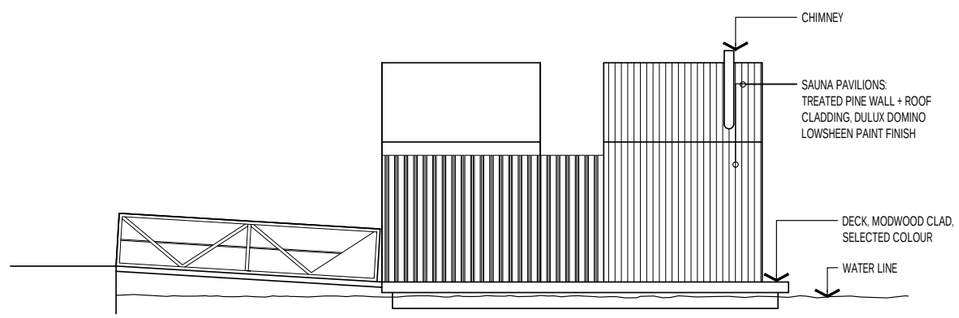


5 – ELEVATION C 1:100



6 – ELEVATION D 1:100

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Nominated Architect: Jason Licht Registration No.: 962 License No.: CC 5865 K
Level 1, The Walnut Building, 199 Macquarie St, Hobart TAS 7000
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ISSUE	DATE	REASON	DRAWN	CHECKED
A	04/10/23	ISSUED FOR CLIENT REVIEW	DK	JL
B	31/05/24	ISSUED FOR INFORMATION	DK	JL

general notes

These drawings show design intent & are suitable as a guide only. Do not scale off the drawings. All dimensions in millimetres. Dimensions of existing building are indicative only - they should not be relied on and are to be verified on site before commencing work. All documents shall be read in conjunction with specifications and any consultants detail. All work shall be in accordance with the Building Code of Australia, relevant Australian Standards & local authority by-laws and regulations. Any discrepancies, errors or omissions shall be referred to the Architects. Drawings are not to be used for construction until issued Construction.

client
N REEVES

project
SAUNA
LAKE HENRY
NZ

drawing status
INFORMATION

drawing
PLANS & ELEVATIONS
GROUND

scale
1:100 at A3

project nº
2317

drawing nº
A02-00

issue
B

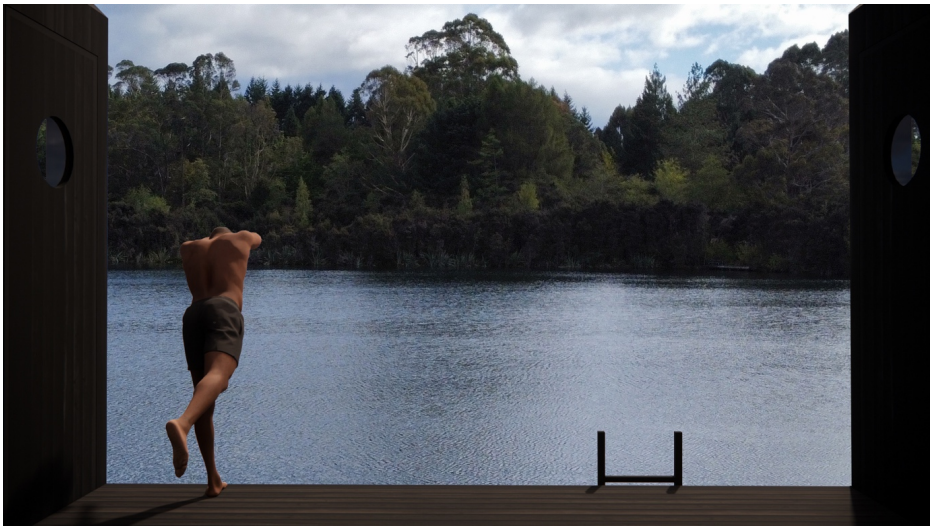
Appendix C - Renders



Aerial view looking north



Aerial view looking east



View from pontoon

SOUTHLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Licence to Occupy

- Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve, Te Anau
- Floating Sauna Limited

Southland District Council
Te Rohe Pōtae o Murihiku

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southlanddc.govt.nz

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Document Revision

Date	Amendment	Amended by	Approved by	Approval date

Licence to Occupy reserve

Licence dated ……..……. 2026

PARTIES

Southland District Council a local authority under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2002 **(Licensor)**

Floating Sauna Limited **(Licensee)**

Background

A. The Licensor has vested in it the Reserve of which the Licence Area (as defined in the Schedule) forms part.

B. Pursuant to the Reserves Act 1977 and any other enabling legislation the Licensor is empowered to administer, manage and control the reserve.

C. The Licensor has agreed to Licence the Licence Area to the Licensee on the Terms set out in the Schedule.

D. The Licence is made pursuant to the Reserves Act 1977.

This deed records

1. Grant of Licence

1.1 The Licensor licences to the Licensee and the Licensee accepts a Licence to Occupy for the Term from the Commencement Date and at the Licence Fee (subject to review) as defined in the Schedule, subject to the rights of termination set out in this licence. The Licensee shall only be permitted to use the Licence Area for the use specified in the Schedule.

2. Payment of Licence Fee

2.1 The Licensee will pay the Licence Fee payable by equal payments in advance on the Licence Fee Payment Dates as more particularly specified in the Schedule. All Licence Fees shall be paid without any deductions by direct payment to the Licensor or as the Licensor directs.

3. Licence Fee Review

3.1 The Licence Fee may be reviewed by the Licensor in the following manner.

a) The Licence Fee will be reviewed on the Market Licence Fee Review Dates and determined as follows:

i. The Licensor may not earlier than three (3) months prior to a Market Licence Fee Review Date (or in the case of a Market Licence Fee Review Date that is also a renewal date, at any time after the Licensee has given notice its intention to renew this Licence) and not later than the next Licence Fee Review Date (regardless of whether the next date is a Market Licence Fee Review Date or a CPI Licence Fee Review Date) give written notice to the Licensee specifying the annual Licence Fee proposed as the current market Licence Fee at that Market Licence Fee Review Date.

ii. If the Licensee gives written notice to the Licensor within 10 working days after service of the Licensor's notice disputing the annual Licence Fee proposed and specifying the annual

Licence Fee proposed by the Licensee as the current market Licence Fee, then the new Licence Fee must be determined in accordance with subclause (v).

iii. If the Licensee fails to give such notice (time being of the essence) the Licensee will be deemed to have accepted the annual Licence Fee proposed in the Licensor's notice.

iv. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Licence, the annual Licence Fee from the relevant Market Licence Fee Review Date will not be less than the annual Licence Fee payable immediately before the Licence Fee Review Date.

v. If subclause (ii) applies, immediately following service of the Licensee's notice on the Licensor, the parties must endeavour to agree upon the current market licence fee, but if agreement is not reached within 15 working days, then the new licence fee may be determined by registered valuers acting as experts and not as arbitrators as follows:

(a) Each party must appoint a valuer and give written notice of the appointment to the other party within 20 working days.

(b) If a party fails to appoint a valuer within the 20-working day period, then the valuer appointed by the other party must determine the new licence fee and such determination will be binding on both parties.

(c) The valuers appointed before commencing their determination must appoint a third expert who need not be a registered valuer. If the parties cannot agree on the third expert, the appointment will be made on the application of either party by the President of The New Zealand Institute of Valuers.

(d) The valuers appointed by the parties must determine the current market licence fee of the Land but, if they fail to agree, then the licence fee must be determined by the third expert.

(e) The valuers or the expert must have regard to any of the representations made by each party but are not bound by them.

(f) The parties must jointly and severally indemnify the third expert for their costs. As between the parties, they will share the expert's costs equally unless the expert determines unequal cost allocation in which case the expert's determination as to costs in binding.

(g) If the parties agree, they may release the third expert from liability for negligence in acting as third expert in accordance with this clause.

(h) When the new Licence Fee has been determined, the person or persons determining it must give written notice of it to the parties.

b) The Licence Fee will be assessed by CPI at each CPI Licence Fee Review Date. The annual Licence Fee payable from each CPI Licence Fee Review Date shall be determined as follows:

i. The Licensor shall adjust the annual Licence Fee on the basis of increases (and not decreases) in the CPI by giving notice to the Licensee of the increase (if any) using the formula: A = B x (C/D) Where:

A = the CPI reviewed Licence Fee from the relevant CPI Licence Fee Review Date

B = the annual Licence Fee payable immediately before the relevant CPI Licence Fee review date

C = CPI for the quarter year ending immediately before the relevant CPI Licence Fee review date

D = CPI for the quarter year ending immediately before the last Licence Fee review date or if there is no previous Licence Fee review date, the commencement date of the then current term of the licence (and in the case where A is the CPI reviewed Licence Fee for a

renewal date then the last Licence Fee review date of the immediately preceding licence term).

ii. If the CPI is discontinued and not replaced, or if there is a material change to the basis of calculation of the CPI, or a resetting of the CPI, an appropriate index which reflects the change in the cost of living in New Zealand as agreed by the parties and failing agreement to be determined by an expert appointed by the president of the New Zealand Law Society will be used.

iii. If the relevant CPI is not published at the relevant CPI Licence Fee Review Date, as soon as the CPI is published an appropriate adjustment will be made to the Licence Fee (if necessary) with effect from the relevant CPI Licence Fee Review Date.

iv. Notwithstanding any other provision of this clause, the annual Licence Fee payable as from the relevant CPI Licence Fee Review Date shall not be less than the annual Licence Fee payable immediately preceding the CPI Licence Fee Review Date (and in the case where the relevant CPI Licence Fee Review Date is a renewal date, the annual Licence Fee payable at the expiry of the preceding term).

v. The new Licence Fee determined pursuant to this clause shall be payable from the relevant CPI Licence Fee Review Date once it is determined by the Licensor giving notice under this clause. Pending determination of the new Licence Fee, the Licensee will pay the Licence Fee that applies prior to the CPI Licence Fee Review Date. On determination of the new Licence Fee, the Licensee will immediately pay any shortfall to the Licensor.

vi. For the purposes of this clause, "CPI" means the Consumer Price Index (All Groups) published by Statistics New Zealand or other governmental agency and any revised, replacement or substituted index.

3.2 The Licensee will pay the reviewed Licence Fee from the Review Date on the basis recorded in clause 2.

4. Rates and Outgoings

4.1 The Licensee will pay the following Outgoings, if applicable, as they become due.

(a) All rates and other charges levied or assessed in respect of the Licence Area by any territorial or other local government authority.

(b) All charges or levies for water, gas, electricity, and other utilities or services supplied to or used on the Licence Area.

(c) All insurance premiums and valuation fees payable in respect of all insurances effected pursuant to this Licence and any insurance excess in relation to any claim under such insurance.

(d) All rubbish collection and sanitation charges or levies in respect of the Licence Area.

(e) All Goods and Services Tax payable in respect of the Licence Fee and other payments due under this Licence.

4.2 The Outgoings will be apportioned between the Licensor and the Licensee in respect of the periods current at the Commencement Date and end of the Term.

5. Default in payments

5.1 If the Licensee defaults in payment of the Licence Fee, Outgoings, or any other moneys payable under this Licence, the Licensee must pay the outstanding amount on demand together with Default Interest from the date payment was due to the date of recovery by the Licensor.

6. Legal costs

6.1 Each party will meet their own legal costs relating to this Licence and any further legal cost relating to any variation or renewal or any deed recording a Licence Fee Review.

6.2 The Licensee will meet the Licensor's legal costs of and incidental to the enforcement or attempted enforcements of the Licensor's rights, remedies and powers under this Licence.

7. Buildings and maintenance

7.1 The Licensee will not erect or alter any building or structure on the Licence Area or Recreation Reserve nor excavate the Licence Area or Recreation Reserve without the prior written consent of the Licensor. Before requesting such consent, the Licensee will submit to the Licensor for its approval, complete working plans and specifications together with a copy to be retained by the Licensor. The Licensee will not proceed until such plans and specifications have been approved by the Licensor, which may be given on such conditions as the Licensor determines (acting reasonably)

7.2 The Licensee, in constructing or altering any building that has received prior approval by the Licensor under clause 7.1, will comply with the provisions of all Acts, Regulations and Bylaws and lawful requisitions of any proper authority having power with respect to the use of the Licence Area and with any conditions imposed by the Licensor or otherwise arising pursuant to the operative district plan.

7.3 The Licensee will ensure copies of any document under the Building Act 2004 provided by the Licensor are displayed in the buildings on the Licence Area as required under that Act.

7.4 The Licensee will not plant any trees, shrubs or other vegetation on or near the Licence Area or remove any trees, shrubs or vegetation from or near the Licence Area without the prior written approval of the Licensor.

7.5 The Licensee will at its cost in a proper and workmanlike manner and in accordance with the reasonable requirements of the Licensor.

(a) Keep the Licence Area (including any buildings and structures on the Licence Area, fences and gates) in a clean and tidy condition and in good and substantial repair.

(b) Keep the Licence Area clear of all noxious weeds, plants and shrubs and will comply with the provisions of the Biosecurity Act 1993 and any rules, regulations and bylaws dealing with noxious weeds and growths.

(c) Repair all glass breakages and breakage or damage to all light fittings and power points and keep the electrical system of the Licence Area (including any building and structures on the Licence Area) in good operating condition.

(d) Paint and re-paint any building and structures on the Licence Area as and when the same reasonably require painting.

(e) Make good any damage caused to or any defect in the interior or the exterior of any buildings and structures on the Licence Area.

(f) Keep any grounds, pathways, bike parks, gardens, lawns, yards or surfaced areas in a tidy condition.

(g) Keep and maintain all open parts of any storm and or wastewater drainage system contained in the Licence Area or connected thereto including downpipes and guttering clear and unobstructed.

(h) Keep the Licence Area clear of vermin.

7.6 The Licensee will regularly remove all rubbish and keep rubbish bins or containers in a tidy and sanitary condition.

7.7 The Licensee will give the Licensor immediate notice of any damage to or defect to the Licensors property or Licence Area caused by the operation of the Licensee's business.

7.8 The Licensee shall not by any act or omission damage or disrupt the Licensor's services around, on or under the Licence Area.

7.9 In the event of any breach of this clause the Licensor may without prior notice enter the Licence Area and take such remedial action as it deems appropriate and recover the cost of doing so from the Licensee. Entry under this provision will not determine the licence.

8. Insurance

8.1 For any buildings, structures, fittings and fixtures on the Licence Area that are owned by the Licensee, the Licensee will at its cost insure and keep insured throughout the Term (and any Further Terms if granted) all of those buildings, structures, fittings and fixtures against damage and destruction by fire, flood, explosion, lightning, storm, earthquake and volcanic activity on the basis of full replacement and reinstatement (including loss damage or destruction of windows and other glass). The Licensee shall provide evidence of such insurance upon receiving a request from the Licensor. The Licensee shall also be required to meet the cost of any insurance excess in relation to any claim under such insurance.

8.2 If insurance cover required under clause 8.1 becomes unavailable during the term of the Licence or any renewal other than because the Licensee's act or omission, the Licensee will not be in breach while cover is unavailable, provided the Licensee uses all reasonable endeavours on an ongoing basis to obtain cover and where available obtains the closest comparable cover in the meantime. The Licensee will advise the Licensor in writing whenever cover becomes unavailable and provide reasons as to the unavailability.

9. Inspection

9.1 The Licensee shall permit any person or persons appointed by the Licensor to inspect the Licence Area and all buildings, structures and installations and the Licensee will immediately comply with all directions from the Licensor in regard to any matter whatsoever.

9.2 If the Licensor gives notice of any defect, damage or default the Licensee will as soon as reasonably practicable properly repair or remedy the defect, damage or default.

9.3 If the Licensee fails to comply with its obligations under clause 9.2, the Licensor may at its option take such steps, expend such money and do such other things as it considers necessary to make good such defect, damage or default. Any money expended by the Licensor (together with Default Interest from the time of payment by the Licensor until the Licensee reimburses the Licensor) will be recoverable from the Licensee.

10. Use of Licence Area

10.1 The Licensee will not use or permit the use of the Licence Area for any purpose other than the Permitted Use.

10.2 The Licensee will not carry on or permit to be carried on upon the Licence Area any noisy or offensive trade or business or permit anything in or about the Licence Area which is or may become a nuisance or annoyance to either the Licensor or the owners or occupiers of land in the vicinity of the Licence Area.

10.3 The Licensee will comply with the provisions of all Acts, Regulations and Bylaws and the lawful requisition of any authority having jurisdiction over the Licence Area.

10.4 The Licensee shall not carry out any activity on the Licence Area that may damage or destroy any natural, scenic, historic, cultural, archaeological, biological, geological or other natural or scientific features or indigenous flora and fauna.

10.5 The Licensee will indemnify the Licensor against all costs, claims, damages, expenses, actions and proceedings which may arise out of any breach by the Licensee of this clause.

11. Renewal

11.1 Where a Further Term is recorded in this Schedule, the Licensee will only be entitled to a renewal for the Further Term provided the Licensor has first confirmed to the Licensee by the date that is four months prior to the relevant Expiry Date that:

(a) The Licensee is not in breach of any Term or condition of this Licence.

(b) There is a sufficient need for the Permitted Use.

(c) The Licensor considers in its sole opinion that it is in the public interest that no other sport, game or recreational activity should have priority.

11.2 Provided the preconditions in clause 11.1 have been met, the Licensee will be entitled to a renewal of this Licence for a Further Term at a rental from the Renewal Date to be determined by the Licensor as on a review under clause 3 but otherwise on the same Terms and conditions contained in this Licence but excluding this right of renewal. The Licensee shall give the Licensor written notice to renew the Licence for a Further Term at least three calendar months prior to the expiry of the relevant Term.

12. Signs

12.1 The Licensee will not erect or display or permit the erection or display of any signs or advertising matter on the Licence Area without the prior consent of the Licensor.

13. Transfer

13.1 The Licensee will not assign, transfer, sublet or otherwise part with the possession or occupation of the Licence Area or any part of the Licence Area without the Licensor's prior written consent which shall be at the Licensor's sole discretion.

14. Damage or Destruction

14.1 Damage or Destruction of Licensee's buildings: If any of the Licensee's buildings or structures on the Licence Area or any part of them at any time during the Licence are destroyed or damaged

then all moneys received by the Licensee in respect of the insurance shall be expended by the Licensee with all reasonable speed in either:

(a) Repairing and reinstating any of the Licensee's partially destroyed or damaged buildings or structures, and until the completion of the repairs or reinstatement a fair proportion of the Licence Fee and Outgoings shall cease to be payable as from the date of damage.

(b) Erecting a new building or structure to replace any of the Licensee's buildings or structures that are completely destroyed, and until the completion of the new building or structure a fair proportion of the Licence Fee and Outgoings shall cease to be payable as from the date of damage.

(c) Clearing the Licence Area and surrounding area including the water body of all remains and rubbish in the event that the Licensee receives insufficient insurance funds to erect a new building or structure and is unable to do so or any necessary permit or consent shall not be obtainable. In this event the Licensee will return the Licence Area to the Licensor in its original condition and the Licence will immediately terminate, and a fair proportion of the Licence Fee and Outgoings shall cease to be payable as from the date of damage.

15. Termination

15.1 The Licensee may terminate this Licence at any time by giving three months' notice in writing to the other party. On expiration of the notice, the rights created by this Licence shall cease and determine and the Licensee shall by the termination date remove or otherwise deal with the buildings or other structures on the Licence Area. No compensation shall be paid to the Licensee for the termination of this Licence.

15.2 If at any time the Licensor is of the opinion that the Licence Area are not being used or not being sufficiently used for the purpose specified in this Licence, the Licensor, after making such enquiries as the Licensor thinks fit and giving the Licensee an opportunity of explaining the usage of the Licence Area Licenced, and if satisfied that the Licence Area Licenced is not being used or is not being sufficiently used for the purpose specified in this Licence, may terminate the Licence on such Terms as the Licensor approves.

16. Re-entry

16.1 If:

(a) The Licence Fee or any part of it is in arrears and unpaid for 20 working days following a Licence Fee Payment Date and the Licensee has failed to remedy the breach within 10 working days after being served notice pursuant to section 245 of the Property Law Act 2007 (PLA);

(b) In case of breach of the Terms of the Licence by the Licensee (including without limitation a breach of the Permitted Use) which the Licensee has failed to remedy within the notice period specified in a notice under section 246 of the PLA;

(c) In the event the Licensee makes or enters into or endeavours to make or enter into any composition, assignment, compromise or other arrangement with or for the benefit of the Licensee's creditors;

(d) In the event of the insolvency, bankruptcy, liquidation of the Licensee or the Licensee goes into recess is wound up for any reason other than for its reconstruction;

(e) The Licensee suffers distress or execution to issue against the Licensee's property goods or effects under any judgment against the Licensee for a sum in excess of $5,000;

then the Licensor may cancel the Licence by re-entering the Licence Area without giving prior notice (or further notice as the case may be) and the Licence will terminate without prejudice to the rights of either party against the other.

16.2 On re-entry the Licensor may remove from the Licence Area any improvements in the apparent possession of the Licensee and place them outside the Licence Area and the Licensor will not be answerable for any loss resulting from the exercise of the power of re-entry.

17. Indemnity

17.1 The Licensor will not be liable for any loss or damage caused or arising out of the use of the Licence Area by the Licensee. The Licensee will throughout the Term (and any Further Terms if granted) indemnify the Licensor against all actions, claims, suits and demands arising out of the use of the Licence Area or anything done or omitted to be done on the Licence Area by the Licensee its members, invitees, agents or employees or customers.

17.2 Without limiting the Licensee's liability under this clause, the Licensee will maintain throughout the Term a public liability insurance policy (in the joint names of the Licensor and the Licensee for their respective interests) against any damage, loss or injury for which the Licensee is liable to indemnify the Licensor. Such public liability insurance will be effected with an insurer on Terms approved by the Licensor (which approval will not be unreasonably or arbitrarily withheld) and for at least $2 million in respect of any one claim or series of claims arising out of the same occurrence. The Licensee will on demand produce the policy to the Licensor and the receipt for payment of the current premium.

18. Control

18.1 The Licensee may fix such fees and charges and may make such rules for the management, control and use of the Licence Area and for the conduct of persons using the Licence Area as may be lawful proper and necessary.

18.2 The public access rights over the Lessor's Recreation Reserve and adjacent platform does not apply to the Licensee's Licence Area without the express consent of the Licensee.

19. Compensation

19.1 The Licensor will not be liable to pay compensation for any improvements effected or buildings erected by the Licensee on the Licence Area.

19.2 The Licensee may at any time (and will if required by the Licensor at the expiry or earlier termination of the Licence) remove all buildings and improvements on the Licence Area erected by the Licensee on the Licence Area and make good at the Licensee's expense any and all resulting damage.

19.3 If the Licensee's buildings and improvements are not removed within 20 days after the Licensor's request (or such later date as the Licensor requires, having regard to the extent of removal required), either:

(a) Ownership of such building and improvements will pass, at the Licensor's election, to the Licensor without compensation; or
(b) the Licensor may remove the buildings and improvements and recover the cost from the Licensee as a debt repayable on demand.

20. Statute

20.1 Where the Property Law Act 2007 or any amendment of this Act is inconsistent with or contradictory to any provision in this Licence, that provision will be negatived or modified to the extent of such inconsistency as permitted by law.

21. Consents

21.1 All consents or approvals required to be given by the Licensor under this Licence will be in writing and, except where otherwise stated, will not be unreasonably or arbitrarily withheld provided that any conditions relating to such consents or approvals have been duly complied with.

22. Provisions remain in force

22.1 Termination of this Licence will not affect the operation of any clauses in this Licence which are expressed or implied to have effect after its termination.

22.2 Nothing in the above provisions affects any other legal or equitable rights of the Licensor.

23. Notices

23.1 Any notice or other communication (notice) given under this Licence must be in writing.

23.2 A notice may be served personally or sent to any of the relevant party's Communication Points listed in this Licence.

23.3 In the case of a notice under sections 245 or 246 of the PLA, notice will be served in the manner prescribed by section 353 of the PLA. In all other cases, unless otherwise required by sections 352 to 361 of the PLA, notice will be served:

(a) In the manner authorised by sections 354 to 361 of the PLA.

(b) By personal delivery, or by posting by registered or ordinary mail, or by email.

23.4 Notices are deemed served at the following times:

(a) When given personally, on delivery.

(b) When sent by post (other than airmail) or document exchange, on the fourth working day following the date of posting.

(c) When sent by airmail outside New Zealand, on the seventh working day following the date of posting.

(d) When sent by email, when acknowledged by the addressee by return email or otherwise in writing.

23.5 Any notice which has been served on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday or after 5pm on a working day is deemed to be served at 9am on the first working day after that day.

23.6 A notice may be given by an authorised officer, employee or agent.

23.7 Notice may be given personally to a director, employee or agent of the party at that party's address or to a person who appears to be in charge at the time of delivery or according to sections 387 to 390 (inclusive) of the Companies Act 1993.

23.8 If the party is a natural person, partnership or association, the notice may be given to that person or any partner or responsible person. If they refuse to accept the notice, it may be brought to their attention and left in a place accessible to them.

23.9 Time is of the essence.

24. Dispute resolution

24.1 Unless otherwise provided under this Licence, if a party has any dispute with the other party in connection with this Licence:

(a) That party will promptly give full written particulars of the dispute to the other.

(b) The parties will promptly meet together and in good faith try and resolve the dispute.

24.2 If the dispute is not resolved within 10 working days of written particulars being given (or any longer period agreed to by the parties) the dispute will be referred to mediation.

24.3 A party must use the mediation procedure to resolve a dispute before commencing any other dispute resolution proceedings.

24.4 The mediation procedure is:

(a) The parties will appoint a mediator and if they fail to agree on a mediator within 15 working days of referral to mediation, the mediator will be appointed by the president of the New Zealand Law Society or the president's nominee.

(b) The parties must co-operate with the mediator in an effort to resolve the dispute.

(c) If the dispute is settled, the parties must sign a copy of the Terms of the settlement.

(d) If the dispute is not resolved within 20 working days after the mediator has been appointed, or within any extended time that the parties agree to in writing, the mediation must cease.

(e) Each party must pay a half share of the costs of the mediator's fee and costs including travel, room hire, refreshments etc.

24.5 The Terms of settlement are binding on the parties and override the Terms of this Licence if there is any conflict.

24.6 The Terms of settlement may be tendered in evidence in any mediation or legal proceedings.

24.7 The parties agree that written statements given to the mediator or to one another, and any discussions between the parties or between the parties and the mediator during the mediation period are not admissible by the recipient in any arbitration or legal proceedings.

24.8 Either party may commence arbitration proceedings when mediation ceases under clause 25.4(d) by giving written notice to the other party.

24.9 If the dispute is referred to arbitration:

(a) The arbitration will be conducted by one arbitrator appointed jointly by the parties.

(b) If the parties cannot agree on an arbitrator within five working days of written notice being given under clause 25.8 the appointment will be made by the president of the New Zealand Law Society or the president's nominee. That appointment will be binding on all parties to the arbitration and will not be the subject of an appeal. The provisions of article 11 of Schedule 1 of the Arbitration Act 1996 are varied as above.

(c) The arbitration will be conducted in accordance with the Rules in Schedules 1 and 2 of the Arbitration Act 1996.

(d) The place of arbitration will be Invercargill.

(e) Unless agreed otherwise, the costs and expenses of the arbitration will be met in accordance with article 6 of Schedule 2 of the Arbitration Act 1996.

(f) Any settlement by arbitration will be recorded in the form of an arbitral award on agreed Terms in accordance with Schedule 1 of the Arbitration Act 1996.

(g) The award will be binding on the parties and override the Terms of this Licence if there is any conflict.

(h) Either party may appeal to the High Court on any question of law arising out of an award in accordance with the Arbitration Act 1996.

24.10 Neither party will unreasonably delay these dispute resolution procedures.

24.11 Despite the procedures outlined in this clause, in the event of default the Licensor may alternatively:

(a) Take proceedings for the recovery of Licence Fee or other monies payable under this Licence.

(b) Exercise their rights and remedies under clause 16.

24.12 These dispute resolution procedures do not apply to:

(a) Any dispute arising in connection with any attempted renegotiation of this Licence.

(b) An application by either party for urgent interlocutory relief.

(c) Any provision in this Licence in respect of which the Licensor's decision is final.

24.13 Pending resolution of any dispute the parties will perform this Licence in all respects including performance of the matter which is the subject of dispute.

25. Communication Points

25.1 The Communication Points for the Licensor and Licensee at the date of this Licence are as set out in the Schedule.

25.2 Each party will notify the other in writing of any changes to the Communication Points.

26. General

26.1 The Licensor is a territorial authority under the Local Government Act 2002 and nothing in this Licence binds the Licensor in its regulatory capacity.

26.2 For the purposes of the exercise or any of the Licensor's powers under this Licence, the Term "Licensor" includes its chief executive for the time being and any officer, agent or contractor authorised by the chief executive.

26.3 Nothing contained or implied in this licence shall be deemed to confer on the Licensee any right to acquire the fee simple of the land of which the Licence Area forms part.

26.4 Words or phrases appearing in this licence which are also defined in the Schedule will be read and construed in accordance with such definitions.

26.5 The Schedule and annexures form part of this licence.

26.6 Headings are inserted for reference only and do not affect the interpretation of this licence.

26.7 The Licensor's waiver or failure to act in response to a breach by the Licensee of its obligations in this licence will not operate as a waiver of the same breach on a later occasion or any other obligations in this licence.

26.8 Words importing the singular number include the plural and vice versa.

26.9 The Term Licensor includes and is binding on its successors and assigns which specifically includes any government body, local authority or other organisation that takes over the responsibilities of

Southland District Council in respect of the Licence Area, and the Term Licensee includes and is binding on the Licensee's executors, administrators and permitted assigns or successors in title.

26.10 Reference in this Licence to any Act or Regulation will be construed as including reference to any amendments or subsequent enactments passed in substitution unless the context otherwise requires.

26.11 "Working day" has the meaning set out in section 4 of the Property Law Act 2007.

26.12 Special Terms in the Schedule will override the Terms in the body of the Licence in the event of any inconsistency.

26.13 The Licensee in carrying out the Permitted Use shall comply with the Licensor's Smoke/Vape Free Open Spaces Policy 2023 ("Policy") as it relates to Licensee's use of the Licence Area. The Policy is available on the Licensor's website. In particular, the Licensee agrees:

a) It will permit the Licensor to install smoke and vape free signs on the Licence Area in such places as Licensor determines (acting reasonably)
b) To promote all public events it holds on the Licence Area as smoke and vape free.

The Licensor will provide a link to the policy to the Licensee or its event coordinator to include in promotional material for any public events.

Signed by

Signed for and on behalf of **Southland District Council** as Licensor under delegated authority in the presence of:

Signature

Name

Position held

Signature of witness

Name

Occupation

Address

Signed for and on behalf of Floating Sauna Limited in the presence of:

Signature

Name

Position held

Signature of witness

Name

Occupation

Address

Signature

Name

Position held

Schedule

Particulars and Special Terms

Item 1	Premises	That part of the recreation reserve known as Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau, being defined as a surface portion of Lake Henry as shown on the attached Site Plan and includes, where appropriate, the Licensor's improvements effected on the Licence Area.
Item 2	Term	15 years
Item 3	Commencement Date	tbc
Item 4	Expiry Date	tbc
Item 5	Further Term	15 years
Item 6	Renewal Date	15 years from commencement-tbc
Item 7	Final Expiry Date (if all further Terms have been exercised)	tbc
Item 8	Licence Fee (subject to review if applicable)	$2391.30 plus GST per annum
Item 9	Payments of Licence Fee	Six (6) monthly in advance
Item 10	Licence Fee Payment Dates	first of the relevant month - tbc
Item 11	First Licence Fee Payment Date	tbc
Item 12	CPI Licence Fee Review Dates	Annually on each anniversary of the Commencement Date (including during any renewal term) except where such date is also a Market Licence Fee Review Date.
Item 13	Market Licence Fee Review Dates	On every 5th anniversary of the Commencement Date, including during any renewal term.
Item 14	Default Interest	10% per annum
Item 15	Permitted Use	Floating pontoon for the commercial use of 2 saunas and 1 changing room.
Item 16	Outgoings	See clause 4.1
Item 17	Communication Points	Licensor's Communication Points for notices are: 15 Forth Street, Invercargill Attn: The Property Manager
		Licensee's Communication Points for notices are: ……. ……. ……. …….

Special Terms:

- The floating pontoon will be limited to 10.2m x 7.7m (78.54m^2)
- No fire pits are allowed on or near the premise.
- Any proposals to construct any structures or paths on Ivon Wilson Park outside the premise shall require the written application to and the approval of the Licensor.
- Any associated infrastructure with the floating sauna (e.g. pathways, bike parks) which are to be located on the recreation reserve, if constructed, shall form part of the Ivon Wilson Park once completed.
- The floating pontoon is not to be attached to the existing platform.
- The Licensee is to ensure that the floating pontoon causes no damage to the existing platform. Any damage is to be repaired at the Licensee's sole cost.
- There are to be no discharges into the lake or surrounds from the activity. This includes biological and chemical substances. Examples include (but not exclusively) ash, cleaning chemicals, cleaning water, rubbish or other waste.
- No vehicles are to be driven to and from the Licence Area, other than with the pre-approval of the Licensor.
- The Licensee is to make to an annual contribution of $1000.00 plus GST towards the cleaning and maintenance of the public toilets located at Ivon Wilson Park.
- The licensee is to make a one-off contribution of up to $5,000.00 plus GST to the upgrade of the existing signage at Ivon Wilson Park.
- Upon notification of special events occurring in Ivon Wilson Park (that involves any of the Lake Henry platforms), the sauna shall not operate while that special event is occurring. Where possible, a minimum of ten (10) working days' notice shall be provided by the Licensor. No Licence Fee or Outgoings abatement shall apply, provided that the event is no longer than seven (7) days.

Site plan

The following diagrams have been supplied by the Licensee.

Diagram 1 – approximate location of the floating pontoon within Ivon Wilson Park – circled in red.



Diagram 2 – approximate Licence to Occupy area on Lake Henry – outlined in red. (It is noted that in Diagram 2 the pontoon measurements are **7.7m x 10.2m** and not 7.5 x 10.5m.)



Submission: Submissions Booklet

Proposed Licence to Occupy - Floating Sauna Ltd

Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau

Southland District Council
Te Rohe Pôtae o Murihiku

PO Box 903
15 Forth Street
Invercargill 9840

0800 732 732
sdc@southlanddc.govt.nz
southlanddc.govt.nz

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[redacted]

From: Sarah de Reeper [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 27 February 2026 10:47 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Ivan Wilson floating sauna

This message is from an external sender

Hi there,
As a Te Anau property owner and rate payer I strongest detest this licence!
Ivan Wilson is a wonderful community park enjoyed by families and local people. We enjoy the reflections, the bird life and dog walking here at Lake Henry and would be super disappointed if you allow a commercial venture on it.
You don't see floating saunas on Queens Park or any other public parks - it's totally unacceptable. There's a big lake available for their use.
Kind regards
Sarah

[redacted]

From: Tammy Magness [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 11 March 2026 9:34 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Licence to Occupy to Floating Sauna Limited submission
Attachments: Submission SDC.pdf

This message is from an external sender

Kia ora,
Please find my submission on the Licence to Occupy to Floating Sauna Limited attached.

Ngā mihi
Tammy Magness

1

Page 2

Manaaki whenua, manaaki tāngata, haere whakamua
Care for the land, care for the people, go forward

TO: Southland District Council

FROM: Tammy Magness
[redacted]

DATE: 11 March 2026

Re: Submission regarding Licence to Occupy Agreement in Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Recreational Reserve, Te Anau with Floating Sauna Limited

Kia ora Southland District Council,
My name is Tammy Magness and I am a resident of Te Anau. I have lived in Te Anau happily with my family since 2014 when we immigrated to Aotearoa/New Zealand. We are now fortunate to be New Zealand citizens. I currently serve Te Anau and the surrounding communities as a mental health clinician (counsellor).

I first want to thank Southland District Council members for the time, effort, and energy spent on balancing what can be tricky territory: the health and wellbeing of the communities within the Southland District, which is home to a diverse population with diverse interests. This diversity is evidenced in StatsNZ census information (StatsNZ). It was the diversity of the region that brought our family to Murihiku - the varied environment and people from around the globe living in our community. Ngā mihi nui for all of the work you do for our region.

I am writing to oppose the licence to occupy agreement in Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve, Te Anau in relation to Floating Sauna Limited. My opposition is grounded by four main points:

1. Questionable compliance with the Reserves Act 1977 in Section 17 concerning Recreational Reserves
2. Misalignment with the 2003 District-Wide Reserve Management Plan
3. Incongruence with the Open Spaces Strategy (2014-2024)
4. Undermining of the importance of Third Spaces in relation to health and wellbeing

Point 1: Reserves Act 1977 in Section 17 concerning Recreational Reserves

17(1) relates to the " the purpose of providing areas for the recreation and sporting activities and the physical welfare and enjoyment of the public, and for the protection of the natural environment and beauty of the countryside, with emphasis on the retention of open spaces and on outdoor recreational activities, including recreational tracks in the countryside"

2(c) those qualities of the reserve which contribute to the pleasantness, harmony, and cohesion of the natural environment and to the better use and enjoyment of the reserve shall be conserved:

2(d) to the extent compatible with the principal or primary purpose of the reserve, its value as a soil, water, and forest conservation area shall be maintained.

Pursuant to the above sections from the Reserves Act 1977, I see several points needing further consideration.The diagram provided in the licence to occupy agreement shows a large, floating platform placed directly in front of one of three platforms which provides public access to Lake Henry.This platform does not align with the emphasis on retaining open spaces, nor does it "contribute to the pleasantness, harmony and cohesion of the natural environment". Further, the floating platform restricts access to Lake Henry by fishermen - especially families and children - non-motorised recreational water enthusiasts, frisbee golfers, and open–water swimmers. Not to mention those wanting to enjoy the silent and pristine serenity of Lake Henry, as this lake is surrounded by trees on all sides, creating a refuge by the water on windy days.The primary purpose of Ivon Wilson Recreational Reserve is to provide free, public access to a beloved local green space. Floating Sauna Limited undermines this purpose.

Point 2: 2003 District-Wide Reserve Management Plan

1.2.2 Objectives:

5. Maintenance and development of existing recreational facilities and environment.

6. Management of reserves and open spaces in such a way that their recreational qualities will contribute to and enhance the enjoyment of the people of the District

3.3 General Access

3.6 Building and Structures

3.6.4 The open space and natural amenity values of the reserves will be protected and managed by allowing only those buildings and structures which complement the purpose or classification of the reserve.

3.17 Leases and Licences to Occupy

Leases and Licenses to Occupy are often an important and intricate aspect of reserve management. They provide an opportunity for sport organisations, private enterprises or community organisations to provide recreational facilities for the public. The Reserves Act 1977 clearly indicates that leases and other occupation rights must be considered in relation to the primary purpose of the reserve and the rights of the public.

A major consideration for the proposed licence to occupy by Floating Sauna Limited is the preservation of open spaces to enhance public enjoyment. Buildings and structures are meant to complement the reserve and uphold general access to its amenities. The licence to occupy by Floating Sauna Limited restricts access to Lake Henry by several recreational user groups. Additionally, a commercial business within a public recreational reserve space does little to enhance the enjoyment of the people of the District. Conversely, a commercial business in a public space detracts from the amenity of the recreational reserve, which has values especially suitable for recreation and sporting activities and the physical welfare and enjoyment of the public, according to the 2003 District-Wide Reserve Management Plan. Furthermore, while Ivon Wilson Recreational Reserve is on the map for tourists generally, the addition of floating saunas potentially creates increased traffic in the park known for quiet walks and native trees. One could argue that the park's 35 hectares is large enough for all to enjoy - even the additional traffic from a commercial business on Lake Henry. However, Lake Henry is a small body of water, with a diameter of 230 metres. The placement of a 78.54 square metre platform - larger than a standard granny flat - which has three structures on it certainly disrupts the natural aesthetic of the reserve, compromises access to Lake Henry, and contradicts with the primary purpose of the reserve.

Point 3: Open Spaces Strategy (2014-2024)
Southland District Council has demonstrated excellent stewardship of Ivon Wilson Recreational Reserve, demonstrating their role as advocate, researcher, and planner as described in the Open Spaces Strategy (2014-2024). Additionally, Southland District Council has met several outcomes outlined in the Open Spaces Strategy (2014-2024). Among these are:
Outcomes:
Our open spaces are places where our communities meet, connect and celebrate
• Public open spaces are used by our communities for a range of events and activities
• Provide public open spaces that encourage our communities to meet and connect
• Celebrate our culture and history

Our open spaces reflect and celebrate our history, our people and our local character
• Reflect our communities' identity, needs and views
• Actively manage cultural and historic heritage

Our open spaces are safe, inspiring, well designed and welcoming to all
• Create safe, accessible and enjoyable places
• Ensure design reflects local character and landscape
• Ensure quality, innovative and creative design
• Balance competing demands for the usage of public open space

Adherence to the Open Spaces Strategy (2014-2024) requires continued advocacy, research, and planning for future generations. It is unclear how Floating Sauna Limited's licence to occupy adheres to the high standards and outcomes set forth above. While a floating sauna can reasonably be a place where "our communities meet, connect, and celebrate", it contributes minimally to the celebration of culture or history. In particular, Ivon Wilson - the park's namesake - was "an enthusiastic environmentalist" who travelled far and wide to collect the native trees planted in the park (https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/5w38/wilson-ivon-vernon). It is not far-fetched to imagine Wilson's dismay at the proposal of floating saunas on Lake Henry. And while one can imagine an "innovative and creative design" of a floating sauna platform, will it "reflect local character and landscape"? More to the point, does a floating sauna "reflect our communities' identity, needs, and views"? With research supporting social connection as a key factor in wellbeing (https://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/literature-reviews/social-connectedness-and-wellbeing.html), Floating Sauna Limited does little to meet this community need, as the sauna is exclusively for those who can afford access to it.

Point 4: Third Spaces in relation to health and wellbeing
Ray Oldenbury coined the term "Third Space", defining it as "a generic designation for a great variety of public places that host the regular, voluntary, informal, and happily anticipated gatherings of individuals beyond the realms of home and work" (https://www.pps.org/article/roldenburg). Third Spaces *can* be commercial spaces, however they are generally understood as freely accessed, public spaces requiring no financial obligation. Ivon Wilson Recreational Reserve is a significant Third Space in Te Anau.

Third Spaces are more important than ever in Aotearoa/New Zealand, as the cost of living continues to rise and an epidemic of loneliness takes hold. Rebekah White, editor of NZ Geographic, adds the importance of Third Spaces that are accessible, close, and inclusive (https://www.nzgeo.com/stories/a-third-place/). Again, Ivon Wilson Recreational Reserve meets the Third Space brief.

As for future generations, who are a key focus in Southland District Council's Open Spaces Strategy, Canta, the official student media and magazine of the University of Canterburym has a few words to say about Third Spaces. Beccy Arnold wrote an article about Third Spaces and their importance to young people entitled "Why Third Spaces Matter". In it, the author includes the disappearance of Third Spaces in conjunction with the cost of "doing anything outside of the house", the cultural demands on time in relation to productivity and profit, and the rise of online communities. Beccy cites the importance of accessing Third Spaces for connection and movement that inspires community and wellbeing.

While the Floating Sauna Limited may have received a resource consent, with less than minor adverse effects on the environment or any person, local democratic processes should prevail. The views and opinions expressed by those who will be directly affected by the proposal, i.e. the community of Te Anau and those who recreate within Ivon Wilson Park, should be of utmost importance. The aforementioned points create space for reflection regarding the inclusion of a commercial business within the boundaries of a recreational reserve. Questionable compliance with the Reserves Act 1977 in Section 17 concerning Recreational Reserve, misalignment with the 2003 District-Wide Reserve Management Plan, incongruence with the Open Spaces Strategy (2014-2024), and undermining of the importance of access to Third Spaces in relation to health and wellbeing are four major points that present sufficient evidence supporting the need for careful consideration regarding the granting of a licence to occupy to Floating Sauna Limited. In my opinion, further care and consideration leads to opposition to a licence to occupy on Lake Henry in Ivon Wilson Recreational Reserve in Te Anau by Floating Sauna Limited.

I would like to be heard in relation to my submission.

Nāku noa, nā

[redacted]

Tammy Magness

Christine Wallace
[redacted]

13th March 2026

Senior Property Advisor
Southland District Council
contactproperty@southlanddc.govt.nz

FINAL Formal Submission / Objection *(please disregard my previous submission made dated 3rd March 2026)*
Re: Proposed Licence to Occupy – Floating Sauna Limited. Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Park Recreation Reserve

Kia ora,

I write to provide a submission on the proposed Licence to Occupy for a floating sauna on Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Park.

I understand that land use consent has been granted under the Resource Management Act for the floating sauna. However, I also understand that this consent relates to planning matters under the District Plan and does not determine whether it is appropriate for a private commercial activity to operate within a Recreation Reserve.

Council therefore retains discretion under the Reserves Act 1977 to determine whether granting a licence aligns with the purpose, character, and long-term management of Ivon Wilson Park.

For the reasons outlined below, I have concerns about the appropriateness of granting a licence for this activity within the reserve and therefore oppose it.

Personal Use and Connection to the Park
I am a regular and long-standing user of Ivon Wilson Park. I use the park frequently for:

- walking with friends
- walking my dog
- mountain biking
- enjoying the quiet natural environment the park provides

My children also completed the Fiordland Kindergarten Nature Discovery programme, creating very special memories for our family within this park.

In addition, I have attended multiple weddings held on the decking area at Lake Henry, which highlights the role this location plays as a peaceful and meaningful gathering place for the community.

For my family and many others, Ivon Wilson Park is not simply open space; it is an important community environment associated with recreation, nature, and shared local experiences.

Character and Quiet Enjoyment of Lake Henry
Lake Henry and the surrounding decking area are valued because they provide a quiet and relaxed recreational environment.
Introducing a commercial activity in this location may alter that character. Even if relatively small in scale, the presence of:

- a commercial structure on the lake
- ongoing customer bookings
- increased activity associated with a business operation

may change how the area is experienced by other users of the park.

Public Access and Shared Use
The decking area and lake edge are currently used by a wide range of people for:

- sitting and enjoying the views
- fishing
- meeting friends
- small gatherings and events

While the lake would technically remain public space, locating a commercial operation in such a prominent position may affect how freely people feel able to use the area. A location that is currently shared informally by the community may begin to feel dominated by a private commercial activity.

Parking and Infrastructure Considerations
Parking at Ivon Wilson Park can already be limited during busy periods.
A commercial operation may increase:

- vehicle arrivals and departures
- parking demand
- pressure on existing facilities such as toilets

It would be helpful for Council to consider how these practical matters will be managed so that existing park users are not adversely affected.

Longer-Term Considerations and Precedent
One of my broader concerns relates to precedent.
Allowing commercial occupation within a recreation reserve may create expectations for similar activities in the future. Over time this could lead to increasing pressure for additional commercial operations within the park.
While each proposal would of course be considered on its merits, it may be helpful for Council to consider the longer-term implications of introducing commercial activity into Ivon Wilson Park and how this aligns with the reserve's purpose.

Licence Duration

The proposed licence term of 15 years with a potential 15-year renewal represents a significant period of time for a commercial activity within a public recreation reserve.
If Council is leaning towards allowing the activity, it may be appropriate to consider whether:

- a shorter initial term, or
- a trial period

would allow Council and the community to better understand the long-term impacts before committing to a longer arrangement.

I recognise that the proposal may provide a recreational experience that some visitors will enjoy. My intention in making this submission is to encourage careful consideration of how the activity fits within the character, purpose, and long-term management of Ivon Wilson Park. This reserve is a very special place for many members of the community, and I hope that any decisions made will continue to protect the qualities that make it so valued.

I do not wish to be heard in person in support of this submission. However, this should not be interpreted as a lack of concern or engagement. I respectfully request that the contents of this submission be given full and careful consideration.

Ngā mihi,

[redacted]

Christine Wallace

[redacted]

From: Chris Malcolm [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 2 March 2026 10:39 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Re: Licence to Occupy to Floating Sauna Limited

This message is from an external sender

Thankyou Megan.

I wish to make a submission **opposing** the proposed Licence to Occupy for a floating sauna on Lake Henry.

While the below was written with the help of LLM's, the thoughts underlying it are based on my own concerns and fleshed out, so as to improve readibility. Please do not discount my statements based on the use of LLM's to aid in formatting my thoughts.

I am concerned about the continued commercialisation of a public recreation reserve. Ivon Wilson Park and Lake Henry are valued shared public spaces, and introducing a long-term private commercial operation risks changing both the character and purpose of the reserve over time.

While the physical footprint may appear small, this proposal sets a clear precedent for private commercial use of the lake and surrounding reserve. Once this line is crossed, it becomes increasingly difficult to draw a clear boundary around what is, and is not, appropriate for a public recreation reserve.

I am particularly concerned that a number of important matters are either unclear or not addressed at all. These include:

- Character and visual impact

  This area is valued for its sense of quiet, natural retreat and relative absence of man-made structures. Introducing a permanent commercial structure detracts from that experience, even if similar structures exist elsewhere in the park. Existing jetty's and pontoons without roofed structures are vastly different to the proposed.

- Exclusivity of public space

  A private commercial operation inherently introduces exclusivity into what is currently a shared public environment. This changes how the space is experienced and who it is primarily for. It also opens the door for future ventures in similar reserve settings

- Noise, behaviour, and operating controls

  The proposal does not clearly state operating hours, noise limits, or how behaviour will be managed. Many people visit this area specifically to enjoy birdsong, tranquillity, and solitude. While alcohol use may be prohibited, it would be unrealistic to assume it will not occur, and there is little clarity around how antisocial behaviour would be prevented or enforced. Conversely, there is also no clear plan for managing deliberate interference or conflict from members of the public.

- Council assets and ratepayer liability

  If associated infrastructure such as paths or accessways are constructed on the reserve, do these become Council assets? If so, are ratepayers expected to fund their ongoing maintenance and upkeep over time? This is not clearly addressed.

- Business failure and site restoration

  It is unclear what protections are in place should the business cease operating or fail. Are bonds, securities, or insurances required to ensure the pontoon and any associated infrastructure are fully removed and the area restored to its former state? At present, this risk appears to sit largely with the public.

- Future expansion and intensification

  While the proposal outlines a current size limit, it is unclear whether there is any pre-determined restriction on future expansion, additional structures, or intensification of use over the long term.

- Practical management and access control

  There is no permanent office or staff presence on site. It is unclear who would practically control or restrict access to the licence area, or how day-to-day issues would be managed in practice (i.e., rubbish, wastewater controls beyond 'dont dump it into the lake'. You can absolutely bet an inebriated male will urinate into the lake from a sauna).

Taken together, these issues suggest the proposal has not been sufficiently thought through for a public recreation reserve of this nature. The lack of clear operational controls, long-term liability safeguards, and defined boundaries makes this a poor fit for a space valued primarily for quiet public enjoyment.

For these reasons, I do not support the granting of the proposed licence.

I do not wish to be heard. But I do wish to hear response/review council minutes or otherwise in relation to this matter (if this is possible - not 100% on the process of these things).

Cheers,
Chris Malcolm

From: Megan Cowley [redacted] on behalf of Contact Property <ContactProperty@southlanddc.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, 2 March 2026 9:09 am
To: Chris Malcolm [redacted]
Subject: RE: Licence to Occupy to Floating Sauna Limited

Good Morning Chris,

Thank you for your email.

Please find attached the proposed Licence to Occupy as requested.

Kind regards,

Megan Cowley
Senior Property Advisor
Property Services
Southland District Council

From: Chris Malcolm [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 27 February 2026 8:13 pm
To: Contact Property <ContactProperty@southlanddc.govt.nz>
Subject: Licence to Occupy to Floating Sauna Limited

This message is from an external sender

Hi there,

Can I please have a copy of the licence to occupy agreement for Floating Sauna Limited in Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Park for review.

Cheers,
Chris Malcolm

Attention: The information contained in this message and/or attachments is intended only for the person or entity to which it is addressed and may contain confidential and/or privileged material. Any review, retransmission, dissemination or other use of, or taking of any action in reliance upon, this information by persons or entities other than the intended recipient is prohibited. If you received this in error, please contact the Southland District Council and delete the material from any system and destroy any copies.
Ph - 0800 732 732 | Email - emailsdc@southlanddc.govt.nz

[redacted]

From: Carrie Skilton [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 12:38 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission - LTO Application - Floating Sauna Limited.
Attachments: CSkilton - LTO Submission.pdf

This message is from an external sender

Hi Team,

Please find my attached submission **in opposition** to the proposed License to Occupy application for Floating Sauna Limited at Section 1 SO 384696 (117 Manapouri Te Anau Highway, Te Anau); also known as Ivon Wilson Park.

If you do have any queries, please note my contact details are at the bottom of the submission, and I am more than happy to further discuss,

Regards,

Carrie

26th March, 2026.

Senior Property Advisor,

PO Box 903,

15 Forth Street, Invercargill.

Re: Submission - Licence to Occupy, Floating Sauna Limited (Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau - Sec 1 SO 384696).

1.1 Introduction

For the avoidance of doubt, the following letter is a formal submission opposing the entirety of the License to Occupy (hereon referred to as “LTO”) application for The Floating Sauna Limited (hereon referred to as 'the Licensee'). This application is proposed over Section 1 SO 384696, 117 Manapouri Te Anau Highway, Te Anau; also known as Ivon Wilson Park.

The following submission includes information showing that the proposal is in direct opposition and is contrary to the Ivon Wilson Park Reserve Management Plan, the Southland District Council Reserves Management Policy, and finally, the overall higher order document, the Reserves Management Act 1977. Findings and conclusions regarding this claim are outlined within sections 1.2, 1.3 and 1.5 of this submission.

I would urge all decision makers for this LTO application to consider whether an application that does not align with local management directives/policies, and higher order legal frameworks can be approved as a benefit to the reserve, and in turn, the local community.

I acknowledge that the applicant has gained Resource Consent for the proposed activity and associated facility via RMA/2024/53230. However, in my professional opinion, I disagree with the SDC processing pathway and overall outcome of this decision for a variety of different reasons; acknowledging that these matters may not be considered relevant to this LTO application.

I would like the option to be heard at any formal hearing/decision making sessions.

1.2 Reserves Management Act 1977.

The proposed commercial activity is to be undertaken within a gazetted reserve protected under the Reserves Act 1977 (hereon referred to as 'the Act). As per s2 of the Act; the definition of "Reserve, or Public Reserve *"...means any land set apart for any public purpose"* and this definition should not be overlooked during the consideration of this application as while the general public may have access to the activity and associated facilities, it is not openly available to the public given the commercial aspect of the proposal. A review of the Act notes that public access to a recreation reserve is a right. The implementation of the sauna facilities removes the ability for the general public to utilise this section of Lake Henry; There is no leeway to consider whether any degree of reserve access removal is appropriate.

Further s17 of the Act is relevant as the purpose of an area protected as a Recreation Reserve under the Act is to provide *"...areas for the recreation and sporting activities and the physical welfare and enjoyment of the public, and for the protection of the natural environment and beauty of the countryside, with emphasis on the retention of open spaces and on outdoor recreational activities, including recreational tracks in the countryside.".* The proposed application does not align with s17 of the Act as again, while the general public may have access to the facility, it is not openly available to the public given the commercial aspect of the proposal. The proposed sauna location can be seen from multiple vantage points around Lake Henry, from the existing tracks, from the public viewing

points and the informal fishing spots along the fringes of Lake Henry. This view imposes upon the protection of the natural beauty of Lake Henry.

Additionally, s54(1) of the Act delegates authority for SDC to lease a recreation reserve only *".. to the extent necessary to give effect to the principles as set out in section 17*(of the Act)*".* As outlined above, the proposal does not align with the intention of s17. Further, s54(d) again notes *"… provided that the trade, business or occupation must be necessary to enable the public to obtain the benefit and enjoyment of the reserve or for the convenience of persons using the reserve".* The proposed activity and associated facility is **not necessary** to facilitate the benefit and enjoyment of the reserve, rather obstructs access to this area of Lake Henry.

In summary, the proposed activity and associated facilities is contrary to the overall intention of the Reserves Management Act 1977, the overall higher order document for managing gazetted reserves.

1.3 Southland District Council - Reserves Management Policy 2016.

The Southland District Council Reserves Management Policy[1] (hereon referred to as the "Policy") infers that leases or LTO *can* be held by third parties (sections 5.2 and 5.5). However, it is acknowledged that a comprehensive list of what may or may not be considered is not provided for, instead, the document suggests via themes and phrasing such as "community", "club" and "sports" that these would be the type of activities considered appropriate under a lease or LTO.

Section 5.10 (Fires) of this policy notes that lighting fires is not permitted unless there is *"prior written approval from the Council and the Southern Rural Fire Authority* (or modern equivalent)*".* The Licensee makes no comment with regards to consultation with the relevant authority at Council or the Rural Fire Authority, nor infers any permits have been granted. I do not believe it is appropriate for a LTO to be granted without consideration towards whether any avoidance of potential fire hazards have been undertaken by the relevant, suitably qualified (and in this case, specifically defined) professionals.

Section 5.12 of this policy notes that *"The number of buildings and structures on reserves will be limited to a level that facilitates the safe and appropriate use of each reserve".* Understanding that the policy does not define appropriate, I suggest that the definition refers to s17 of the Act, my comments on this matter can be found within section 1.1 of this submission. In this case, the proposed buildings and structures are not an appropriate use of the reserve.

In summary, the proposed activity and associated facilities is inconsistent with the relevant sections and overall intentions as directed by the Southland District Council Reserves Management Policy 2016.

1.4 Southland District Council – Trading in Public Places Bylaw 2023

The proposal is inherently a trading activity which is defined by the Trading in Public Places Bylaw[2] (hereon referred to as the "Bylaw") as *"… a one-off or a series of activities whether temporary or permanent, undertaken by any person or organisation involving the sale of goods in a public place or the offering of a commercial service for payment, reward of otherwise…".* As such, it is also subject to this bylaw.

[1] https://www.southlanddc.govt.nz/council/bylaws-and-policies/policies/
[2] https://www.southlanddc.govt.nz/services/certificates-and-licences/trading-in-a-public-place/v

Section 7.2.3 of this bylaw instructs that whether to issue permission under the Bylaw, Council *may* consider the matters as outlined within (a) – (h) of this section. Of relevance are matters (c), (d), (e), (f) and (h) with further comments with regards to these outlined below:

c) The application does not provide any information surrounding the potential adverse nuisance effects with regards to noise.
d) The application does not give adequate information surrounding potential adverse amenity effects other than stating that amenity values will not be compromised (section 5.31 of supporting information). It is noted that the supporting information provides little context on the existing amenity values as experienced and appreciated from reserve users.
e) The location of the activity seeks to utilise an existing jetty; the location of the proposed activity and associated facilities essentially removes this existing jetty from public recreational use. Given that Lake Henry has three designated viewing/jetty areas; the proposal seeks to remove 1/3 out of the limited options available.
f) The applicant has not provided any input from suitably qualified professionals to identify any potential impact of the proposed activity upon the native flora and fauna as they exist in the immediate area.
h) As outlined within section 1.2 above, the proposed activity and associated facility is inconsistent with the Southland District Council Reserves Management Policy 2016.

In summary, I urge Council to also consider the proposal against the directions outlined within the Bylaw.

1.5 Ivon Wilson Park Reserve Management Plan 2008

The Ivon Wilson Park Reserve Management Plan (hereon referred to as the "Management Plan") clearly outlines the historical significance of Ivon Wilson Park as a natural space for the beautification of the area whilst also encouraging native specifies of both flora and fauna to thrive. The Management Plan also specifically notes a clear vision which is *"To build upon Ivon Wilson's dream of creating a parkscape of trees that attracts people and wildlife"* and notes that Lake Henry is the focal point and that further development of the park should be undertaken *"in a manner that makes is locally and regionally recognised for its exceptional interest and enjoyment to all visitors".* Acknowledging that this may also include paying visitors noting the Management Plan does not specifically restrict commercial activities, I do not believe the history of the site caters to the activity as proposed.

The proposed activity is contrary to the outcomes as anticipated of the relevant policies of the Management Plan as outlined in further detail below. It is noted that policies not mentioned are considered irrelevant to the proposal, are deemed to be suitably assessed by the supporting information, or proposed LTO special terms and therefore do not require consideration.

1.5.1 Vegetation Management

Policy (i) - Whilst proposal does not seek to remove vegetation and therefore maintains the landscape, the proposal does not seek to fulfil the other half of the policy which is to enhance. This policy is specifically drafted with the wording of "**and**". The proposal is therefore contrary to this policy.

1.5.2 Fauna Management

Policy (i) – The proposal has not considered the protection of indigenous fauna noting that the management plan identifies a wide range of indigenous fauna and the proposal has not consulted with a suitably qualified expert to determine whether there are any potentially threatened species in this location. The proposal is therefore contrary to this policy.

1.5.3 Water Quality

Policy (i) – Lake Henry is of a shallow depth (approx. 15m), the location of the pontoon is in proximity to the bog at the edge. Acknowledging that the depth at this section is unknown, persons plunging into the lake may disturb sediments at the bottom. Poor water quality resulting from sediment disturbance due to high turbidity events (such as repetitive plunging) can lead to:

- Reduced oxygen levels within the lake resulting in algae blooms.
- Fish stress due to additional sediments obstructing gills.
- Habitation destruction as settling sediments can bury fish spawning beds and aquatic insect habitats.

Section 5.11 of the supporting information provided has not considered the effects of the proposed plunging activity with regards to water quality, only in terms of discharge. The proposal is therefore contrary to this policy.

1.5.4 Fires

All Policies – It is assumed this policy is most likely to have been drafted with regards to safety, regardless, the language of Policy (i) is clear, being that fires area "prohibited". The applicant has provided no emergency plan in an event of a fire, nor has provided information as to how the ash will be disposed of to avoid unintentional fires. Additional comments are included above within section 1.3 of this submission and are to be considered with regards to these policies. The proposal is therefore contrary to this policy.

1.5.5 Recreational Use/Facilities

Policy (i) – This policy relies on the maintenance and improvement of existing facilities. Whilst I understand that the agreement includes some one-off and ongoing financial obligations for the Licensee, the licensee has not offered a financial obligation regarding the ongoing maintenance that will be required of the existing jetty which will be utilised for the purpose of accessing the pontoon. Based on the supporting information there could potentially, at maximum, be up to 169 persons coming and going from the pontoon per day (12 persons + 1 staff member) with 13 sessions per day occurring on the hour from 07:00 to 20:00, acknowledging that the last session would start at 20:00. The proposal is therefore contrary to this policy.

Policy (ii) – As aforementioned within this submission, for a variety of different reasons, the proposed activity is not appropriate within a recreation reserve and should not be considered as generally acceptable. The proposal is therefore inconsistent with this policy.

1.5.6 Signs, Interpretation and Education

All Policies – The applicant proposes no signs within the supporting information, yet there is a resource consent decision which supports signage. Further information can be found within section 1.5 below. As the supporting information does not provide information on signage proposed, an assessment around whether the proposed commercial activity *can* align with these policies, with specific consideration towards affecting the aesthetic value of the reserve, cannot be undertaken. As such, it is inappropriate to approve signage under an LTO application where the extent, design and location of any signage is unknown.

1.5.7 Leases and Temporary Use

Policy (i) – The public interest is limited to those who can afford to pay the fee for the proposed activity. Those who can't afford to pay the fee, bear the amenity cost. This does not fit within the overall purpose of a recreation reserve for a variety of reasons as aforementioned in this document and within this assessment upon the Management Plan and is therefore inconsistent with this policy.

1.5.8 Leases and Temporary Use

Policy (i) – As discussed under section 1.5.5 of this submission, the proposal does not offer any maintenance agreement for the use of the existing Jetty.

Policy (iii) – As discussed above within this submission the proposal is not considered to be an appropriate use of a public reserve and is therefore contrary to this policy.

1.5.9 Development

Policy (i) – The proposal is inconsistent with and/or contrary to the intentions of the objectives and policies as outlined within this section above and is therefore inconsistent with this policy.

Policy (ii) – As outlined above, the supporting information has not given adequate information around the potential adverse effects on the environment in terms of potential adverse physical ecological effects, and in addition, the potential adverse amenity effects in terms of persons utilising the recreation space. The proposal is therefore contrary to this policy.

1.5.9 Development Proposals

(1) The proposal is not sensitive to the natural environment other than being recessively coloured. The specific noting that *"Tracks and Jetty-like structures to facilitate access and fishing would be a typical acceptable style of development".* Given that these are provided as a general guide within this identified area, it is not considered that buildings are within the same context as that anticipated by the Management Plan.

For the reasons as outlined above, the proposal is generally contrary to the overall vision and intentions of the Management Plan as directed by the objectives and policies.

1.6 Resource Consent Decision - RMA/2024/53230

Acknowledging that this LTO is not the correct place to raise grievances with Council regarding consideration of the incorrect process, and this lies within the legal, judicial review process; it shall be noted that there are some inconsistencies between the final, approved resource consent decision, and the LTO application. These matters are outlined below to encourage further considerations.

- The resource consent decision has consideration towards signage; however, the LTO application makes no mention of proposed signage, with the supporting information (5.18) stating specifically that *"no signage is proposed as part of this application".*

- The resource consent decision has applied for a discretionary activity that **does not** comply with the Management Plan; however, Commissioner Wilson then concludes in section 7.3.10.2 that *"…granting the consent does not offend the Park Management Plan."* – this appears to be specific language utilised to avoid a conclusive statement on whether the proposal meets the vision and intentions of the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan set by the objectives and

policies. As outlined above within section 1.4 of this submission, I believe the proposal does not meet the intentions of the Management Plan.

- Acknowledging that the applicant has sought consultation with the Fiordland Community Board (11 September 2024), with respect, the Community Board has not taken consideration of the reserve status of the park and only relies upon the potential positive effects with regards to Tourism. The Community Board have requested that the sauna be out of sight of the "main viewing platform"; however, the Landscape Architecture Report (Patch Architecture) provided with the resource consent application clearly shows this will not be possible as per the Visual Assessment Images (Image 1). Image 1 has been selectively taken from the far corner of the viewing platform and the existing Jetty (which will be behind the floating pontoon structure) is visible within this photo. A person standing towards the edge of the viewing platform **will clearly note the structure**, as this extends an additional 7.7m from the Jetty, further into Lake Henry. The applicant's approval from the Fiordland Community Board should be considered invalid to this proposal until such time as it is updated. I would urge this matter to be considered further.

1.7 Overall Summary

I object entirely to this License to Occupy proposal based on the application as provided.

The proposal has not given adequate consideration to the avoidance and/or mitigation of potential adverse effects upon both the wider physical and social environment.

For the reasons as outlined above, the proposal is in direct opposition and is contrary to the Ivon Wilson Park Reserve Management Plan, the Southland District Council Reserves Management Policy, and finally, the overall higher order document, the Reserves Management Act 1977.

Ultimately, this is a commercial activity where the Licensee is profiting at the cost of the loss of amenity for reserve users. I would urge the Southland District Council to consider the pattern of modern development where greenfield spaces are compromised at the cost of the community, and to consider whether this approach is considered appropriate in the long-term planning of community spaces such as recreation reserves. The approval of an LTO for this proposal also sets a precedent for other potential commercial activities to occur within the reserve.

If there are any further queries in response to the above submission, please do not hesitate to contact me via the below methods.

Regards,

[redacted]

Carrie Skilton

Resource Consents Planner

Contact Information:

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Chris Watson [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 27 February 2026 10:39 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Proposed floating sauna business on Lake Henry submission

This message is from an external sender

I wish to formally express my opposition to the proposed floating sauna at Lake Henry.

I am a local business owner in Te Anau, operating Alpine Kitchens and Joinery LTD. While I support local enterprise and understand the value of new attractions that may benefit our town economically, I do not believe this particular location is appropriate for such a development.

Lake Henry is widely valued as a peaceful, open public space used by walkers, families, dog owners, and those seeking a quiet natural setting. Increased traffic and activity associated with a commercial sauna operation would inevitably change the character of this area. It is currently a place where locals can enjoy space, openness, and unobstructed lake views.

I am also involved with the Fiordland Camera Club, whose members frequently use this location for photography. The lake's natural, uncluttered outlook is a key part of its appeal. A permanent floating structure would materially alter the visual landscape and detract from the aesthetic values that many residents and visitors appreciate.

In addition, Lake Henry is one of the most accessible and popular locations in the basin for photographing the Aurora Australis. On active nights, multiple photographers gather along the wharves to capture the Southern Lights. The introduction of a floating structure — particularly if lit — would significantly impact the quality of these images and the overall night-sky experience.

With Fiordland working toward recognition as a dark sky destination, it is important that developments near key viewing areas are carefully considered. Preserving natural sightlines and minimising light intrusion should remain a priority.

While I support thoughtful economic development, I respectfully submit that this proposal is not suited to this specific location and that alternative sites should be considered.

Chris Watson
[redacted]
Te Anau
[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

1

Page 20

[redacted]

From: Tess Crawford [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2026 2:46 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Re: My protest against the proposed sauna at lake Henry

This message is from an external sender

Hi Megan,
I wrote out another submission (below) that provides a bit more information on my reasoning re the sauna.
Please could you submit this instead.
Kind regards
Tess (Theresa)

Hi there,

I'm writing to oppose the proposed idea of a floating sauna situated at Ivan Wilson Park, Te Anau, in its current proposed position.

I think the idea of a floating sauna in Te Anau is an excellent idea but I don't support the proposed position.

Ivan Wilson park is a beautiful peaceful park well used by locals.
I myself go there to walk most days of the week and sit on its various wharves each day I visit .
It is my sanctuary in this world , where I go to find peace and I believe it be a very spiritual place.

I also have so many photos of Lake Henry - a sauna will disrupt this well loved view enjoyed by so many.

A business taking over one of these wharves for personal financial gain and taking it away from the general public is disappointing.

I'd like to use this sauna but not in this proposed spot.

I think it would be a great idea for the whole plan to be revamped and other places looked into for where this business could reside to be fair to everyone involved.

I'm not against it to be situated in the park - I just don't think the proposed spot is the right place. Can it be disguised a little bit more in a different area of the lake on its own wharf?

If a compromise could be made on the position of the sauna, then locals would be much happier to support it with both cash and also by word of mouth.

I want the best for everyone.

Thanks for listening.

Kind regards

Theresa (Tess) Crawford

From: Tess Crawford [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 27 February 2026 10:01 pm
To: Contact Property <ContactProperty@southlanddc.govt.nz>
Subject: My protest against the proposed sauna at lake Henry

REDACTED

This message is from an external sender

I am wishing to protest against the building of a sauna on lake Henry in Te Anau with all of my heart.

This is my favourite peaceful spot. I go there most days to decompress and just be.

Do not do this.

Please, please do not let this happen.

It would break my heart. REDACTED

A sauna is not needed in this special place.

It can go somewhere else but not here.

Regards REDACTED

Tess Crawford

[redacted]

From: Cassy Hurley [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, 28 February 2026 7:38 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission – Proposed Licence to Occupy, Lake Henry (Floating Sauna)

This message is from an external sender

To the Senior Property Advisor,

I write to lodge a personal submission in respect of the proposal to grant a Licence to Occupy over part of Ivan Wilson Recreation Reserve (Lake Henry) for the operation of a floating sauna business.

I do not support the granting of this licence in its current form.

Ivan Wilson Park is valued by many in our community as a quiet, open, and passive recreation space. It provides a natural setting for walking, play, and peaceful enjoyment of the lake environment. The introduction of a permanent commercial structure on Lake Henry would, in my view, materially change the character and amenity of the reserve.

While the proposed footprint of approximately 79m^2 may appear modest, the visual impact on a small and contained lake environment would be significant. The presence of a built commercial structure on the water would alter open sightlines and diminish the sense of space and serenity that currently defines the park.

Additionally, the proposal introduces an element of exclusive use over part of the lake. Even if physically limited, the perception of "claimed" space and associated activity has the potential to alter how others use and experience the area. Increased foot traffic, vehicle movements, and group activity associated with bookings may further affect the quiet nature of the lake.

I am also concerned about the broader precedent that would be set by granting a 15-year licence with a further 15-year right of renewal. This represents a long-term commitment of public reserve land to private commercial use. Ivan Wilson Park is classified as a Recreation Reserve under the Reserves Act 1977, with its primary purpose being public recreation and the protection of open space. I question whether a private, fee-based commercial activity is consistent with the intended purpose and long-term stewardship of this reserve.

I am not opposed to innovative or wellness-based tourism ventures in principle. However, I believe such activity would be more appropriately located in an area that is already designated for commercial or visitor-focused development, rather than within a recreation reserve whose value lies in its simplicity and openness.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that Council decline the application in its current form, or alternatively undertake broader community consultation and strategic consideration before committing to long-term commercial occupation of this reserve.

Kind regards

Cassy O'Sullivan

Get Outlook for iOS

[redacted]

From: Brad Houghton [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, 28 February 2026 8:52 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Floating Sauna at Lake Henry

This message is from an external sender

I am fully against any form of commercial exploitation of Ivan Wilson Park.
I personally feel if the council are looking to commercialise public parks for profit then the water park would be a better fit

[redacted]

From: Ruaraidh [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, 28 February 2026 9:37 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Te Anau -Lake Henry Proposal

This message is from an external sender

Dear Southern District Council,

I am writing to submit my opposition to the plans for a commercial sauna based in Ivon Wilson Park in Te Anau.
I strongly feel this is against the ethos of the recreational reserve, used by many for leisure activities, particularly dog walking and immersing in nature.
The addition of a large, commercial structure on the lake edge would significantly alter the essence of the lake and the reserve.
Furthermore, the land, forest and lake edge would inevitably be irreversibly damaged by the building and use of the structure, which is clearly against the purpose of the recreational reserve.

I very much hope the local opinions are heeded in this important matter.

Kind regards,

Dr Ruaraidh Ellison
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: R Brown [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, 28 February 2026 9:43 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Lake Henry sauna proposal

This message is from an external sender

Kia ora,

I am writing to you regarding the proposed sauna development at Lake Henry in Ivon Wilson Park.

Ivon Wilson is a valuable community space, most loved by dog walkers and those with young children. I deeply value it's natural beauty and sense of wilderness whilst being within the town boundaries and accessible to all. Adding a commercial enterprise will alter its sense of wilderness and irrevocably change the nature of the park.

Moreover, the added footfall on the grass areas, particularly in a linear nature from carpark to sauna, will likely lead to mud requiring a footpath to be constructed. During winter and when the ground is waterlogged the grass areas are delicate - this is currently ok because many users walk in different areas without replicating the exact same path.

I urge you to decline this proposal.

Many thanks,

Rachel Brown
Te Anau Resident, [redacted]

[redacted]

From: William Ferris [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, 28 February 2026 10:17 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission - Ivon Wilson park

This message is from an external sender

Dear Councillors,

I am writing to oppose the proposal to grant consent for a floating sauna business to operate within our public park.

Public parks are intended to remain open, accessible, and non-commercial spaces for the enjoyment of the entire community. Introducing a private commercial operation into this environment would set an undesirable precedent and risks gradually eroding the public nature of the space. Once commercial activities are permitted in one instance, it becomes increasingly difficult to refuse others.

There are also practical concerns. A floating sauna may introduce issues relating to safety, environmental impact, noise, increased traffic and parking pressure, and visual intrusion. The cumulative effect of these factors could significantly diminish the amenity value of the park for regular users, including families, walkers, and those seeking quiet recreation.

If commercial wellness services are to operate in our area, they should be located within appropriately zoned commercial premises rather than occupying shared public space.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that Council decline the application.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Yours sincerely,
William Ferris

[redacted]

From: Kenya Campbell [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, 28 February 2026 10:26 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Oppose Licence to Occupy to Floating Sauna Limited

This message is from an external sender

Hello,

I wish to lodge a formal submission opposing the proposal to place a commercial floating sauna on Lake Henry in Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau.

My reasons are as follows:

1. **Protection of the Natural Environment**
   Lake Henry and Ivon Wilson Park are treasured natural spaces with significant ecological value. The lake and surrounding wetlands provide habitat for a variety of native birds and wildlife. Commercial infrastructure on the lake poses a risk of disturbance, pollution, and disruption to this fragile ecosystem. Wildlife that thrives here, including waterfowl and other native species deserves to be protected, not displaced.
2. **Preservation of a Popular, Community-Focused Public Space**
   Ivon Wilson Park and Lake Henry are well-loved community areas used by residents and visitors for walking, biking, frisbee golf, picnics, family gatherings, weddings, relaxation, and recreation. This area is one of the open green spaces in Te Anau where people of all ages can enjoy nature in a peaceful, uncommercialised setting.
3. **Impact of Commercial Activity on Amenity Values**
   Introducing a commercial enterprise such as a floating sauna shifts the nature of the space from community use to private profit. It alters the ambience and character of the park, a place currently valued for its tranquillity, natural beauty, and accessibility. Commercial activity could lead to increased traffic, noise, waste, and a change in the visitor experience that residents and families currently enjoy.
4. **Community Identity and Public Access**
   Ivon Wilson Park is part of Te Anau's identity as a town that values open, natural spaces. Allowing a commercial installation on Lake Henry would set a precedent for future activities that may further erode public access and enjoyment of the environment.
5. **Alternatives Should Respect the Environment**
   If recreational or wellness activities are to be encouraged in the district, they should be sited in locations that do not compromise sensitive natural spaces or significantly alter cherished community areas.

The proposal for a floating sauna on Lake Henry would negatively affect the natural environment, the peaceful character of Ivon Wilson Park, and the enjoyment of the space by local residents and visitors. For these reasons, I respectfully oppose this proposal and urge the Council to decline it.

Thank you for considering my views.

Yours sincerely

Kenya Campbell

[redacted]

From: Susan Lindqvist [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, 28 February 2026 2:19 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Sauna With a View New Zealand's First Floating Sauna Redefines Accessible Luxury in Wellness - Spa & Wellness
Attachments: Sauna With a View New Zealand's First Floating Sauna Redefines Accessible Luxury in Wellness - Spa & Wellness.png; ATT00001.txt

This message is from an external sender

NO
We don't want this on Lake Henry, a Recreational Reserve and loved by children and families.
Not appropriate.
Susan Lindqvist
[redacted]



ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST SCENIC CONTRAST THERAPY EXPERIENCES.

[redacted]

From: Lyn Austin [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, 28 February 2026 10:50 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Ivor wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

I am very much against this idea. This is not what the park is for. Having lived here 40 plus years many walks, taking children to Lake Henry, walking with dogs. School children cross country, kindy school children Autunm in the park.
This is Not for commerical operations. Next businesses will be setting up Restaurants and shops. Opens up doors for one business your opening up for all. A park is a park not for commerical use. So please listen to the local ratepayers.
Regards
Lyn Austin

Submission on an application for resource consent

Form13 under Resource Management Act 1991

Email to:

Send to: Southland District Council, PO Box 903, 15 Forth Street, Invercargill 9840, New Zealand
For enquiries please phone: 0800 732 732

SUBMITTER DETAILS			
Full Name	**Susan Craw**		
Telephone	[redacted]	Email	[redacted]
Street address	[redacted]		
	Te Anau	Post code	[redacted]
Contact Email	[redacted]		

APPLICATION DETAILS	
RMA Number	
Name of Applicant	**Floating Sauna Ltd**
Applicate site address	Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau
Proposed activity	Commercial sauna in a Recreational Reserve

SUBMISSION DETAILS		
☐ I/We support all r part of the application	☐x I/We oppose all or part of the application	☐ I/We are neutral towards the application

The specific parts of the application that my / our submission relates to are: (give details, using additional pages if required)

This park around Lake Henry was formed and developed by Ivon Wilson, an avid environmentalist, with the intention that it would be enjoyed by generations of families and children in the area.

The trails and lake platforms give access but still allow a sense of wilderness and adventure.

The exotic trees at the entrance, some quite rare, are a delight with the changing of the seasons.

This peaceful space is well used by families and children, both locals and visitors, and its relative underdevelopment still allows a sense of isolation and discovery.

Look at the reviews on Trip Advisor!

The proposed commercial undertaking is totally out of character with the area and with the original intent of the founder. This application does not align with your Policy Statement 5.5, Reserves Management Policy, Set 2016. There is no "clear requirement for the service" and no "demonstrated opportunity for reliable improvement". In fact, quite the opposite, the proposed service will not benefit the majority of visitors and it will definitely NOT provide reliable improvement. Installation of such a commercial activity will degrade the environment, spoil the peaceful ambience and reduce the feeling of isolation and adventure for children.
The reasons for my / our submission are: (use additional pages if required)
As above
The decision I / we would like the Council to make is: (give details including, if relevant, the parts of the application you wish to have amended and the general nature of any conditions sought. Use additional pages if required)
This proposal should be turned down, should never have even been considered! It totally transgresses the Reserves ACR which states that the qualities of the Reserve that contribute to the pleasantness, harmony and cohesion of the natural environment and to the better use and enjoyment of the reserve shall be conserved AND that scenic and scientific features shall be managed and PROTECTED.
HEARING OF THIS APPLICATION
If a hearing is held, I / we:
☐ Wish to speak in support of my / our submission

☐x Do not wish to speak in support of my / our submission
☐ If others make a similar submission I / we will consider presenting a joint case with them at the hearing
☐ Request that the Council delegates its functions, powers, and duties to hear and decide the application to one or more hearings commissioners who are not members of the Council, under section 100A of the Resource Management Act.
Please note that a hearing will only be held if the applicant and/or any submitters wish to be heard, but all submissions will be taken into consideration regardless. Submitters who indicate that they wish to speak at the hearing will be sent a copy of the planning report. If you change your mind about whether you wish to speak at the hearing, please contact the Council..
SIGNATURE
Signature of submitter: Susan Craw. [redacted]
Date: 28 February 2026

IMPORTANT NOTES	
(i)	The Council must receive your submission before the closing date and time for submissions on this application.
(ii)	You must also send a copy of this submission to the applicant's address for service.
(iii)	If this application was limited notified the Council may adopt an earlier closing date for submissions once responses have been received from everyone who was notified.

(iv)	If you are a trade competitor, your right to make a submission may be limited by the provisions in Part 11A of the RMA.
(v)	The Council may strike out a submission (or part of it) in the following situations: • It is frivolous or vexatious • It discloses no reasonable or relevant case • It would be an abuse of the hearing process to allow it to be taken further • It contains offensive language • It is supported only by material that purports to be independent expert evidence, but has been prepared by a person who is not independent or who does not have sufficient specialist knowledge or skill to give expert advice on the matters.

PRIVACY INFORMATION

The information requested on this form, including your contact details, is required by the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA). The information will be held by the Council, and you may ask to check and correct any personal information that we hold about you. The RMA requires your submission, including your name and contact details, to be made available to the Council (including the Council decisionmaker) and the applicant.

Your submission, including your name and contact details, may also be made available to other submitters and to the public on the Council's website, or on request. If requested, the Council may legally be required to make all submissions available to the public (which can include the media), including the name and contact details of the submitter, subject to the provisions of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA).

If you believe there are compelling reasons why your contact details should be kept confidential from other submitters or the public under LGOIMA, please contact the processing Planner for this application prior to making your submission.

[redacted]

From: Antonia C [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, 28 February 2026 1:10 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission – Floating Sauna Proposal, Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve (Oppose)

This message is from an external sender

Good Afternoon,

I oppose the intention to grant a "licence to occupy" for the proposed floating sauna at Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve (Lake Henry) on the grounds that the proposal is statutorily inconsistent with the purpose and management requirements of a Recreation Reserve under the Reserves Act 1977, and is therefore inappropriate for this location.

Ivon Wilson Park, including Lake Henry, is classified as a Recreation Reserve under the Reserves Act 1977 and is held in fee simple by Southland District Council.
Under section 17 of the Reserves Act 1977, recreation reserves are required to be administered primarily for the physical welfare and enjoyment of the public, through open, shared, and informal recreational use, while protecting the natural environment and amenity values of the reserve.

The established and recognised recreational use of Ivon Wilson Park and Lake Henry includes walking, picnicking, children's fishing, disc golf, mountain biking, passive enjoyment of the lake, and informal community use. These activities are open-access, non-exclusive, and broadly available to the public, and are consistent with the purpose of a recreation reserve.

The proposed floating sauna represents a controlled-access, commercial wellness facility that would occupy part of the lake on an exclusive basis for a prolonged period (15 years with a right of renewal for a further 15 years). This constitutes a private and commercial occupation of reserve land and waters, rather than a facility that supports or is necessary for general public recreation.

Noting that the absence of existing other commercial or floating structures on Lake Henry demonstrates the long-standing open and informal recreational character of the reserve, which this proposal would fundamentally alter.

Although floating, the sauna would function as a permanent or semi-permanent structure, requiring exclusive occupation of lake space, mooring or anchoring systems, safety and access infrastructure, and operational controls that would restrict public use of the affected area. Such occupation is inconsistent with the open and shared use principles that underpin recreation reserve management.

The proposal would also displace and constrain existing recreational uses of Lake Henry, including swimming, paddling, fishing, and quiet enjoyment, and would introduce safety, access, and amenity conflicts that are incompatible with the reserve's intended function as a family-oriented and passive recreation space.

Given the reserve's statutory purpose, the commercial nature of the activity, the long-term exclusive occupation proposed, and the absence of any functional necessity for the activity to be located on reserve land or waters, the proposal is inconsistent with section 17 of the Reserves Act 1977. These inconsistencies cannot be adequately avoided, remedied, or mitigated through conditions.

For these reasons, granting a licence to occupy for a floating sauna on Lake Henry would represent an inappropriate use of a recreation reserve, and the application should therefore be declined.

I do not wish to be heard in support of my submission.

Regards

Antonia Croft

[redacted]

From: Danielle Bosch [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, 28 February 2026 2:36 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Ivan Wilson Proposal

This message is from an external sender

Good day.

I vehemently disagree with the proposed license to operate a floating sauna on Lake Henry in the Ivan Wilson park, Te Anau.

It is such a beautiful park to go to with family and kids, we utilize it regularly, as do most locals, schools, preschools.
Commercializing this area should be prohibited. Let's keep it like it is, so it can be enjoyed by everyone.
Please don't allow this to be licensed.

Kind Regards, Danielle Bosch

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[redacted]

From: Fabienne Mareel [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, 28 February 2026 2:56 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Wilson Reserve Floating sauna

This message is from an external sender

Submission: Opposition to Proposed Floating Sauna at Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Park

I am writing to oppose the proposal for a floating sauna on Lake Henry in Ivon Wilson Park.

Lake Henry is one of Te Anau's most peaceful public spaces. It is used daily by children, families, dog walkers, disc-golf players, and locals who value the quiet, natural setting. The lake and surrounding bush support abundant birdlife, which depends on the current low-disturbance environment.

Introducing a commercial enterprise on the lake would fundamentally change the character of this park. Increased noise, traffic, and activity would undermine the very qualities that make Ivon Wilson Park so important to the community. A floating sauna is not compatible with the park's purpose as a low-impact, family-friendly, nature-focused reserve.

Key concerns include:

- Loss of tranquillity in one of Te Anau's quietest public environments.
- Disruption to wildlife, particularly birdlife that relies on the calm setting.
- Incompatibility with existing community activities, including children's play, dog walking, and disc golf.
- Commercialisation of a public park, setting a precedent for further private development.
- Safety and access pressures, with increased vehicle and foot traffic in a small natural reserve.
- Impact on dark-sky values, as Lake Henry is one of the easiest and safest places in town to view the night sky and the aurora. Any commercial lighting, extended hours, or increased activity would diminish this rare, accessible dark-sky experience.

Lake Henry is one of the few places where locals and visitors can enjoy the aurora in a quiet, natural setting without artificial light or commercial activity. Protecting this dark-sky environment is important not only for wildlife but also for community wellbeing and the unique identity of Te Anau.

I urge decision-makers to protect Lake Henry and Ivon Wilson Park by declining this proposal.

Best regards,
Fabienne Mareel
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, 28 February 2026 2:45 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Intention to grant licence to occupy

This message is from an external sender

Tēnā koe,

I have lived in the Te Anau basin for 30 years and cherish Ivon Wilson Park and Lake Henry. Locals regard this as a public space which is free to visit. To have our lovely view spoilt by a structure which offers a service which most of us can't afford is a sickening prospect.
Commercial activity would put pressure on the parking, which is needed most by families with young children.
There are some really interesting skinks living in the sphagnum moss on the side of the lake that doesn't have tracks and if any paths were to be put through that area to access the sauna then this would be an important consideration.
I absolutely oppose the granting of this license.

Ngā mihi
Catherine

[redacted]

From: Vanessa Horwell [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, 15 March 2026 10:06 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission on proposed floating sauna on Lake Henry
Attachments: Submission on Proposed Licence to Occupy for floating sauna, Lake Henry.pdf

This message is from an external sender

Kia ora

Please find attached my submission on the proposed floating sauna on Lake Henry. I wish to be heard in relation to this submission.

Ngā mihi
Vanessa Horwell

[redacted]

Submission on Proposed Licence to Occupy

Floating Sauna Ltd – Ivon Wilson Park / Lake Henry

Submitter: Vanessa Horwell
Position: **Oppose**
I wish to be heard in support of this submission.

Introduction

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the proposed Licence to Occupy for the floating sauna at Lake Henry in Ivon Wilson Park.

I oppose the proposal in its current form.

My concerns relate to the privatisation and commercial use of a public structure, loss of public access and amenity, inconsistency with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan, parking and displacement effects on local users, the excessive proposed lease term, the timing of the proposal while the park management plan is under review, and the insufficient financial return to the public for the use of a public reserve.

Ivon Wilson Park is an important public recreation reserve valued by the community for its peaceful character, open access to the lake, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature connection. The proposal would introduce a private commercial activity into a prominent part of the lake edge while relying heavily on existing public infrastructure.

Summary of key concerns

My main concerns are:

- Privatisation and commercial use of a public jetty and lake access point
- Loss of public access to the water and views from the jetty
- Inconsistency with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan (please see detailed assessment against the Management Plan in Appendix 1);
- Parking pressure and displacement of local park users
- The scale of activity, potentially up to 168 users per day in summer
- Inadequate contribution toward servicing public toilets
- The excessive proposed licence term of 15 years plus a further 15 year renewal
- The proposal proceeding while the park management plan is under review

Privatisation of a public structure

My primary concern is that the proposal effectively privatises an existing public structure.

The floating sauna pontoon is proposed to connect directly to the existing public jetty via a gangway rather than constructing independent access infrastructure. While it may be suggested that the public will still be able to access the jetty, the reality is quite different.

A large commercial structure directly abutting the public jetty, with solid wooden fencing and controlled access, fundamentally changes the character and use of the structure.

While people may technically still be able to walk onto the jetty, access to the water from that location and enjoyment of the lake will be significantly reduced. Views across the lake from the jetty will also be obstructed. People will not be able to access the water from this jetty for swimming, fishing, or simply enjoying the views, as a large floating pontoon with solid fencing and three structures will be in the way.

In practical terms, this proposal results in the privatisation of a public structure and a key lake access point for a private commercial activity.

Public use of the jetty

The northern jetty is frequently used by the community, particularly by children and families.

Groups such as Fiordland Kindergarten through their Nature Discovery programme and Southern Stars regularly use the lake edge and jetty as part of environmental education activities. Many other local families and children also use the jetty for exploring the lake and interacting with nature. I visit this jetty frequently and over the years have enjoyed this space with my children and also as part of school trips, scouts and Kinfergarden visits.







The Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan includes the objective:

"To foster public appreciation for the Park, facilitate public access to, and recreational use of, the area."

This proposal undermines that objective.

Landscape effects

The landscape assessment concludes that the proposal will have very low landscape effects. This conclusion is difficult to reconcile with the reality of the proposal.

The floating sauna will be highly visible from almost all vantage points around Lake Henry. The most impacted location will be the northern jetty itself, which is currently a key viewing point

across the lake. The sauna pontoon will sit directly in front of this jetty and will dominate the immediate view. How can it be concluded that this will have a low landscape and amenity effect? This jetty was built for the use and enjoyment of the public, not for it to be taken over by a commercial operation. If the operator was proposing to build their own jetty and walkway in another remote part of the lake, that wasn't highly visible from the existing platforms, then that would be a different story, but that is not the proposal that is being considered here.

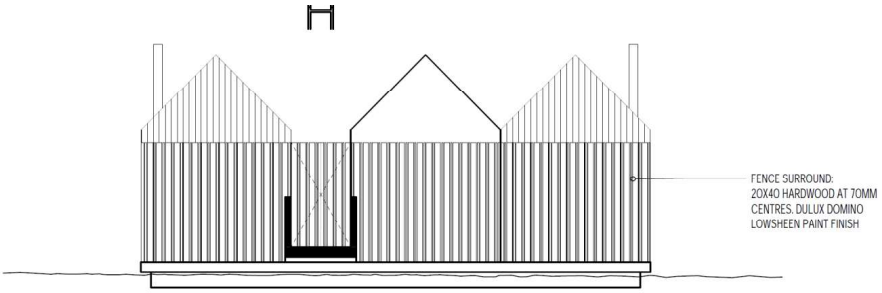


Figure 1 - View from the existing jetty to the south will be blocked by this high wooden fence.

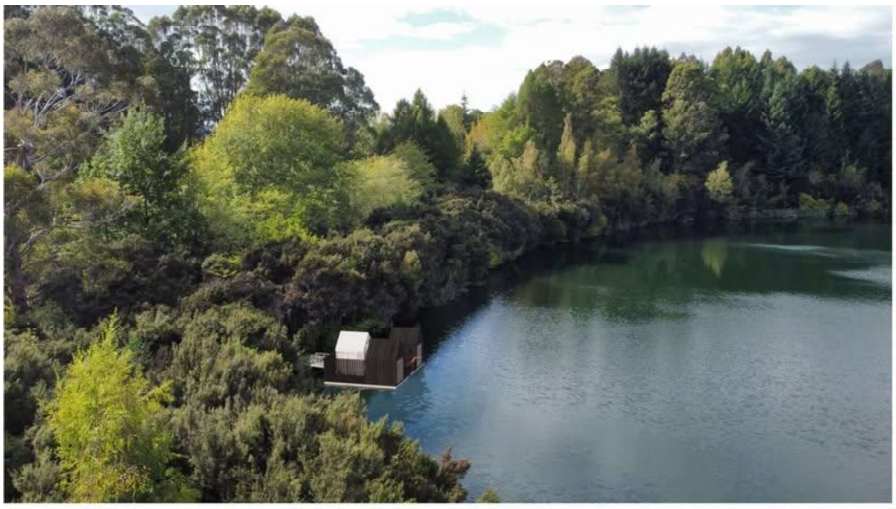
The structure will also be clearly visible from the public jetty on the western side of the lake and from walking paths around the lake.

The claim that landscape effects will be very low appears to significantly underestimate the visual prominence of a large floating structure on a relatively small lake. The various landscape assessments and council reports acknowledge that the changing room will be highly visible due to the materials used which are not recessive.

The assessment also suggests that the northern jetty is poorly used. This does not reflect the reality of how the jetty is used by locals, families and children. It would be helpful to understand what monitoring or observational assessment was undertaken to support that claim. Did the Landscape architect monitor the site over a period of time, or just visit the site once? Or was anecdotal evidence used? It is clear from the reaction of the Te Anau community that the jetty is well used, well loved and really valued by the community. Allowing a floating sauna to directly abut this structure would be a large loss of amenity and recreation values for the public.



Figure 2 - the saunas will be highly visable from all other vantage points on the lake



Aerial view looking east

Scale of activity

The proposal allows for two saunas with up to six users each per session.

With operating hours between 7am and 9pm this could result in up to 14 sessions per day.

This equates to a potential maximum of approximately 168 users per day during summer.

This represents a significant level of commercial activity for a small lake within a passive recreation reserve.

Furthermore, up to 28 people could be using the facility at any one time, taking into account the customers in the current session and the customers in the next session waiting to go in.

Parking and transport effects

The transport assessment suggests that approximately ten parking spaces may be required.

However if users book individually for shared sessions and arrive separately in vehicles, parking demand could be significantly higher. There may also be overlap between sessions, meaning customers from one session remain parked while the next group arrives.

If twelve people arrive separately for one session and another twelve arrive for the following session, it is entirely possible that the available parking could be filled. Is this acceptable to the Council? I would suggest this is not acceptable to the Te Anau Community and users of Ivon Wilson Park, who may be displaced by the parking requirements for this proposal, with very little to any gain to the public.

While the proposal suggests visitors will walk or cycle, the reality is that most users will likely drive.

There are currently no dedicated bicycle parking facilities within Ivon Wilson Park.

Parking impacts therefore need to be seriously considered to ensure that existing park users are not displaced.

Public toilets

The proposal includes a contribution of $1,000 per year toward cleaning public toilets. Given the potential for up to 168 sauna users per day, this contribution is clearly completely inadequate.

If the operator is not providing their own toilet facilities, then they should be responsible for the full cost of servicing the public toilets generated by their business.

A realistic servicing regime would likely require cleaning twice daily during peak periods. Based on typical cleaning costs this could easily amount to approximately $25,000 per year. A $1,000 annual contribution is therefore not reasonable.

Fireplaces and wood-fired saunas

The proposal includes wood-fired saunas and also references a fireplace on the dock beside the changing room.

Introducing both wood-fired saunas and a fire pit in this location raises concerns about smoke, smell, and consistency with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan.

Wood fires in this prominent lake-edge location are completely inconsistent with the Ivon Wilson Park management plan and inappropriate for a passive recreation reserve.

The Ivon Wilson Park management plan very clearly states, on page 17:

"to prohibit the lighting of fires in the Park other than in barbeques that may be provided by the Council".

This is very strong and unequivocal wording, with no room for diversions from this policy. It is hard to see how the Council could consider the floating sauna proposal is consistent with the Ivon Wilson Park Management plan when the basic premise of the sauna is to operate two wood fires to heat the saunas. I note that an outside fire put is also proposed by the applicant.

Water Quality

The information on discharges to the lake provided by the applicant and in council reports appear inconsistent. It appears that the applicant intends to take water from lake Henry to wash the sauna and facilities and discharge this to the lake. On page 6 of the notification report it states "*The application has confirmed that water taken from Lake Henry will be used to rinse down the sauna. No chemicals will be added to the rinse water.*" However in other locations in the application/proposal and in Council reports, it states that there will be no discharge to the lake. There is no information on cleaning, or stormwater discharge. While a resource consent for a discharge of a contaminant to surface water would be required under Environment Southland as a discretionary activity, any discharges to the lake is also relevant to the decision on whether or not to grant the lease, as this is one of the policies in the IWP management plan. Further information from the application is required to determine what impacts a discharge to surface water would have.

Lease term

The proposed licence term of 15 years with a further 15 year renewal is excessive.

This could allow occupation of part of the reserve for up to 30 years.

For comparison, the Fiordland Community Garden in Memorial Park, a well-loved community initiative run by a registered charity and providing clear public benefit, receives only a five-year Licence to Occupy, even upon it's recent renewal the council would not consider a longer term.

It is difficult to understand why a community initiative providing a public service receives only a short-term licence while a private commercial activity is proposed to receive a licence of up to 30 years.

Management plan review

The Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan was adopted in 2008 and states that it should be reviewed at ten-year intervals. A full review should therefore have occurred around 2018. However, the plan has not been reviewed since its adoption.

The Council is currently undertaking a review of the district-wide Reserve Management Plan (2003), which will likely inform the future management of individual reserves, including Ivon Wilson Park.

Granting a long-term commercial Licence to Occupy of 15 + 15 years before the relevant management planning framework has been updated risks pre-empting the outcome of that process and limiting the ability of the community to shape the future management of the park.

In my view it is inappropriate to grant a long-term commercial licence over part of the park while this wider reserve management review process is underway.

Community projects within the park are currently being paused while Council determines the future direction of the park through the management planning process. For example, last year, with the support of the Council, I ran a community planting project with local schools and youth groups where we planted 500 native trees in Ivon Wilson Park. This planting programme is consistent with the objectives and policies of the management plan. However, when enquiring about further planting with kids this year, we were told that this wasn't possible while the management planning process is underway so that Council can determine what the community wants for the future of the park.

It seems inconsistent that community planting projects which align with the management plan must wait for the outcome of the management planning process, while a commercial development and long-term occupation of the reserve which is at odds with the Management Plan is being progressed.

Community Board letter of support

The Fiordland Community Board letter of support states that the sauna should be out of line of sight of the main viewing platform.

However the proposal clearly shows that the floating sauna pontoon will be directly adjacent to the platform and therefore clearly visible from it. This appears inconsistent with the condition set out in the Community Board letter.

Council should clarify whether the proposal is consistent with the basis on which the Community Board originally provided support. I have asked for further clarification from the Community Board as to their involvement and am awaiting a response.

Financial return to the public

The proposed licence fee appears to be approximately $2,391 per year plus GST, along with the $1,000 contribution toward toilet cleaning.

For a commercial operation occupying part of a public reserve and relying on public infrastructure, this appears extremely low.

If commercial activities are permitted on public reserve land, the financial return to the public should be meaningful and proportionate to the private benefit being derived.

Statutory Framework – Reserves Act and Management Plan

Ivon Wilson Park is classified as a recreation reserve and is therefore subject to the Reserves Act 1977. Under section 41(11) of the Reserves Act, the administering body must comply with the management plan for the reserve when exercising its powers and functions. Section 54 of the Act also provides that a territorial authority may grant a lease or licence over a recreation reserve where there is an approved management plan and where the proposed lease or licence is in conformity with, and contemplated by, that management plan.

The Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan therefore provides the key policy framework for assessing whether a Licence to Occupy is appropriate.

As demonstrated in the assessment contained in this submission, and in the detailed assessment against the Management plan in **Appendix 1** below, the floating sauna proposal appears inconsistent with numerous objectives and policies of the management plan, including those relating to:

1. maintaining Lake Henry and the surrounding bog in as natural a state as possible
2. facilitating public access to, and recreational use of, the park
3. maintaining scenic values
4. restricting the number of buildings and structures within the reserve
5. prohibiting fires within the park (other than Council-provided barbeques)
6. ensuring leases are in the public interest and consistent with the management plan.

The Southland District Council has stated that the proposal does not comply with the management plan, and for this reason the applicant applied for a land use consent.

ACTIVITY STATUS RULE	STANDARD NOT MET	REASON	MATTERS OF CONTROL OR DISCRETION	NOTIFICATION CLAUSE
GRUZ-R4 Discretionary Activities	GRUZ-R1-16	The activity is located within a Council reserve but does not comply with the Ivon Wilson Park management Plan	No matters of control	No notification clause

Figure 3 - Activity status as determined by SDC's planning department

The applicant's own assessment against the management plan, on page 78 of the full application to SDC, outlines a number of policies that aren't adhered to.

When considered collectively, these conflicts raise a significant question as to whether the proposed Licence to Occupy can reasonably be considered to be **"in conformity with and contemplated by"** the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan, as required under the Reserves Act.

In addition, meaningful public consultation is an important part of the reserve management framework. In this case, the consultation undertaken by the Council appears inadequate. The public notice for the Licence to Occupy provided only the draft licence document, without any supporting information describing the proposal itself, its scale, or its potential effects.

Members of the public have had to locate the application documents themselves in order to understand what is being proposed and to make informed submissions. In my view this falls short of the level of transparency and public engagement that would normally be expected for a proposal involving long-term commercial occupation of a public reserve.

Given the apparent inconsistencies with the management plan, and the importance of the reserve to the local community, it is difficult to see how the Council could reasonably form the view that the proposed licence meets the requirements of the Reserves Act.

Relief sought

For the reasons outlined above, I request that the proposed Licence to Occupy be **declined**.

If council is minded to approve the proposal, I request that:

1. no licence be granted until the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan review is completed
2. the licence term be substantially reduced -to five years or less;
3. the operator provide independent access infrastructure rather than relying on the existing public jetty;

4. That the operator locates the floating sauna in a location away from the existing public jetties, and in a way that does not adversely affect views of the aurora or the enjoyment of the public;
5. the operator provide their own toilet facilities or fully fund public toilet servicing;
6. the operator funds additional parking facilities;
7. the financial terms of the licence be reconsidered to provide a fair public return.

Conclusion

Ivon Wilson Park is a shared public space. Decisions about its future should prioritise community access and environmental values over the commercial interests of a single operator. I ask that you protect the long-term public character of the park and decline this proposal.

Hearing

I wish to be heard in support of this submission.

Appendix 1 - Assessment of the proposal against Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan 2008

4a. Vision	Intent of the vision	Assessment of proposal	Consistency
"To build on Ivon Wilson's dream of creating a parkscape of trees that attracts people and wildlife."	The vision emphasises a park characterised by natural landscape, trees, wildlife habitat, and public enjoyment of a natural environment. The park is intended to attract people because of its natural character rather than built structures or commercial activities.	The floating sauna introduces a commercial structure directly onto Lake Henry and attached to an existing public jetty. Rather than reinforcing the park's natural "parkscape of trees", it introduces a prominent built structure and associated commercial activity into one of the park's most visible locations.	Inconsistent
"With Lake Henry as it's focal point, to further develop the park in a manner that makes it locally and regionally recognised for its exceptional interest and enjoyment to all visitors."	Lake Henry is intended to remain the central feature of the park and development should enhance public enjoyment of the lake for all visitors.	The proposal would place a private commercial facility directly on the lake and attached to a public jetty. While the lake remains physically present, the use of this key access point becomes dominated by a private activity. Public enjoyment of the lake from the jetty would be significantly reduced, particularly access to the water and views.	Inconsistent
4b. Management Objectives	**What the objective requires**	**Assessment of proposal**	**Consistency**
(i) "To promote and facilitate multiple use of the park based on identifiable recreation activities compatible with the character and sustainability of the resource."	The park should support a range of recreational activities that are compatible with the character of the park and sustainable over time.	The proposal introduces a private commercial sauna facility directly attached and abutting an existing public jetty. This effectively prioritises a single commercial activity over other recreational uses of the jetty and surrounding lake edge. Instead of facilitating multiple compatible recreational uses, the proposal risks displacing existing public recreation such as swimming, viewing the lake, children's nature activities and informal recreation from this location.	Inconsistent

(ii) "To enhance and maintain the scenic values and attractions of Ivon Wilson Park."	The scenic character of the park and lake should be protected and enhanced. Development should not detract from the park's landscape values.	The floating sauna structure will be clearly visible from multiple vantage points around Lake Henry, particularly from the northern jetty where it will sit immediately adjacent to and abutting the existing platform. It will be clearly visable from the southern jetty which is frequently used. The structure will dominate the view from these locations and alter the open character of the lake edge. The conclusion from the Landscape Architect and Council Planners that landscape effects will be" very low" appears inconsistent with the scale and prominence of the structure.	Inconsistent
(iii) "To as far as possible maintain Lake Henry and surrounding bog in its natural state."	The lake and surrounding natural environment should be protected from development or activities that compromise its natural character.	The proposal introduces a floating pontoon structure with two wood-fired saunas, a changing room, fencing and regular commercial activity directly on Lake Henry. This represents a significant built structure and intensification of activity on the lake. It is difficult to reconcile this with the objective of maintaining the lake and surrounding bog in "as natural a state as possible".	Inconsistent
(iv) "To foster public appreciation for the park, facilitate public access to, and recreational use of, the area."	The park should remain accessible and enjoyable for the public, and development should encourage rather than restrict public use.	The floating sauna pontoon is proposed to be connected directly to the existing northern jetty with a gangway and enclosed by fencing. It will be abutting the northern jetty in a way that prevents any access to or views of the lake from that Jetty. While people may technically still be able to walk onto the jetty, access to the water from this location will be blocked and views from the jetty significantly altered. The jetty effectively becomes the entry point to a private commercial facility rather than a public recreation structure. This substantially reduces the public utility and enjoyment of that location.	Inconsistent
Administration			

Policy	Policy intent	Assessment	Consistency
(i) "To administer, manage and control the reserve in accordance with the Reserves Act 1977, the District Plan, and the Reserves and Open Spaces – Policy and Guidelines."	The reserve must be managed consistently with statutory requirements including the Reserves Act and management policies.	Under the Reserves Act, licences must be consistent with the reserve management plan. As demonstrated in this assessment, the proposal conflicts with several objectives and policies of the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan.	Inconsistent
(iii) "To continue to administer the reserve at a level consistent with the classification of District Reserve under the Reserves and Open Spaces Policy and Guidelines."	The reserve should be managed according to the purpose of a district recreation reserve, primarily for public recreation and enjoyment. It has values that benefit the whole district, containing significant ecological, amenity or scenic values..	A commercial sauna facility attached to and blocking a public jetty prioritises private commercial activity over general public recreation and changes the character of this part of the reserve.	Inconsistent

Management Plan Review and Amendment

Policy	Policy intent	Assessment	Consistency
"To review this management plan as necessary with complete reviews made at 10 year intervals."	The policy recognises that reserve management plans need to be kept current so that park management reflects community expectations and changing circumstances. Regular review ensures that major decisions about the park are based on up-to-date policy direction.	The Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan was adopted in 2008, and the policy states that complete reviews should occur at 10-year intervals. A full review should therefore have occurred around 2018, but the plan has not been reviewed since adoption. The Council is currently undertaking a review of the district-wide Reserve Management Plan (2003), which will likely inform the future management of reserves including Ivon Wilson Park. Granting a long-term commercial Licence to Occupy of 15 + 15 years before the relevant management plans have been updated risks pre-empting the outcome of that process and limiting the ability of the community to shape the future management of the park.	Inconsistent with intent of policy

Water Quality

Policy	Policy intent	Assessment	Consistency
"To manage the park in such a manner as not to impact negatively on Lake Henry water quality."	Activities should not negatively affect the water quality of Lake Henry.	The proposal introduces regular commercial swimming/cold plunge activity and wood-fired heating directly on the lake. The application provides limited detailed assessment of potential water quality impacts. Given the scale of activity proposed, potential effects on water quality remain uncertain. The applicant intends to take water from Lake Henry for cleaning the sauna, and discharging this directly back to the lake. While the water take looks like a permitted activity (up to 2000L/day), the discharge will have contaminants in it (that is the purpose of "cleaning"), therefore it would need a discharge consent from Environment Southland under Rule 5 of the Water and Land Plan, "Discharge of contaminants to surface water bodies" - as a discretionary activity. A discharge of the wash water, regardless of whether detergent is used or not, could adversely impact water in Lake Henry.	Uncertain / Potentially inconsistent

Fires

Policy	Policy intent	Assessment	Consistency
"(i) To prohibit the lighting of fires in the park other than in barbeques that may be provided by the council."	Fires are generally prohibited in the park except in designated council facilities.	The proposal includes two wood fires inside the saunas, and reference to a fireplace on the pontoon beside the changing room. I note that in the draft LTO it restricts a firepit, and it looks like the applicant may be withdrawing the proposal for the outside firepit on the pontoon. The wood fires in the sauna are not council-provided barbeques and therefore are inconsistent with this policy. I note the wording in this policy is very strong, using the word "prohibit" it is very clear that no other fires are permitted under the IWPMP. For this reason, it's hard to see how the Council could consider issuing a LTO to the applicant.	Inconsistent

"(ii) To take every reasonable precaution to prevent the occurrence of fire in the management area."	Fire risk should be minimised.	Introducing wood-fired saunas and potentially a fireplace increases fire risk within the park environment and is inconsistent with the precautionary approach outlined in the policy.	Inconsistent
Recreational Use/ Facilities			
Policy	**Policy intent**	**Assessment**	**Consistency**
"(i) To maintain and improve the quality of facilities to encourage increased use of the park."	Facilities should support and enhance public use of the park.	The floating sauna does not function as a public facility. It is a private commercial activity with restricted access, and its placement reduces the usefulness of the existing public jetty.	Inconsistent
"(ii) To allow development that is appropriate for and generally acceptable for a reserve of its nature – additional projects will be assessed on a case by case basis."	Development must be appropriate to the character of the reserve.	A commercial sauna facility with potentially up to 168 users per day introduces a level of commercial activity that appears inconsistent with the passive recreation character of Lake Henry.	Inconsistent
"(iii) To keep the number of structures on the reserve to a minimum."	Built development should be limited to protect the park's character.	The proposal introduces multiple structures including two saunas, a changing room and pontoon infrastructure on the lake. The explanation states that Ivon Wilson Park offers visitors peace and tranquillity, and its important that any developments recognise and complement these. It's possible that the level of activity at the floating sauna would disrupt the peace and tranquillity on Lake Henry.	Inconsistent
Leases and Temporary Use			

Policy	Policy intent	Assessment	Consistency
"(ii) To grant leases when they are considered to be in the public interest and in accordance with the reserve's purpose, objectives and policy."	Leases should clearly benefit the public and align with the management plan. Explanation from the plan: "As a general rule the rights of the public take priority over the requirements of a prospective lessee."	The proposal allows a private commercial operator to occupy part of the lake and utilise a public jetty for access for up to 30 years. The loss of public amenity and access appears disproportionate to the benefit to the public. The explanation states that the rights of the public should take priority over that of a prospective leasee. The floating sauna proposal appears to reverse this principle by prioritising the needs of a commercial lessee over the public's ability to use and enjoy the northern jetty and lake access point.	Inconsistent
"(iv) To require all leases to act in accordance with this management plan."	Any lease must comply with the management plan.	As identified above, the proposal conflicts with multiple objectives and policies in the management plan, so it is not possible for the lease for the sauna to act in accordance with the management plan.	Inconsistent

Buildings and Structures

Policy	Policy intent	Assessment	Consistency
(ii) " When upgrading existing or constructing new structures and buildings to use materials and colours that are in harmony with the environment."	Structures and buildings should use materials and colours that blend with the surrounding natural environment and minimise visual impact.	The changing room is proposed to be constructed of Dampalon, a semi-opaque polycarbonate material, which will appear white. This material and colour are unlikely to blend with the surrounding natural environment of the lake and park. In addition, the floating sauna pontoon will be enclosed by a solid hardwood fence, which will block views from the northern viewing platform and introduce a visually dominant built element on the lake edge. These features do not appear to be in harmony with the surrounding environment.	Inconsistent

"(iii) To restrict the number of buildings, utilities and structures to a level which facilitates the safe and appropriate use of the reserve."	Structures should only be provided where necessary to enable safe and appropriate public use of the reserve.	The proposal introduces multiple new structures on Lake Henry, including two saunas, a changing room, fencing and pontoon infrastructure. The explanation to the policy states that buildings and structures are permitted when they facilitate the public's enjoyment of the reserve and activities. In this case the floating sauna is a private commercial facility with restricted access, enclosed by fencing, and therefore does not facilitate general public use or enjoyment of the reserve. In addition to introducing several new structures onto Lake Henry, the proposal also alters the function of an existing public structure — the northern jetty — by effectively converting it into the access point for a private commercial facility.	Inconsistent

Development

Policy	Policy intent	Assessment	Consistency
"(i) To undertake such development as is required to achieve the objectives, and implement the policies, contained in this management plan."	Development should help achieve the objectives of the plan.	The proposal conflicts with multiple objectives and policies of the management plan, including those relating to maintaining Lake Henry in its natural state, facilitating public access and recreational use, protecting scenic values, restricting fires, and keeping structures within the reserve to a minimum.	Inconsistent

"(ii) Developments may range from landscaping to sports/recreation facilities, buildings, lighting and carparking. *Each development project will be assessed on its effect on the environment, existing activities, fauna, flora or the unique feature of the reserve.*	The plan recognises that development may occur within the park, but each proposal must be assessed for its environmental effects and its impact on existing uses and the unique features of the reserve.	The floating sauna proposal would introduce a prominent built structure directly onto Lake Henry, the central feature of the park. The proposal would also alter the use of the northern jetty, which is currently used by the public for viewing the lake and accessing the water. The structure may also affect existing recreational use of the jetty and lake edge. Given these effects on the lake environment, existing recreational activities, and the unique feature of Lake Henry itself, the proposal does not appear to satisfy the policy requirement that development be carefully assessed and compatible with these values.	Inconsistent

Development proposals – Lake Henry

Policy / explanation	Policy intent	Assessment	Consistency
"(1) Lake Henry and surrounding bog vegetation as central point. This area has important native qualities that need to be maintained. Any future development in this area would need to be sensitive to the natural environment. Tracks and jetty like structures to facilitate access and fishing would be a typical type of development."	Development near Lake Henry should be minimal and focused on facilitating public access and fishing.	The floating sauna is not a structure facilitating public access or fishing. Instead it is a private commercial facility occupying part of the lake and restricting use of the existing jetty, and as such it prevents public access to the lake and fishing in the lake from that jetty.	Inconsistent

[redacted]

From: Nick Keizerwaard [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 18 March 2026 5:19 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Re: Submission in Opposition – Proposed Licence to Occupy, Ivon Wilson Park
Attachments: Submission - LTO Lake Henry.pdf

This message is from an external sender

Kia ora Megan,

In light of newly available information, as well as my own further investigation - including a site meeting with our local councillor - I would like to make a resubmission.

Please find attached the submission, which supersedes the one supplied on 28 February.

Ngā mihi,
Nick Keizerwaard

On Mon, Mar 2, 2026 at 11:33 AM Contact Property <ContactProperty@southlanddc.govt.nz> wrote:

> Kia ora Nick,
>
> Thank you very much for taking the time to email us.
>
> This is an acknowledgement that we have received your submission.
>
> Ngā mihi
>
> Megan Cowley
>
> Senior Property Advisor
>
> Southland District Council

From: Nick Keizerwaard [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, 28 February 2026 8:03 pm
To: Contact Property <ContactProperty@southlanddc.govt.nz>
Subject: Submission in Opposition – Proposed Licence to Occupy, Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

SUPERSEDED

Tēnā koutou,

I am writing to oppose the proposed Licence to Occupy over part of Ivon Wilson Park for the purpose of operating a floating sauna business on Lake Henry.

The specific area is an established, safe and sheltered public viewing platform for passive, peaceful recreation, with no admission required. Its value lies in its openness, informality, and unrestricted public access.

Ivon Wilson Park is classified as a Recreation Reserve under the Reserves Act 1977. Section 17 of the Act provides that recreation reserves are to be administered for the purpose of providing areas for recreation and sporting activities, and for the physical welfare and enjoyment of the public, with the public's freedom of entry and access preserved "as far as possible."

While the Act allows for leases or licences where activities are consistent with the reserve's purpose, exclusive occupation that materially restricts established public access must be demonstrably necessary and consistent with that primary objective.

SUPERSEDED

In its current form, the proposed activity does not appear to meet that criterion, and I question its alignment with the Reserves Act 1977; particularly the following:

S17. (c) those qualities of the reserve which contribute to the pleasantness, harmony, and cohesion of the natural environment and to the better use and enjoyment of the reserve shall be conserved, and;

(d) to the extent compatible with the principal or primary purpose of the reserve, its value as a soil, water, and forest conservation area shall be maintained.

Te Anau and the wider Fiordland region are increasingly recognised for the quality of their night skies. Aurora viewing and astro-tourism contribute meaningfully to year-round visitation, including winter.

Publicly accessible, south-facing vantage points within township limits are limited. The platform in question plays a quiet-but-important role in enabling both residents and visitors to experience the night environment freely.

SUPERSEDED

Community members have previously suggested the development of a purpose-built aurora and night sky viewing deck on the shore of Lake Te Anau as a constructive way to strengthen this offering and better activate the lakefront. That opportunity remains unrealised. In that context, the proposed loss or restriction of one of the few existing informal viewing sites is difficult to justify.

If the operation results in the effective loss of access to the south-facing platform currently used for quiet enjoyment, including aurora and night sky viewing, I expect there will be a measurable reluctance within the wider community to patronise such a business.

This submission is not anti-business. I appreciate the concept of a floating sauna and recognise that similar offerings operate successfully elsewhere. However, the proposed activity over Lake Henry is not fitting with the character of this natural, public reserve area.

SUPERSEDED

My submission is grounded in the principle that shared public reserve land should not be allocated in a manner that displaces community access.

For these reasons, I oppose the granting of this Licence to Occupy.

Ngā mihi,

Nick Keizerwaard

Te Anau

Attention: The information contained in this message and/or attachments is intended only for the person or entity to which it is addressed and may contain confidential and/or privileged material. Any review, retransmission, dissemination or other use of, or taking of any action in reliance upon, this information by persons or entities other than the intended recipient is prohibited. If you received this in error, please contact the Southland District Council and delete the material from any system and destroy any copies.
Ph - 0800 732 732 | Email - emailsdc@southlanddc.govt.nz

Individual Submission in Opposition to Proposed Licence to Occupy Lake Henry

Submitted by: Nick Keizerwaard of Te Anau

18th March 2026

Tēnā koutou,

I write to formally oppose the proposed Licence to Occupy over Lake Henry for the operation of a floating sauna business.

Ivon Wilson Park is a Recreation Reserve administered under the Reserves Act 1977. Under Section 17, such reserves are to be managed for public recreation while preserving freedom of entry and access "as far as possible," and protecting the natural qualities that contribute to the reserve's environmental cohesion and public enjoyment.

In its current form, the proposal is not consistent with these requirements.

Inconsistency with Primary Purpose (Section 17(1))

The proposal introduces a fixed, privately operated commercial activity occupying a prominent lake-edge location and utilising the existing northern (south-facing) public jetty.

While access may technically remain, the functional reality is that a public access structure becomes the entry point to a private operation. This materially alters how the space can be used and reduces its availability for general recreation.

This represents a shift from open, shared use to controlled commercial use, which is not consistent with the primary purpose of a recreation reserve.

Privatisation of Public Infrastructure and Precedent Risk

The reliance on the northern jetty effectively appropriates public infrastructure for private gain. As a result, use of the adjacent south-facing viewing platform is likely to be significantly reduced by the public.

Allowing this activity establishes a precedent for further commercial occupation of public lake edges and access points within the reserve. Over time, this risks incremental erosion of public access and the informal recreational character the reserve is intended to protect.

Effects on Natural Character and Environmental Qualities (Section 17(2)(c))

Lake Henry is a small, visually contained environment where structures have a disproportionate impact.

The proposed sauna would be highly visible from lakeside vantage points and would sit directly within the primary viewing axis from the northern jetty. This would interrupt open water views and diminish the natural character and spatial cohesion of the lake environment.

In this context, these effects are more than minor and are inconsistent with the requirement to preserve the qualities contributing to the reserve's environmental cohesion.

Displacement of Established Passive Recreation

The public viewing platforms are established locations for passive recreation, including informal use, environmental appreciation, and dark-sky observation.

This location provides one of the few accessible, unobstructed southern viewing corridors within Te Anau township, supporting aurora viewing and wider night-sky appreciation.

These activities rely on open sightlines, low light conditions, and minimal visual intrusion. The introduction of structures, lighting, and regular evening activity within this corridor would materially degrade this experience.

As a form of passive recreation dependent on environmental conditions, this use aligns with the purpose of the reserve and warrants protection.

Scale and Intensity

The scale of the proposed operation, including extended daily operating hours and high user turnover, represents a level of commercial intensity that is out of proportion with the passive recreational character of the reserve.

This concentration of activity at a single lake-edge location increases pressure on shared space and infrastructure, to the detriment of existing users.

Inconsistency with Management Plan

The Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan (2008) restricts fires within the park to council-provided facilities. The use of wood-fired saunas appears inconsistent with this provision.

Additionally, the Management Plan is overdue for review. Granting a long-term commercial licence in advance of updated planning risks pre-empting future community input and direction for the reserve.

Inconsistency with Community Board Letter of Support

The Community Board's support was expressed "in principle" and appears to have been based on an assumed development scenario, including provision of an independent accessway.

The current proposal differs materially, relying instead on direct use of an existing public jetty for access. This represents a fundamental change in how the activity interacts with public infrastructure and space.

As such, the support provided does not appear to reflect the proposal as now presented, particularly in relation to access, location, and effects on public use.

Lease Duration and Public Benefit

The proposed licence term of up to 30 years is disproportionate for a private commercial activity occupying a prominent public location and relying on existing infrastructure.

The level of public return does not appear to reflect the value of the site or the degree of exclusive use.

Relief Sought

For these reasons, I request that the proposed Licence to Occupy be declined.

If approval is considered, any consent should be subject to:

- Completion of updated reserve management planning
- A substantially reduced licence term
- Independent access infrastructure (no reliance on, or obstruction of, public viewing platforms)
- Protection of key viewing corridors and passive recreation areas
- Full provision of supporting infrastructure by the operator
- Review of financial terms to ensure fair public return

Conclusion

The proposal introduces a permanent commercial use that reduces public access, alters the natural character of the lake, and displaces established forms of passive recreation.

It is not consistent with the purpose or management of a recreation reserve and should not be approved in its current form.

I wish to be heard in support of this submission and would welcome the opportunity to speak to the matters raised.

Ngā mihi,

Nick Keizerwaard

[redacted]

From: Liz Goldie [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, 28 February 2026 8:21 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission: Sauna at Ivan Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

My submission, (which I do not need to be given in person) is:

I am not supportive of the proposal to establish a sauna operation in this Park.

In the absence of any Reserve Management Plan for Ivan Wilson Park which articulates a strategic plan for the space and has canvased the community and which is cognizant of our manawhenua's values I suggest you put the horse in front of the cart, and consult on a Reserve Management Plan first.

The SDC Districtwide Reserve Management Plan 2003 states that Ivan Wilson Park is one of the spaces "which has significant features, values or management issues which require specific policy. Because of (its) significance a seperate Reserve Management plan will be maintained (Ivan Wilson Park plan is yet to be prepared)"
I cant find said plan. Does it exist? If it doesn't, Council you are found wanting.

Liz Goldie
[redacted]

Sent from my phone

[redacted]

From: LIZ NEWELL [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, 28 February 2026 8:40 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Ivan Wilson Park Te Anau, licence to operate a floating sauna Business on Lake Henry.

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,

Submission against the proposed licence to operate a floating sauna business on Lake Henry.

I am horrified that the SDC would even consider a commercial venture in our beautiful peaceful Ivan Wilson Park.
I regularly walk in this park, enjoying the peace and I also love to take photos of Lake Henry. I have a wonderful collection of different seasons that show that it is a spectacular area to visit.
I also know that Lake Henry is used as a back drop for many photos, for all sorts of reasons and we certainly do not need to have a business floating around this lake.
It is also a popular lake for Kids to fish in and this would certainly spoil this as well.

Please turn this application down for the Sauna Business, everyone in Te Anau agrees with my view.
We hope that the council will reject this consent being allowed.

Kind regards,
Liz Newell,
[redacted]
Te Anau.

[redacted]

From: An Hu [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 2 March 2026 9:49 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Re: Ivan Wilson Park License

This message is from an external sender

Hello Megan,

Thanks for forwarding. Apologies I hadn't listed my objections. Please see below.

Floating Sauna ltd has successfully secured permission (despite objections in both instances) to open two floating saunas in Tasmania and Australia. Although I can see that this might be a welcome addition to the tourism offer in Te Anau, and why some might support the proposal, I fail to see why a recreation reserve would be a suitable site. Not least given the terms of the proposed lease which would allow long-term commercial use on a Recreation Reserve.

Summary of objections

Environmental Impact

Lake Henry is small and shallow. Is the council assured that the impact of this commercial activity won't affect water quality & fish habitat? Given the well-established use as a junior fishery (offering a safe and accessible place for youngsters) has there been an impact assessment including consulting with Fish and Game Southland who I believe stock the lake? It is not just the building what about increased traffic and noise? How might this impact on the safety of junior anglers? And it is not just about fishing – increased people means there is a potential impact on other species and birds in the park. Has the council undertaken an environmental assessment? And, if they have, where can the public access this?

Land use

Given this is a recreation Reserve how is a long term lease to a **private business** (15 years initially plus option for a further 15 years) compatible with the reserves purpose to provide a **public recreation area.** The commercial use of public land limits how the public can use the space (the park is valued as a quiet space especially when Te Anau is at its busiest). Where is the broad community benefit if this private company is allowed a license to operate in a public space? There are small parking areas – are these also going to need (in time) to be expanded to accommodate sauna customers? Allowing one commercial operator into the park opens the door for more development. What would the council not approve? And why if they approve this? Or is the intention to give this operator exclusive rights? If yes, how was this business selected and were any other options considered?

Consultation

There has been a very short timeframe to raise concerns. Could you confirm whether the council is going to hold a hearing (given the objections to the proposal)? And what the process is for people to make representations at a hearing?

Thanks Annie

On Mon, 2 Mar 2026 at 11:45, Contact Property <ContactProperty@southlanddc.govt.nz> wrote:

> Good Morning Annie,

Thank you for taking the time to email us.

Your objection has been received.

Please find attached the proposed Licence to Occupy as requested.

Kind regards,

Megan Cowley

Senior Property Advisor

Property Services

Southland District Council

From: An Hu [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, 28 February 2026 9:25 pm
To: Contact Property <ContactProperty@southlanddc.govt.nz>
Subject: Ivan Wilson Park License

This message is from an external sender

Hello,

I would like ot object ot this proposal and understand a copy of the licence to occupy agreement is available for viewing.

Please forward.

Thanks Annie

Attention: The information contained in this message and/or attachments is intended only for the person or entity to which it is addressed and may contain confidential and/or privileged material. Any review, retransmission, dissemination or other use of, or taking of any action in reliance upon, this information by persons or entities other than the intended recipient is prohibited. If you received this in error, please contact the Southland District Council and delete the material from any system and destroy any copies.
Ph - 0800 732 732 | Email - emailsdc@southlanddc.govt.nz

[redacted]

From: chris morison [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2026 4:42 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission Lake Henry Sauna
Attachments: Chris Morison Sauna Submission.docx

This message is from an external sender

Please find attached my submission to the proposal for a Floating Sauna on Lake Henry in Ivon Wilson Park.
Chris Morison

1

Submission opposing:

"Southland District Council proposes to grant a Licence to Occupy to Floating Sauna Limited for an area comprising approximately 79m² situated on Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Park, located at 117 Manapouri Te Anau Highway, Te Anau. The land is legally described as Section 1 SO 384696, held in fee simple by Southland District Council, and is classified as a Recreation Reserve subject to the Reserves Act 1977."

Submitter

Christopher Stewart Morison
[redacted]

I, Christopher Stewart Morison, a resident of Te Anau for 13 years and holder of a Bachelor of Agricultural Science and a Diploma in Environmental Management, formally opposes the proposal by Floating Sauna Limited to obtain a Licence to Occupy approximately 79m² of Lake Henry, situated within Ivon Wilson Park (IWP).

I request the opportunity to be heard.

1. Failure to Address Core Components of Sustainable Management

The decision-making process to date has not adequately considered the full suite of sustainable management obligations. While environmental effects were assessed, there is little to no evidence that the applicant or the Council has evaluated:

- Social effects on existing reserve users.
- Community wellbeing and cultural values.
- Intergenerational equity, including the ability of future generations to enjoy the reserve as it was planned.

I consider this omission inconsistent with the principles of sustainable management and contrary to the expectations of responsible reserve administration.

2. Adverse Environmental, Aesthetic, and Intrinsic Effects

The proposed site is located in what is widely regarded as the most visually significant and photogenic area of IWP. The introduction of a commercial floating structure will:

- Intrude upon natural vistas and mirror-like lake reflections.
- Generate noise, water disturbance, and visual disruption from client activity.
- Diminish the intrinsic values of the reserve, including its ecological, cultural, and scenic attributes.

These effects are inconsistent with the Reserves Act 1977, particularly s17(2)(c), which requires that the qualities contributing to the pleasantness, harmony, and cohesion of the natural environment be conserved.

3. Loss of Quietness, Solitude, and Wellness Values

IWP is heavily relied upon by residents for quiet recreation, mental restoration, mindfulness, and solitude. It is one of the few remaining sheltered peaceful environments within close proximity to Te Anau township.

The introduction of a commercial operation would materially compromise these values, undermining the park's function as a refuge from noise, tourism pressure, and urban activity.

4. Inconsistency with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan (IWPMP)

The proposal does not comply with several management objectives and policies of the IWPMP. In particular:

- A floating commercial structure is inconsistent with the intended parkscape envisioned by Ivon Wilson and reflected in the plan.

- Development Policy 4(ii) requires assessment of effects on the environment, existing activities, flora, fauna, and unique features — including the park's quietness, which would be adversely affected.
- The commercial nature of the activity is not contemplated by the plan, which focuses on landscaping and low-impact recreational facilities.

5. Conflict with the Reserves Act 1977 — Public Access

Section 17 of the Reserves Act requires that the public have free and reasonable access to recreation reserves.
The proposal involves creating exclusive occupation of the jetty frontage through fencing and gating, which would:

- Restrict public access.
- Prevent the public from using the jetty for its intended recreational purposes.
- Contravene the statutory requirement for open public use.

6. Precedent for Further Commercialisation

Granting this licence would establish an undesirable precedent for future commercial activities within IWP, eroding the reserve's uncommercialised character and undermining long-term protection of its natural and cultural values.

Conclusion

Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Park is not an appropriate location for a commercial floating sauna.
The proposal is inconsistent with:

- The Reserves Act 1977
- The Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan
- Principles of sustainable management
- The intrinsic, aesthetic, cultural, and wellness values of the reserve

I, Christopher Morison respectfully request that the application be declined in full.

[redacted]

From: Beth Neill [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, 8 March 2026 3:31 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission on Licence to Occupy: Floating Sauna Limited

This message is from an external sender

Tēnā koe

Considering the Licence to Occupy for a floating sauna, I have the following concerns.

The Ivon Wilson park is a significant historical feature in Te Anau and what it currently offers (to residents and visitors) is important. Children enjoy fishing in Lake Henry, families get together, and special occasions are celebrated. It is also a place for quiet contemplation and reflection.

While public events can be held in the Ivon Wilson park, the Floating Sauna seeks a more or less permanent occupation. I think there is a risk this will diminish the value and significance the park has for the community.

I am sure there are other places the Sauna could be located where it would be enjoyed by locals and visitors.

Ngā mihi,

Beth Neill

[redacted]

From: Lee [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, 1 March 2026 9:30 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission regarding proposed Licence to Occupy – Floating Sauna Limited, Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve

This message is from an external sender

To the Property Services Team,

I am writing to formally submit my objection to the proposed licence to occupy part of Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve for the purpose of operating a floating sauna business.

Ivon Wilson Park is a valued recreation reserve that provides a quiet, natural environment for walking, disc golf, and relaxation. One of its most important qualities is the peaceful atmosphere and the opportunity for people to enjoy nature without commercial activity. Introducing a commercial sauna operation would fundamentally change the character of this reserve and diminish the sense of calm and open space that the community currently enjoys.

I am particularly concerned about the impact on parking and access. The existing car park is already heavily used by visitors walking the tracks and using the disc golf course. At peak times, parking can be limited or full. The proposal does not make clear whether Floating Sauna Limited would be required to provide its own dedicated parking. Without additional parking provision, this business would likely increase congestion and reduce access for current users of the reserve.

I am also concerned about the precedent of allowing private commercial operations within a recreation reserve. Recreation reserves are intended to prioritise public access, recreation, and environmental values. Allowing exclusive commercial use of part of the lake risks reducing the sense that this space belongs equally to everyone.

I respectfully ask the Council to carefully consider the long-term impact of this proposal on public access, parking availability, environmental values, and the peaceful character of Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve.

Please note that I would like to be heard in relation to this submission if a hearing is held.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback.

Kind regards,

Lee Smillie

Ngā mihi

Lee [redacted]

[redacted]
Invercargill

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Alan & Shelia Petrie [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, 8 March 2026 12:53 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Fwd: SUBMISSION - LAKE HENRY LICENCE TO OCCUPY

This message is from an external sender

Begin forwarded message:

From: [redacted]
Date: 8 March 2026 at 10:32:37 AM NZDT
To: [redacted]
Subject: SUBMISSION - LAKE HENRY LICENCE TO OCCUPY

1. My name is Alan Petrie, I have been a Te Anau ratepayer since 1975. In 1985 I was involved with the preparation of the Management Plan for Ivon Wilson Park, prepared jointly between the Department of Lands and Survey and the Department of Internal Affairs (NZ Wildlife Service).

2. In a wider landscape context, Lake Henry is a remnant of the adjoining Lake Te Anau, when the smaller lake was enclosed by moraine ridges, more than 6,000 years ago. Subsequently, when Lake Te Anau dropped to its present level the stranded gravel caused the formation of Lake Henry. The lake is oval in shape and at its widest part is 210m (google earth search) and is encircled by a fragile peat bog of various widths and averages 3m in depth.

3. Due to its location Lake Henry is the natural focal point or nucleus of numerous scenic vistas, producing a memorable experience for both residents and visitors alike. Some of these vistas could emotively be described as chocolate box-like.

4. The margins of Lake Henry are predominantly natural in character, i.e. nature dominates over man-made elements. The surrounding vegetation is Manuka shrublands intermixed with other native species such as lowland flax. There are several introduced species that are intermingled with the native vegetation. Around the edge of the lake's spongy peat lands the vegetation is dominated by short wire rush. Some sections of the lake's margins are characterised by small islands of sphagnum moss, separated by ponding. These small islands make ideal nesting areas for both ducks and NZ scaup.

5. As already stated, nature dominates over man-made elements of Lake Henry, presently, the only "built" elements around the lake's edge are the three wooden deckings. These structures are low in profile and are typically what one would expect to find in such a location, producing uninterrupted viewing points of the lake and its wider setting. Probably most importantly the wooden deckings protect the underlying fragile peat land from human damage.

6. Water is a magnet for small children. In the case of Lake Henry this factor was recognised in the original Management Plan with the lake being stocked with brook trout and being designated as a junior fishery.

7. According to research (associated with research in the 1985 Management Plan), Lake Henry, apparently because of natural bio chemical and morphometric causes, has become under stress.
Therefore, becoming extremely susceptible to culturally induced enrichment. To directly quote the applicant in a media statement "Up to 12 people at a time could use the sauna, jumping into the lake's cold spring water to cool down for one hour long sessions." I consider this recreational activity would be inappropriate to promote within a relatively shallow moraine/glacial lake. It should be noted that the applicant's existing floating sauna is located on the edge of Tasmania's Lake Derby, which is a deep man-made reservoir contained by a dam 120m high.

8. Only a location and a layout plan have been officially provided by the applicant. Documentation does not provide a list of materials to be used except in a media release which states that the structures will be clad in a translucent (polycarbonate) sheeting, which from personal knowledge has both high sheen and reflectivity traits. The layout plan shows a 1.2m fence around the perimeter of the pontoon, again no information is given regarding the fence material, which could be safety glass, mesh or wooden railing. Furthermore the potential for cleaning fluid to inadvertently spill into the lake's pristine water would have a localised detrimental effect on aquatic life.

9. Traditional Finnish saunas use wood fires to create steam. Some contemporary saunas use either electric or gas. The given example on social media indicates one structure on Lake Derby having a chimney with smoke lofting out of it. With Lake Henry sited within a low depression, this would result in an inversion layer settling over the water body, particularly during colder winter months. Firewood would have to be stored on the pontoon.

10. In the case of an emergency (hypothermia caused by plunging into cold water) it would be difficult to access the sauna site because the public car park is surrounded by bollards. Additionally, it would appear that there would be no toilets provided, which means sauna users will have to walk 195m (google earth search) to the closest public toilets which would seem impractical due to the fact that bathing clothing is the normal attire for this recreational "experience".

11. It would appear that swimming is a part of the necessary criteria for this activity to proceed within IWP, which would seem inappropriate within the context of this park's underlying use. The existing main recreational pursuit for IWP is disc golf, a low key activity that many family groups participate in on a regular basis. The necessary disc cages are relocatable and could be moved to another site if required; however the undulating topography of IWP makes it ideal for this popular recreational pursuit. The proposed sauna on a floating pontoon would be costly to salvage or resite from the lake's edge due to the fact that substantial foundation/footings would be required because the structure is in direct alignment with the prevailing southwesterly wind.

12. I consider no mitigation methods are possible to screen the floating sauna from

existing wooden viewing points due to the fact that separating them is an uninterrupted expanse of water. The proposed sauna is only 95m away from the main viewing platform (google earth search).

13. I consider this proposed venture creates an extremely low threshold for other private development in IWP. As forementioned, Lake Henry is a small shallow moraine lake recognised for both its high inherent values and visual amenity attributes.

14. Finally I submit that this application is a complete environmental misfit and therefore should be declined in its entirety.

I do not wish to be heard at the hearing.

[redacted]

From: George Batchelor [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 3 March 2026 12:40 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Re: Intention to grant lease over Ivon Wilson park for a sauna

This message is from an external sender

Hello Megan.
Quite the storm over this one. Good luck with it all.
I feel like the council and indeed the applicant have shot themselves in the foot by blindsiding the community with this. I think that process needs reviewing.

Can I add to my submission please?
If this already done deal and is going to go ahead, I'd like to see the licensee pay for baseline water testing at the site on a periodic basis throughout the remainder of the summer and winter before the development goes ahead. I believe ES already have an agent testing the water in Lake Te Anau on a regular basis, so that could be an avenue for the applicant to pursue. They should also pay for surveillance monitoring during the active licensing period.
I would also like to see the pontoon area expanded by 2 metres to allow containerised planting of screening trees on the east and west sides of the pontoon at least.
This would help mitigate the visual effect of the project from the main pontoon area.
I don't believe that an annual $1000 contribution to cleaning costs of the toilets even covers the increased usage directly related to the project.
I think that needs to increase as it currently represents a contribution of $2.70 per day. I can't see that covering the cost of toilet paper.

Thanks Megan,
Regards, George.

On Mon, 2 Mar 2026 at 4:57 PM, Contact Property <ContactProperty@southlanddc.govt.nz> wrote:

> HI George,
>
> Thank you for your comments and feedback. I will place your email in the submissions and if you want to add more to your submission just let me know.
>
> Kind regards,
>
> Megan Cowley

From: George Batchelor [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 2 March 2026 3:52 pm
To: Contact Property <ContactProperty@southlanddc.govt.nz>
Subject: Re: Intention to grant lease over Ivon Wilson park for a sauna

This message is from an external sender

Thanks Megan for the copy of the agreement.

As a rate payer on a commercial property, as well as domestic, I am very surprised that the council thinks a return of $2391.30 adequately compensates the people of te anau for the loss of amenity value at the reserve. It isn't even as much as the rates on an empty section? The people of te anau would effectively be subsidising the business.

I'm not against the idea of a sauna on public land, but not on lake Henry.

Why not offer them space in the waterpark, if that is to be developed? Also why give it away? They should pay their way by funding some of the other development in the waterpark - including any upgrades to access plus parking etc. they should then be paying a commercial rate on the land they occupy, much as any business on the Main Street or motels has to. Somewhere in the region of $30k per year based on the floor area.

Regards

George

On Mon, 2 Mar 2026 at 3:09 PM, Contact Property <ContactProperty@southlanddc.govt.nz> wrote:

> Good Afternoon George,
>
> Thank you very much for emailing us.
>
> Please find attached the proposed Licence to Occupy document for you to view.
>
> Unfortunately, I am unable to answer your other 2 questions and have forwarded your queries to another team within Council who may be able to assist you.
>
> Kind regards,

Megan Cowley

Senior Property Advisor

Property Services

Southland District Council

From: George Batchelor [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, 1 March 2026 2:56 pm
To: contactproperty@southlanddc.co.nz; Contact Property <ContactProperty@southlanddc.govt.nz>
Subject: Re: Intention to grant lease over Ivon Wilson park for a sauna

This message is from an external sender

On Fri, 27 Feb 2026 at 10:39 PM, George Batchelor [redacted] wrote:

> Please do not grant this licence to occupy.
>
> Southland dc has clearly been hit up as an easier target than doc to grant an inappropriate lease over a public area of natural beauty and recreation.
>
> I'm staggered that this is even being considered.
>
> A commercialised floating sauna, with associated admin block, access points etc is totally at odds with intention and current usage of the Ivon Wilson park.
>
> I do not support this venture as it is not in the best interests of the stakeholders in Ivon Wilson Park - that is the rate payers and users of the park.
>
> I would like to access a copy of the proposed agreement please.
>
> I would also like to know the stance of the community board on this proposal.
>
> I would also like to see a timeline of the community engagement processes that have lead to the decision to grant a licence.
>
> Regards
>
> George Batchelor
>
> [redacted]

[redacted]

From: Vicki O'Brien [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, 1 March 2026 3:11 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission on Ivon Wilson Reserve and Sauna Business
Attachments: Submission to Council Opposing License to Occupy Recreation Reserve in Te Anau.docx

This message is from an external sender

Submission Attached

Vicki O'Brien
[redacted]

Submission to Council Opposing License to Occupy Lake Henry at Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve in Te Anau

Preserving the Quiet Enjoyment of Our Community Space

To the Southland District Council,

I am writing to formally object to the proposal for a Floating Sauna Business to be granted a license to occupy the Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve in Te Anau. As a local resident and frequent visitor to the reserve, I am deeply concerned that the introduction of commercial activity will compromise the quiet enjoyment that this space currently offers to the community.

The Recreation Reserve has long served as a peaceful retreat for individuals and families, providing a natural setting for relaxation, reflection, and recreational activities. Granting a business the right to occupy part of the reserve risks introducing noise, increased traffic, and commercial pressures that are incompatible with the intended use of this public space. The presence of a business may deter locals and visitors seeking tranquility, and could set a precedent for further commercialisation of our valued natural areas.

I urge the Council to consider the broader impact on community wellbeing and the environment. The reserve's unique character is defined by its serenity and accessibility for all, free from the disturbances associated with commercial operations. Protecting the quiet enjoyment of the reserve is essential for maintaining Te Anau's appeal as a destination for both residents and tourists seeking natural beauty and peaceful recreation.

I respectfully request that the Council reject the proposal and uphold the reserve's status as a sanctuary for quiet enjoyment and natural appreciation.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I do not wish to be heard on this submission.

Yours sincerely,

Vicki O'Brien

[redacted]

1 March 2026

[redacted]

From: Andrew Mackie [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, 1 March 2026 4:12 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Sauna proposal for Ivor Wilson park

This message is from an external sender

Dear SDC,

as a local & ratepayer I say no, we don't want or need this, what a stupid idea.
And what the heck is the deal with considering a commercial venture in one of our reserves? Is there precedence for this already in Te Anau?
And this seems a bit late in the process to get public opinion, would have happily said "no" in any instance.

To confirm... that's no thanks from me.

regards,
Andrew Mackie
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Hannah Otene [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, 1 March 2026 4:25 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Ivon Wilson park

This message is from an external sender

Good afternoon
I would like to put forward my disapproval of the intent to grant a license to occupy for a floating sauna on Lake Henry. Ivon Wilson Park is a very popular park for local ratepayers, mostly due to its serene atmosphere. To have a business running in the middle of this will take away from the people that contribute to the running costs of this park.
To award this license will also set a precedence for future commercialisation of our town, this should be a serious consideration.
Thank you

Hannah Otene

[redacted]

From: Joyce Morgan [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 2 March 2026 8:34 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Intention to grant a licence to occupy over part of Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve

This message is from an external sender

Hi team,

My take on this is:
"Great idea. Wrong location"
I do not think the location is appropriate. Would be nice to have a Buisness like this in Te Anau but not on public land.

Kind regards,
Joyce

[redacted]

From: Peter Dolamore [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 25 March 2026 11:25 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Lake Henry submission
Attachments: submission Lake Henry .docx

This message is from an external sender

Hello,

Please find attached my submission against the proposed Lake Henry sauna Licence to Occupy application

Regards
Peter Dolamore
[redacted]

Lake Henry Sauna, Licence to Occupy

I wish to object against the Licence to Occupy for the proposed sauna at Lake Henry.

This creates a restricted area, likely limiting access opportunities for the community to connect with the lake in the ways it was originally intended.

This is going to be a significant sized structure protruding out into a small lake. Even with it being painted to try and blend in with the existing environment, given how far it will extend out into the lake, it will still be highly visible from the other two platforms, I feel this will be quite obtrusive.

With the hours the sauna is proposed to be open, there is potential for up to 168 people to jump in the lake each day over the daylight saving hours, this would result in quite a bit of skin tissue and urine entering the lake, voluntary if a person cannot be bothered walking up to the toilets or involuntary as happens when a person hops into a swimming pool.

Has the council calculated what additional toilet cleaning costs there could be from the potential increased use of the toilets by sauna users?

Ivon Wilson Park ought to remain untouched so that visitors can appreciate its tranquil atmosphere, lovely trees, and serene areas. The small lake, traditionally a spot for children to fish, adds to the park's peaceful charm.

It is a great concept, but I feel Lake Henry is completely the wrong place for it.

I do not wish to be heard on this, I just want my voice counted as not being in favour

Peter Dolamore

[redacted]

Submitter #49

15 March 2026

Senior Property Advisor
Southland District Council
Via email: [redacted]

To Whom It May Concern

Re: Submission on Proposed Licence for a floating sauna to Occupy Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Park

I am writing to submit in opposition to the proposal to grant a licence allowing a floating sauna to operate on Lake Henry in Ivon Wilson Park.

Ivon Wilson Park occupies a special place in Te Anau. It is valued by locals and visitors alike because it remains one of the few areas in the town that has retained a quiet, natural and largely uncommercialised character. People visit the park to walk, observe birdlife, sit beside the lake, photograph the landscape, enjoy the night sky, and spend time in a peaceful environment.

Spaces like this are increasingly rare. Decisions that affect them therefore deserve careful consideration, because even relatively small changes can gradually alter the character of a place that the community has valued for decades.

Council is being asked to decide whether to grant a Licence to Occupy public reserve land, which requires consideration of broad issues including the purpose of the reserve, the character of the park, the appropriateness of commercial activity within that space, the length of the proposed occupation, and whether the community receives fair value from the use of publicly owned land.

It is on these grounds that I oppose the proposal.

Tourism Development and the "Right Activity in the Right Place"

Te Anau and the wider Fiordland area clearly benefit from tourism and visitor activity, and most residents recognise the importance of a healthy visitor economy. Strategic documents such as the Fiordland Community Futures Plan refer to attracting investment and supporting business growth in the region.

However, support for tourism development does not mean that every tourism proposal is appropriate in every location. Many successful tourism destinations carefully manage where commercial activities occur in order to protect the natural and recreational values of particular spaces.

The question in this case is not whether a floating sauna experience might have value as a tourism activity. The question is whether placing a commercial floating structure within Lake Henry in Ivon Wilson Park is the most appropriate location for that activity.

Ivon Wilson Park is valued because it has remained a quiet, natural and largely uncommercialised environment within Te Anau. Introducing a commercial structure into the lake will change the character of a space that has traditionally been reserved for informal public recreation and appreciation of the landscape.

For that reason it is entirely reasonable for the community to support tourism development in the broader Fiordland area while still questioning whether this particular proposal is appropriate within this specific reserve.

Commercialisation of a Public Reserve

The floating sauna would represent the establishment of a private, ticketed commercial business operating from within a public nature reserve.

Historically, Ivon Wilson Park has been a place of shared public recreation. Visitors walk the paths, enjoy the lake, observe wildlife, photograph the scenery, or simply spend time in a peaceful outdoor setting. These are activities that allow all members of the community to enjoy the reserve equally.

A commercial operation introduces a different dynamic. Part of the lake would become associated with a private business where access is tied to a paid activity. While the footprint of the platform may appear modest, the principle it introduces is significant.

The lake would no longer be solely a shared natural landscape. It would also become the site of a commercial enterprise operating within the reserve.

This raises a broader question about the long-term direction for Ivon Wilson Park. Once commercial operations begin to establish themselves within a reserve, even in relatively small ways, it becomes easier for similar proposals to follow over time. Incremental decisions can gradually reshape the character of a public space in ways that may never have been intended.

Peppercorn Licence Fee and Limited Public Benefit

The proposed licence fee of approximately **$2,391 per year** is extremely low given the nature of the opportunity being granted.

The arrangement effectively allows a private business to operate a revenue-generating activity within a scenic public reserve and derive income from that location for a very small annual payment.

If a private operator is to use public land as the basis for a commercial enterprise, particularly within a publicly owned park and lake, the return to the community should be meaningful. In this case the proposed fee appears closer to a symbolic or peppercorn rate than a fair reflection of the commercial value of the location.

The licence agreement also refers to two additional contributions which do little to altern the overall financial picture.

- $1,000 per year toward public toilet cleaning
- A one-off contribution of up to $5,000 toward signage upgrades

The toilet contribution equates to **less than three dollars per day**. Given that the sauna operation would attract additional visitors and increase use of existing park facilities, it is difficult to see how such a small contribution would meaningfully offset the additional demand placed on public infrastructure.

The signage contribution is also unlikely to provide substantial benefit to ratepayers. In practical terms, upgraded signage would most likely be required to identify the facility and direct customers to the sauna operation itself. As such, it appears closer to standard business infrastructure than a genuine public benefit.

Taken together, these payments remain modest relative to the commercial opportunity being created.

If a private company is to generate income from a public reserve for potentially decades, the community should receive a significant return in exchange for the use of that publicly owned space.

Long-Term Occupation of Public Space

The proposed licence provides for a **15-year initial term with a further 15-year right of renewal**, creating the potential for a **30-year commercial presence on Lake Henry**.

While the structure is described as removable and low impact, a 30-year tenure is not temporary in any meaningful sense. It represents a long-term occupation of public space.

Once an operation like this becomes established it is unlikely to be easily removed. Businesses invest in infrastructure, build customer bases and develop expectations of continuity. In practical terms a licence of this length establishes a semi-permanent commercial foothold within the reserve.

The theoretical ability to remove the structure does not change the reality that granting such a licence creates a long-term shift in how part of the reserve is used.

Lack of consistency with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan

Council's Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan (2008) provides clear guidance on the purpose and character of the reserve. When the floating sauna proposal is considered alongside the objectives contained in that plan, several areas of tension become apparent.

The management plan consistently describes Ivon Wilson Park as a place intended for passive recreation, appreciation of nature and quiet enjoyment of the landscape. Activities such as walking, picnicking, bird watching, photography and informal recreation are identified as core uses of the reserve.

These activities allow visitors to experience the park's natural setting without introducing permanent built structures or exclusive uses within the lake itself.

The floating sauna proposal differs from this vision in several important ways.

First, it introduces a private commercial activity within the lake environment. Passive recreation allows all visitors to enjoy the space equally, whereas a commercial facility occupies part of the reserve for a specific paid activity.

Second, the management plan emphasises the importance of maintaining the natural landscape character of the park. Lake Henry is identified as a key scenic feature whose open water, reflections and surrounding vegetation contribute strongly to the visual identity of the reserve.

A floating platform with built structures introduces a permanent man-made element into what is currently a simple and uncluttered lake environment. Even if modest in size, such a structure inevitably becomes a visible focal point within the landscape.

Third, the plan highlights the importance of protecting the scenic amenity of the lake and surrounding environment. Scenic amenity includes the visual qualities that make the park appealing such as open views across the water, the reflective surface of the lake and the sense of simplicity and calm that currently characterises the area.

Introducing a floating structure into the lake inevitably alters those qualities.

Fourth, the park is recognised as an important refuge for birdlife and natural vegetation, supported by the relatively quiet atmosphere of the reserve. Increased activity on the lake associated with a commercial operation has the potential to change the level of human presence in an area that has historically remained low-key.

Finally, the management plan acknowledges the vision of Ivon Wilson, who personally planted thousands of trees and helped shape the landscape into the park enjoyed today. His work created a carefully designed natural environment intended for community enjoyment.

That legacy reinforces the idea that the park was established primarily as a shared public landscape rather than a venue for commercial enterprises.

Built Structures and Development Within the Park

The management plan also anticipates that any built infrastructure within the park will generally be small-scale facilities that support public recreation, such as tracks, seating, signage or simple shoreline structures.

These types of facilities assist visitors while remaining visually unobtrusive.

The proposed sauna differs from this approach because it is a purpose-built commercial structure dedicated to a private activity.

It would also be located directly within the lake itself. Most existing park infrastructure sits on land and can be integrated within the surrounding vegetation. A floating structure positioned within the lake occupies a visually prominent position that cannot easily be screened or blended into the landscape.

While the footprint may appear modest, the significance lies in the change in land use it represents. Instead of infrastructure that supports general recreation, the lake would contain a dedicated commercial facility operating within the reserve.

Aurora Viewing and Dark-Sky Values

Lake Henry is also widely recognised as one of Te Anau's most accessible locations for aurora viewing and night-sky photography.

The area offers a clear southern horizon, relatively low light interference and easy public access from the shoreline and viewing areas.

The proposed floating sauna would occupy approximately 80 square metres of lake space directly in front of the existing viewing platform within an important viewing corridor.

Many visitors and photographers rely on this location for unobstructed southern views. Introducing a floating structure in this position risks diminishing one of the town's most accessible aurora viewing locations.

Transparency and Access to Information

Given the level of public interest in this proposal, it is concerning that key details of the proposed licence arrangement were not initially proactively published on the Council website and instead required members of the public to request documents directly.

Though I found Council staff very responsive to my request for documents, for decisions involving long-term commercial use of public reserve land, it would be preferable for councils to publish draft agreements, fee structures and key conditions openly as part of the consultation process so that the community can engage fully with the proposal. I hope this is something that can be considered going forward.

Conclusion

Ivon Wilson Park remains one of the few places in Te Anau that has retained its quiet, natural and largely uncommercialised character.

The proposal before Council would introduce a long-term commercial operation into Lake Henry, grant potentially 30 years of occupation to a private business, and do so for a peppercorn financial return to the community.

The decision regarding this proposal is being made on behalf of the community and future generations and should therefore be made with particular care by decision makers.

For these reasons, I do not support the company being granted a Licence to Occupy Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Park, and I respectfully request that the proposal be declined.

Your sincerely,

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: alan coppin [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 2 March 2026 10:36 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Opposition floating sauna Ivon Wilson park

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,

I wish to lodge a formal submission opposing the proposed Licence to Occupy to Floating Sauna Limited over part of Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve.

My opposition is based on concern that the proposed activity appears inconsistent with the statutory purpose and management obligations applying to recreation reserves under the Reserves Act 1977.

Statutory purpose of Recreation Reserves
Section 17(1) of the Reserves Act 1977 provides that recreation reserves are to be managed for the purpose of providing areas for the recreation and sporting activities and the physical welfare and enjoyment of the public, and for the protection of the natural environment and beauty of the countryside. Any secondary or commercial use must remain clearly subordinate to these primary purposes.

The proposed licence would grant exclusive occupation of reserve space for a commercial operation for a term of 15 years, with a further right of renewal extending potential occupation to 30 years. In practical terms, this represents a long-term private commercial use of public reserve land.

It is unclear how such exclusive commercial occupation can be reconciled with the requirement that recreation reserve land remain principally available for public use and enjoyment.

Consistency of commercial licensing under Section 54
While Section 54 enables licences to occupy reserve land, such licences must be demonstrably consistent with the reserve's classified purpose. The scale, permanence, and duration of the proposed activity raise legitimate doubt as to whether the commercial use remains ancillary to recreation, rather than constituting a primary private activity located within public reserve space.

Environmental protection obligations
Section 17(1) further requires that recreation reserves be managed for the protection of the natural environment and beauty of the countryside. Section 17(2)(b) provides that where natural features or indigenous flora or fauna are present on the reserve, those features shall be managed and protected to the extent compatible with the principal purpose of the reserve. The establishment and ongoing operation of a floating commercial structure within Lake Henry introduces potential cumulative effects on water quality, ecological values, and the natural character of the reserve environment. These effects warrant careful scrutiny given the protected status of the reserve.

Impact on public enjoyment and reserve character
Ivon Wilson Park is widely valued as a passive recreational environment characterised by open access and low-impact use. The introduction of permanent commercial infrastructure and associated visitor activity risks altering both the character and use expectations of the reserve and may diminish its function as an accessible public space intended for general community enjoyment.

Adequacy of supporting infrastructure and effects on public use
I also wish to raise concern regarding whether the existing infrastructure within Ivon Wilson Park is suitable to accommodate sustained commercial activity of this nature.

The reserve's lavatories, parking facilities, accessways, and surrounding land appear designed to support general recreational use rather than ongoing commercial operations attracting concentrated visitor demand. Increased commercial patronage is likely to place additional pressure on parking availability, pedestrian access, and shared public amenities.

As a result, ordinary members of the public may experience reduced accessibility and enjoyment of the reserve through congestion, limited parking availability, and increased activity levels within an area intended primarily for passive recreation.

Effects on established recreational fishing use
Lake Henry is widely used by members of the public, including young children and families, as a safe and accessible location for recreational fishing. The lake is stocked with rainbow and brown trout as a children's fishery, with free fishing licences available from the Fiordland National Park Visitor Centre. It provides a controlled and low-risk environment where children are able to fish freely from the shoreline and surrounding reserve areas.

The introduction of a commercial floating sauna operation is likely to increase regular swimming and water-based activity within the lake. This raises concern regarding potential conflicts between swimmers and recreational fishing activities, including safety considerations and reduced suitability of the lake for its existing use by young and inexperienced fishers.

Recreation reserves are intended to accommodate and protect public recreational activities. Where a new commercial activity introduces ongoing operational use that may materially interfere with established recreational use, it is unclear whether the reserve can continue to fulfil its primary purpose under Section 17 of the Reserves Act 1977.

Displacement of existing recreational use
I am also concerned that the proposal may result in the displacement or modification of existing recreational use currently enjoyed by the public within Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve.

Lake Henry and the surrounding reserve are actively used for passive recreation, walking, dog walking, mountain biking, disc golf, relaxation, and recreational fishing. These activities reflect the core purpose for which recreation reserves are intended to be managed. Where the introduction of a commercial activity results in existing users needing to alter, restrict, or avoid their established recreational use due to increased activity levels, safety considerations, or spatial conflict, there is a risk that the reserve no longer serves the public recreation purpose for which it is classified.

In this respect, it is unclear whether the proposed activity enhances public recreation or instead displaces established recreational use in favour of private commercial occupation.

Duration of the proposed occupation
I also note that the proposed licence provides for a term of 15 years together with a further right of renewal for an additional 15 years, creating the potential for occupation of reserve space for up to 30 years.

While licences to occupy are provided for under the Reserves Act 1977, the extended duration proposed raises concern as to whether the occupation remains temporary and ancillary to recreation

reserve purposes. A commercial activity authorised for multiple decades risks establishing a de facto permanent private presence within land intended to remain primarily available for public recreation.

Such long-term occupation may also limit future reassessment of environmental effects, infrastructure capacity, and impacts on public use should circumstances or community expectations change over time.

Adequacy of the current Reserve Management Plan
I note that the Southland District Council's District Wide Reserve Management Plan 2003 identified Ivon Wilson Park as requiring its own individual management plan, listing it as a "plan to be prepared." It does not appear that a specific management plan for Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve has been completed in the intervening period.

Section 41 of the Reserves Act 1977 provides for the preparation of management plans for reserves. Under Section 54(1A), the prior consent of the Minister of Conservation is not required for a lease or licence where the administering body has an approved management plan and the lease or licence is in conformity with and contemplated by that plan. In the absence of a current and specific management plan for Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve, there is a question as to whether the appropriate statutory process has been followed and whether the proposal can be said to be contemplated by any operative plan.

I further note that the Council gave public notice in 2025 of its intention to undertake a comprehensive review of the District Wide Reserve Management Plan 2003, with a new draft plan expected to be released for public submissions in mid-2026. Granting a long-term commercial licence over reserve land immediately prior to the completion of a comprehensive management plan review raises concern that the decision may preempt outcomes that should properly be considered through the plan review process.

Community interest considerations
This submission is made in the interest of maintaining Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve as an accessible and low-impact public space for the wider community. Recreation reserve land represents a shared public asset, and decisions relating to long-term commercial occupation warrant careful consideration to ensure that existing recreational values, environmental qualities, and public accessibility are not progressively diminished.

For these reasons, I respectfully oppose the granting of the proposed Licence to Occupy and request that Council carefully satisfy itself that the proposal fully complies with the purpose, intent, and statutory requirements of the Reserves Act 1977 before any decision is made.

Yours sincerely,
Alan Coppin

[redacted]

From: Helen&Grant Newcombe [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 3 March 2026 10:47 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission - Floating Sauna Limited
Attachments: Submission Floating Sauna Limited.pdf

This message is from an external sender

Morena

Here is my submission opposing the granting of a license to Floating Sauna Limited, Te Anau.

Regards,
Helen Newcombe

Submission on License to Occupy: Floating Sauna, Lake Henry

To: The Property Manager, Southland District Council

Regarding: Application for License to Occupy – Ivon Wilson Park (Lake Henry)

Submitter Name: Helen Newcombe

Address: [redacted]

I am writing to formally oppose the application for a License to Occupy a portion of Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Park for the purpose of operating a commercial floating sauna. As a previous longstanding resident of Te Anau, and a regular user of the park, I believe this development is fundamentally incompatible with the park's status as a passive recreation reserve.

Grounds for Opposition

1. **Incompatibility with "Passive Recreation" Status** Ivon Wilson Park is a cherished passive reserve. Its value lies in its quiet, undeveloped nature, providing a sanctuary for walking, biking, and fishing.
    a. Introducing a commercial enterprise, complete with a 78.54m^2 floating structure, shifts the park's character from a public commons to a commercialised zone.
    b. The Reserves Act 1977 requires that the public's right of freedom of entry and access be maintained. Granting a 15-year (plus 15-year renewal) exclusive right to a portion of the lake surface effectively privatizes public space for 30 years.

2. **Impact on Existing Users (Children and Families)** Lake Henry is a designated children's fishery.
    a. The presence of a commercial sauna and changing room on the water creates a physical and visual obstruction for young anglers.
    b. There is a significant safety and clash of use concern regarding children fishing in close proximity to a commercial sauna operation where adults will be congregating and moving in and out of the water.

3. **Environmental and Aesthetic Concerns** While the application states there will be no discharges, a floating structure of this size inevitably impacts the ecology of a small lake like Lake Henry.
    a. **Visual Amenity:** The park is valued for its natural vistas. A 10.2m x 7.7m artificial pontoon with structures will permanently mar the view of the lake.
    b. **Infrastructure Creep:** Item 15 mentions "associated infrastructure" like pathways and bike parks. This suggests the footprint of the business will bleed out into the land-based portion of the reserve, further eroding the open space.

4. **Low Public Benefit vs. High Private Gain** The proposed license fee of $2,391.30 per annum is exceptionally low for the exclusive use of a premier public asset.
    a. The contributions to signage and toilet cleaning do not compensate for the loss of tranquillity and the precedent set by allowing commercial development in a passive reserve.
    b. The 30-year potential term (Item 7) is an excessive duration to lock away public lake surface for a private business.

Conclusion

Ivon Wilson Park should remain a place where the community can escape commercial activity. There are many other locations in Te Anau suitable for commercial tourism; Lake Henry, a place for children, dogs, and quiet reflection, is not one of them.

I request that the Council decline this License to Occupy in its entirety.

Signed: [redacted]

Date: 3/3/2026.

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Edith Jones [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 2 March 2026 5:44 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Ivan Wilson

This message is from an external sender

I would like to make a submission in opposition to granting the Licence to Occupy to Floating Sauna Limited in Ivan Wilson Park.

Ivan Wilson is an incredibly special place, for both the locals and the tourists. It is such a peaceful, serene place, and so close to town. It's a fantastic place to walk your dog, which I have done hundreds of times there.

Please keep Ivan Wilson as it is. There are other places that this operation can go.

I would like to be heard.

Edith Jones
Manapouri

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 3 March 2026 8:34 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve

This message is from an external sender

Dear Sir/ Madam,

I would like to lodge an objection to the proposed commercial sauna that is intended to be at Lake Henry in Ivon Wilson Park in Te Anau.

I love this park, it is somewhere I run and take my kids on walks to. My kids also do Nature Discovery there on Wednesday mornings as part of their Kindergarten programme.

Ivon Wilson Park is all about nature and getting out and enjoying nature. I already find Ivon Wilson has become a lot busier since the Frisbee golf has been installed and there are parts of it that I don't run in now incase I get hit by a Frisbee.

I do not want to see any commercial businesses come into the park. I want it to be protected as a recreational reserve. Let's not sell out, let's protect our resources in Te Anau. I formally object to the sauna business at Lake Henry.

Thank you,
Marianne.

[redacted]

From: Dawn Hansen [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 3 March 2026 10:03 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Ivon Wilson submission

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to oppose the proposed consent approval for a floating sauna to be constructed on Lake Henry at Ivon Wilson Reserve.

Reasons for my concern are as follows:

- the northern jetty is a quieter jetty that is perfect for dog owners to take their dogs swimming, away from the main jetty and other park users.

- weddings are often held on the main jetty as it is a beautiful spot. The outlook during ceremonies and wedding photos would be negatively impacted having a sauna business in the background.

- Te Anau & Fiordland is growing as a dark sky location, perfect for night photography. The proposed northern jetty is one of very few locations easily accessible in Te Anau perfect for Aurora photography.

- impact of increased use to the park on parking & facilities

- Ivon Wilson is one of the few areas dog owners can take their dogs off lead

- While the idea is exciting and there would be benefits to the Te Anau Communtiy I believe Ivon Wilson Reserve is not the best location for this. Surely the business owner could purchase more appropriate commercial land, construct and create a cold plunge pond pool with similar characteristics.

In summary I do not agree with this proposal.

Kind regards,

Dawn Hansen

[redacted]

From: jonathon pidduck [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 3 March 2026 10:21 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Intention to grant licence to occupy

This message is from an external sender

I would like to Oppose the floating sauna idea for lake Henry. I suggest the owner buys and develop private land and do it there.
Thank you and let common sense prevail.
I can't believe it got to this stage.
Jonathon Pidduck.

[redacted]

From: Melissa Austin [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 3 March 2026 10:22 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Intention to grant licence to occupy

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,

Leave Ivon Wilson Park alone and all that's in it. If you want to do something like that try the non existent bird park we no longer have and make sure the person is paying the same amount of rates etc as if they were renting a building.

Mel
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Nichollette Brown [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 3 March 2026 10:25 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Comment on 15-year Licence to Occupy for a floating sauna on Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

Kia ora,

Thank you for the chance to comment on the proposed 15-year Licence to Occupy (with a further 15-year renewal) for a floating sauna on Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Park. **I do not support the proposal for the following reasons**:

1. Community concern

Recent reporting and social media feedback shows many locals feel *"upset and blindsided"*, and there is confusion due to limited information. This indicates the proposal does not currently have social licence.

2. Impacts on reserve values

The proposal includes an 80 m² floating platform with structures and up to 12 users per session, which would significantly change the character of the small lake and surrounding recreation reserve. This is inconsistent with the quiet recreational use expected in Ivon Wilson Park. This does not align well with the purpose of a recreation reserve under the Reserves Act 1977, which prioritises public enjoyment of open spaces, landscape values, and low-impact recreation.

3. Potential environmental and amenity effects

The nature of the activity—repeat sessions, noise, increased visitor pressure—has the potential to disturb wildlife and the natural quiet of the area. Given Lake Henry's small size and enclosed nature, effects are likely to be more pronounced than on a larger lake.

4. Insufficient public information

The public notice outlines the size and duration of the licence, but limited environmental or operational detail is available. This makes it difficult for the community to give informed feedback.

Given the lack of social licence, likely impacts on reserve values, and inadequate public information, I do not support granting a Licence to Occupy at this time.

I do not wish to be heard in relation to this submission.

Ngā mihi,
Nichollette Brown

[redacted]

From: Mary [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 23 March 2026 11:22 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission Against Proposed Licence to Occupy – Floating Sauna, Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,

I submit in opposition to the proposed Licence to Occupy for the floating sauna to be located at Ivon Wilson Park.

1. Inconsistency with Reserve Purpose

Ivon Wilson Park is a recreation reserve. The management objectives of Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan 2008 are:

i. To promote and facilitate multiple use of the Park based on identifiable recreation activities compatible with the character and sustainability of the resource.
ii. To enhance and maintain the scenic values and attractions of Ivon Wilson Park.
iii. To as far as possible maintain Lake Henry and surrounding bog in its natural state
iv. To foster public appreciation for the Park, facilitate public access to, and recreational use of, the area.

The proposed activity is a private commercial enterprise and is inconsistent with the management objectives of the reserve. While the applicant suggests the activity enables recreation, this is only for paying customers and does not provide for the general public in an open and equitable manner. If the activity were genuinely consistent with the intended recreational use of the reserve, it would likely be anticipated and enabled within the planning framework, rather than requiring resource consent.

The proposal therefore represents a shift from public recreation to private commercial use, which is inconsistent with the fundamental purpose of the reserve.

2. Adverse Effects on Amenity Values for Reserve Users

The floating sauna platform with multiple structures will introduce a visually dominant and incongruous element into a park valued for its open space, natural character, and sense of tranquility.

The development will:

- Diminish the visual amenity of the lake and surrounding park environment to other users of the reserve
- Reduce the sense of peace and naturalness currently experienced by park users
- Introduce built form and activity that is out of keeping with the established character of the reserve

These effects are significant given the relatively small and intimate scale of the lake environment.

3. Effects on Public Access and Use

The proposed structure will extend from an existing jetty, effectively appropriating public space for exclusive use. This will:

- Limit access to and use of the jetty by the general public
- Create a perception that the area is no longer publicly available
- Displace other recreational users who currently utilise the lake edge

Even if not physically exclusive, the presence of a commercial operation creates a functional and psychological barrier to use.

4. Effects on Other Park Users Not Fully Addressed

While environmental effects may have been considered through the resource consent process, the broader effects on the experience of other park users have not been adequately addressed.

This includes:

- Loss of quiet enjoyment
- Increased activity and intensity of use in a previously passive recreation setting
- Commercialisation of a public space

These are critical considerations when assessing a licence to occupy within a reserve, and they extend beyond the scope of typical resource management assessments.

5. Precedent Effects

Granting a licence for a commercial activity of this nature risks setting a precedent for further private commercial uses within the reserve.

This could lead to:

- Incremental loss of public space
- Erosion of the reserve's character and purpose
- Increased pressure to accommodate similar developments

Such a shift would fundamentally alter the nature of the park over time.

6. Public Interest

The reserve is a public asset intended for the benefit of the entire community. Allocating space for private commercial gain—particularly where access is restricted to paying users—does not serve the broader public interest.

Public reserves should remain spaces that are inclusive, accessible, and free from commercial barriers.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, I oppose the granting of the proposed Licence to Occupy. The activity is inconsistent with the purpose of the reserve, will adversely affect amenity values and public use for the long term, and represents an inappropriate commercialisation of a public space.

I request that the Southland District Council decline the application.

I do not wish to be heard in person for this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Mary Williams

[redacted]

From: brian johnston [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 3 March 2026 11:41 am
To: Contact Property; brian johnston
Subject: SDC Proposal to grant a licence to Floating Sauna Ltd.

This message is from an external sender

I am writing this submission in **opposition** to the SDC's proposal to grant a licence to Occupy to Floating Sauna Ltd an area on Lake Henry within Ivan Wilson Park.
My main opposition is based on my belief that such a commercial business will severely disturb the peace and serenity of this beautiful park. I often seek refuge in this park for quiet contemplation, and to enjoy the plants, trees and bird life.

For over 7 years, our peace and quiet was disturbed by an AirBnB operating next door to us, near the dividing boundary fence. One of the two rental properties had a spa bath which guests would frequently use at all hours of the day and night. We were subjected to a party-like atmosphere, with music, shouting and drunken behaviour. The owners of the property did nothing to curb these regular disturbances, neither did complaints to Airbnb.

Why am I mentioning this? I've read the owner of this proposed enterprise, Nigel Reeves, envisages up to 12 people at a time, could use the sauna, who'll be at liberty to jump into the cold, spring waters, to cool down. These potentially noisy sessions are for an hour long at a time. I envisage, such a commercial business will disturb this much loved sanctuary for peace and quiet.

I would suggest that if Mr. Reeves is so keen to proceed with such an unpopular venture, he purchases separate land, and builds his floating sauna there, well away from our community park.

Kind Regards,
Brian Johnston
[redacted]
Te Anau.

[redacted]

From: [redacted] McDermott [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 17 March 2026 1:29 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Ivon Wilson Park Submission
Attachments: Submission on Proposed Licence to Occupy.docx

This message is from an external sender

Submission on Proposed Licence to Occupy
Floating Sauna Ltd – Ivon Wilson Park / Lake Henry

Submitter:
Korena McDermott
[redacted]

Position: **Oppose**

I wish to be heard in support of this submission. Request to be heard withdrawn

Please find a submission on the proposed Licence to Occupy for the floating sauna at Lake Henry in Ivon Wilson Park.

Korena McDermott
[redacted]

Submission on Proposed Licence to Occupy
Floating Sauna Ltd – Ivon Wilson Park / Lake Henry

Submitter:

Korena McDermott

[redacted]

Position: **Oppose**

I wish to be heard in support of this submission.

Please find a submission on the proposed Licence to Occupy for the floating sauna at Lake Henry in Ivon Wilson Park.

I oppose the proposal in its current form.

The concerns relate to the privatisation and commercial use of a public structure, loss of public access and amenity, inconsistency with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan, parking and displacement effects on local users, the excessive proposed lease term, the timing of the proposal while the park management plan is under review, and the insufficient financial return to the public for the use of a public reserve.

Ivon Wilson Park is an important public recreation reserve valued by the community for its peaceful character, open access to the lake, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature connection. The proposal would introduce a private commercial activity into a prominent part of the lake edge while relying heavily on existing public infrastructure.

A summary of concerns are

• The proposal proceeding while the park management plan is under review

• Privatisation and commercial use of a public jetty and lake access point

• Loss of public access to the water and views from the jetty

• Inconsistency with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan (please see detailed assessment against the Management Plan in Appendix 1);

• Parking pressure and displacement of local park users

• The scale of activity, potentially up to 168 users per day in summer

• Inadequate contribution toward servicing public toilets

• The excessive proposed licence term of 15 years plus a further 15 year renewal

Privatisation of a public structure

A primary concern is that the proposal effectively privatises an existing public structure. The floating sauna pontoon is proposed to connect directly to the existing public jetty by a gangway rather than constructing its own access infrastructure. While it may be suggested that the public will still be able to access the jetty, the reality is quite different.

A large commercial structure directly adjoining the public jetty, with solid wooden fencing and controlled access, absolutely changes the character and use of the structure.

While people may technically still be able to walk onto the jetty, access to the water from that location and the enjoyment of the lake will be significantly reduced. Views across the lake from the jetty will also be obstructed. People will not be able to access the water from this jetty for swimming, fishing, or simply enjoying the views, as a large floating pontoon with solid fencing and three structures will be in the way.

In practical terms, this proposal results in the privatisation of a public structure and a key lake access point for a private commercial activity.

Public use of the jetty

The northern jetty is frequently used by the community, particularly by children and families.

Many groups such as Fiordland Kindergarten through their Nature Discovery programme and Southern Stars regularly use the lake edge and jetty as part of environmental education activities. Many other local families and children also use the jetty for exploring the lake and interacting with nature.

The Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan includes the objective:

"To foster public appreciation for the Park, facilitate public access to, and recreational use of the area."

This proposal undermines that objective.

Landscape effects

The landscape assessment has concludes that the proposal will have very low landscape effects.

That conclusion is difficult to reconcile with the reality of the proposal.

The floating sauna will be highly visible from all vantage points around Lake Henry. The most impacted location will be the northern jetty itself, which is currently a key viewing point across the lake. The sauna pontoon will sit directly in front of this jetty and will dominate that immediate view. How can it be decided that this will have a low landscape and amenity effect?

This jetty was built for the use and enjoyment of the public, not for it to be taken over by a commercial operation. If the operator was proposing to build their own jetty and walkway in another remote part of the lake, that wasn't highly visible from the existing platforms, then that would be a different story, but that is not the proposal that is being considered here.

The structure will also be clearly visible from the public jetty on the western side of the lake and from walking paths around the lake.

The claim that landscape effects will be very low appears to significantly underestimate the visual prominence of a large floating structure on a relatively small lake. The various landscape assessments and council reports acknowledge that the changing room will be highly visible due to the materials used which are not recessive.

The assessment also suggests that the northern jetty is poorly used. This does not reflect the actually reality of how the jetty is used by locals, families and children.

Did the Landscape architect monitor the site over a period of time, or just visit the site once? It has been very clear from the reaction of the Te Anau/Fiordland community that the jetty is well used, well loved and really valued by the community.

Allowing a floating sauna to directly join this structure would be a large loss of amenity and recreation values for the public.

Scale of proposed activity

The proposal allows for two saunas with up to six users each per session.

With operating hours between 7am and 9pm this could result in up to 14 sessions per day.

This equates to a potential maximum of approximately 168 users per day during the summer.

This represents a significant level of commercial activity for a small lake within a passive recreation reserve.

28 people could be using the facility at any one time, taking into account the customers in the current session and the customers in the next session waiting to go in.

As this represents the summer period only it’s a even larger as an all year round activity

Parking and transport

The transport assessment does suggest that approximately ten parking spaces may be required. However if users were to book individually for shared sessions and arrive separately in vehicles, parking demand could/would be significantly higher. There may also be overlap between sessions, meaning customers from one session remain parked while the next group arrives.

If twelve people arrive separately for one session and another twelve arrive for the following session, it is entirely possible that the available parking could be filled.

Is this acceptable to the Council?

I would happen to suggest this is not acceptable to the Te Anau Community and users of Ivon Wilson Park, who may be displaced by the parking requirements for this proposal, with very little to any gain to the public.

The proposal does suggest visitors will walk or cycle, the reality is that most users will likely drive.

At present there is no dedicated bicycle parking facilities within Ivon Wilson Park.

Parking impacts therefore need to be seriously considered to ensure that existing park users are not displaced at all.

Public Amenities

The proposal as it stands includes a contribution of $1,000 per year toward cleaning public toilets. As the potential for up to 168 sauna users per day, this contribution is utterly completely inadequate.

If the operator is not providing their own toilet facilities, then they should be responsible for the full cost of servicing the public toilets generated by their business.

A realistic servicing regime would likely require cleaning twice daily during peak periods.

Based on typical cleaning costs this could easily amount to approximately $25,000 per year. A $1,000 annual contribution is therefore not reasonable at all.

Fireplaces and wood-fired saunas

The proposal includes wood-fired saunas and also references a fireplace on the dock beside the changing room.

Introducing both wood-fired saunas and a fire pit in this location raises concerns about smoke, smell, and consistency with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan.

Wood fires in this prominent lake-edge location are completely inconsistent with the Ivon Wilson Park management plan and inappropriate for a passive recreation reserve.

The Ivon Wilson Park management plan very clearly states, on page 17:

"to prohibit the lighting of fires in the Park other than in barbeques that may be provided by the Council"

This is very strong and unequivocal wording, with no room for diversions from this policy. So its hard to see how the Council could consider the floating sauna proposal is consistent with the Ivon Wilson Park Management plan when the basic premise of the sauna is to operate two wood fires to heat the saunas. I notice that an outside fire pit is also proposed by the applicant.

Water Quality

The information on discharges to the lake provided by the applicant and in council reports appear inconsistent. It appears that the applicant intends to take water from lake Henry to wash the sauna and facilities and discharge this to the lake. On page 6 of the notification report it states "The application has confirmed that water taken from Lake Henry will be used to rinse down the sauna. No chemicals will be added to the rinse water." However in other locations in the application/proposal and in Council reports, it states that there will be no discharge to the lake. There is no information on cleaning, or stormwater discharge.

While a resource consent for a discharge of a contaminant to surface water would be required under Environment Southland as a discretionary activity, any discharges to the lake is also relevant to the decision on whether or not to grant the lease, as this is one of the policies in the Ivon Wilson Park management plan. Further information from the application is required to determine what impacts a discharge to surface water would have.

Lease term

The proposed licence term of 15 years with a further 15 year renewal is excessive.

This could allow occupation of part of the reserve for up to 30 years.

In comparison, the Fiordland Community Garden in Memorial Park, a well-loved community initiative run by a registered charity and providing clear public benefit, receives only a five-year Licence to Occupy, even upon it's recent renewal recently the council would not consider a longer term.

It is difficult to understand why a community initiative providing a public service receives only a short-term licence while a private commercial activity is proposed to receive a licence of up to 30 years.

Management plan review

The Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan was adopted in 2008 and states that it should be reviewed at ten-year intervals. A full review should therefore have occurred around 2018.

However, the plan has not been reviewed since its adoption.

The Council is currently undertaking a review of the district-wide Reserve Management Plan

(2003), which will likely inform the future management of individual reserves, including Ivon Wilson Park.

Granting a long-term commercial Licence to Occupy of 15 + 15 years before the relevant management planning framework has been updated risks pre-empting the outcome of that process and limiting the ability of the community to shape the future management of the park.

It seems therefore inappropriate to grant a long-term commercial licence over part of the park while this wider reserve management review process is underway.

Community projects within the park are currently being paused while Council determines the future direction of the park through the management planning process.

It seems inconsistent that community planting projects which align with the management plan must wait for the outcome of the management planning process, while a commercial development and long-term occupation of the reserve which is at odds with the Management Plan is being progressed.

Community Board letter

The Fiordland Community Board letter of support states that the sauna should be out of line of sight of the main viewing platform.

However the proposal clearly shows that the floating sauna pontoon will be directly adjacent to the platform and therefore clearly visible from it.

This appears inconsistent with the condition set out in the Community Board letter.

Council should clarify whether the proposal is consistent with the basis on which the Community Board originally provided support.

Financial return

The proposed licence fee appears to be approximately $2,391 per year plus GST, along with the $1,000 contribution toward toilet cleaning.

For a commercial operation occupying part of a public reserve and relying on public infrastructure, this appears extremely low.

If commercial activities are permitted on public reserve land, the financial return to the public should be meaningful and proportionate to the private benefit being derived.

Statutory Framework – Reserves Act and Management Plan

Ivon Wilson Park is classified as a recreation reserve and is therefore subject to the Reserves Act 1977. Under section 41(11) of the Reserves Act, the administering body must comply with the management plan for the reserve when exercising its powers and functions. Section 54 of the Act also provides that a territorial authority may grant a lease or licence over a recreation reserve where there is an approved management plan and where the proposed lease or licence is in conformity with, and contemplated by, that management plan.

The Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan therefore provides the key policy framework for assessing whether a Licence to Occupy is appropriate.

As demonstrated in the assessment contained in this submission, and in the detailed assessment against the Management plan below, the floating sauna proposal appears inconsistent with numerous objectives and policies of the management plan, including those relating to:

- Maintaining Lake Henry and the surrounding bog in as natural a state as possible
- Facilitating public access to, and recreational use of, the park
- Maintaining scenic values
- Restricting the number of buildings and structures within the reserve
- Prohibiting fires within the park (other than Council-provided barbeques)
- Ensuring leases are in the public interest and consistent with the management plan.

The Southland District Council has stated that the proposal does not comply with the management plan, and for this reason the applicant applied for a land use consent.

The applicant's own assessment against the management plan, on page 78 of the full application to SDC, outlines a number of policies that aren't adhered to.

When considered collectively, these conflicts raise a significant question as to whether the proposed Licence to Occupy can reasonably be considered to be "in conformity with and contemplated by" the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan, as required under the Reserves Act.

In addition, meaningful public consultation is an important part of the reserve management framework. In this case, the consultation undertaken by the Council appears inadequate. The public notice for the Licence to Occupy provided only the draft licence document, without any supporting information describing the proposal itself, its scale, or its potential effects.

Members of the public have had to locate the application documents themselves in order to understand what is being proposed and to make informed submissions. This falls short of the level of transparency and public engagement that would normally be expected for a proposal involving long-term commercial occupation of a public reserve.

Given the apparent inconsistencies with the management plan, and the importance of the reserve to the local community, it is difficult to see how the Council could reasonably form the view that the proposed licence meets the requirements of the Reserves Act.

For the reasons outlined above, I request that the proposed Licence to Occupy be declined.

If council is believes it still should approve the proposal, I would like request that:

- No licence be granted until the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan review is completed
- That the licence term be substantially reduced to five years or less
- That the operator provides independent access infrastructure rather than relying on the existing public jetty

- That the operator locates the floating sauna in a location away from the existing public jetties, and in a way that does not adversely affect views of the aurora or the enjoyment of the public
- The operator is provide their own toilet facilities or fully fund the public toilet servicing
- The operator funds the additional parking facilities
- The financial terms of the licence be reconsidered to provide a fair public return.

Ivon Wilson Park is a shared public space. Decisions about its future should prioritise community access and environmental values over the commercial interests of a single operator. I ask that you protect the long-term public character of the park and decline this proposal.

Assessment of the proposal against Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan 2008

Vision

4a. Vision - "To build on Ivon Wilson's dream of creating a parkscape of trees that attracts people and wildlife."

Intent of the vision - The vision emphasises a park characterised by natural landscape, trees, wildlife habitat, and public enjoyment of a natural environment. The park is intended to attract people because of its natural character rather than built structures or commercial activities.

Assessment of proposal - The floating sauna introduces a commercial structure directly onto Lake Henry and attached to an existing public jetty. Rather than reinforcing the park's natural "parkscape of trees", it introduces a prominent built structure and associated commercial activity into one of the park's most visible locations.

Inconsistent

Vision - "With Lake Henry as it's focal point, to further develop the park in a manner that makes it locally and regionally recognised for its exceptional interest and enjoyment to all visitors."

Intent of the vision - Lake Henry is intended to remain the central feature of the park and development should enhance public enjoyment of the lake for all visitors.

Assessment of proposal - The proposal would place a private commercial facility directly on the lake and attached to a public jetty. While the lake remains physically present, the use of this key access point becomes dominated by a private activity. Public enjoyment of the lake from the jetty would be significantly reduced, particularly access to the water and views.

Inconsistent

4b. Management Objectives –

(i) “To promote and facilitate multiple use of the park based on identifiable recreation activities compatible with the character and sustainability of the resource.”

What the objective requires - The park should support a range of recreational activities that are compatible with the character of the park and sustainable over time.

Assessment of proposal - The proposal introduces a private commercial sauna facility directly attached and abutting an existing public jetty. This effectively prioritises a single commercial activity over other recreational uses of the jetty and surrounding lake edge. Instead of facilitating multiple compatible recreational uses, the proposal risks displacing existing public recreation such as swimming, viewing the lake, children's nature activities and informal recreation from this location.

Inconsistent

(ii) “To enhance and maintain the scenic values and attractions of Ivon Wilson Park.”

What the objective requires - The scenic character of the park and lake should be protected and enhanced. Development should not detract from the park's landscape values.

Assessment of proposal - The floating sauna structure will be clearly visible from multiple vantage points around Lake Henry, particularly from the northern jetty where it will sit immediately adjacent to and abutting the existing platform. It will be clearly visible from the southern jetty which is frequently used. The structure will dominate the view from these locations and alter the open character of the lake edge. The conclusion from the Landscape Architect and Council Planners that landscape effects will be" very low" appears inconsistent with the scale and prominence of the structure.

Inconsistent

(iii) “To as far as possible maintain Lake Henry and surrounding bog in its natural state.”

What the objective requires - The lake and surrounding natural environment should be protected from development or activities that compromise its natural character.

Assessment of proposal - The proposal introduces a floating pontoon structure with two wood-fired saunas, a changing room, fencing and regular commercial activity directly on Lake Henry. This represents a significant built structure and intensification of activity on the lake. It is difficult to reconcile this with the objective of maintaining the lake and surrounding bog in "as natural a state as possible".

Inconsistent

(iv) “To foster public appreciation for the park, facilitate public access to, and recreational use of the area.”

What the objective requires - The park should remain accessible and enjoyable for the public, and development should encourage rather than restrict public use.

Assessment of proposal - The floating sauna pontoon is proposed to be connected directly to the existing northern jetty with a gangway and enclosed by fencing. It will be abutting the northern jetty in a way that prevents any access to or views of the lake from that Jetty. While people may technically still be able to walk onto the jetty, access to the water from this location will be blocked and views from the jetty significantly altered. The jetty effectively becomes the entry point to a private commercial facility rather than a public recreation structure. This substantially reduces the public utility and enjoyment of that location.

Inconsistent

Administration

Policy - (i) “To administer, manage and control the reserve in accordance with the Reserves Act 1977, the District Plan, and the Reserves and Open Spaces – Policy and Guidelines.”

Policy Intent - The reserve must be managed consistently with statutory requirements including the Reserves Act and management policies.

Assessment - Under the Reserves Act, licences must be consistent with the reserve management plan. As demonstrated in this assessment, the proposal conflicts with several objectives and policies of the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan.

Inconsistent

(iii) “To continue to administer the reserve at a level consistent with the classification of District Reserve under the Reserves and Open Spaces Policy and Guidelines.”

Policy Intent - The reserve should be managed according to the purpose of a district recreation reserve, primarily for public recreation and enjoyment. It has values that benefit the whole district, containing significant ecological, amenity or scenic values.

Assessment - A commercial sauna facility attached to and blocking a public jetty prioritises private commercial activity over general public recreation and changes the character of this part of the reserve.

Inconsistent

Management Plan Review and Amendment

Policy - "To review this management plan as necessary with complete reviews made at 10 year intervals."

Policy Intent - The policy recognises that reserve management plans need to be kept current so that park management reflects community expectations and changing circumstances. Regular review ensures that major decisions about the park are based on up-to-date policy direction.

Assessment - The Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan was adopted in 2008, and the policy states that complete reviews should occur at 10-year intervals. A full review should therefore have occurred around 2018, but the plan has not been reviewed since adoption.

The Council is currently undertaking a review of the district-wide Reserve Management Plan (2003), which will likely inform the future management of reserves including Ivon Wilson Park. Granting a long-term commercial Licence to Occupy of 15 + 15 years before the relevant management plans have been updated risks pre-empting the outcome of that process and limiting the ability of the community to shape the future management of the park.

Inconsistent with intent of policy

Water Quality

Policy - *"*To manage the park in such a manner as not to impact negatively on Lake Henry water quality."

Policy Intent - Activities should not negatively affect the water quality of Lake Henry.

Assessment - The proposal introduces regular commercial swimming/cold plunge activity and wood-fired heating directly on the lake. The application provides limited detailed assessment of potential water quality impacts. Given the scale of activity proposed, potential effects on water quality remain uncertain. The applicant intends to take water from Lake Henry for cleaning the sauna, and discharging this directly back to the lake. While the water take looks like a permitted activity (up to 2000L/day), the discharge will have contaminants in it (that is the purpose of "cleaning"), therefore it would need a discharge consent from Environment Southland under Rule 5 of the Water and Land Plan, "Discharge of contaminants to surface water bodies" - as a discretionary activity. A discharge of the wash water, regardless of whether detergent is used or not, could adversely impact water in Lake Henry.

Potentially inconsistent

Fires

*Policy "(*i) To prohibit the lighting of fires in the park other than in barbeques that may be provided by the council."

Policy intent - Fires are generally prohibited in the park except in designated council facilities.

Assessment - The proposal includes two wood fires inside the saunas, and reference to a fireplace on the pontoon beside the changing room. I note that in the draft LTO it restricts a firepit, and it looks like the applicant may be withdrawing the proposal for the outside firepit on the pontoon. The wood fires in the sauna are not council-provided barbeques and therefore are inconsistent with this policy. I note the wording in this policy is very strong, using the word "prohibit" it is very clear that no other fires are permitted under the IWPMP. For this reason, it's hard to see how the Council could consider issuing a LTO to the applicant.

Inconsistent

ii) To take every reasonable precaution to prevent the occurrence of fire in the management area."

Policy Intent – Fire risk should be minimised

Assessment - Introducing wood-fired saunas and potentially a fireplace increases fire risk within the park environment and is inconsistent with the precautionary approach outlined in the policy.

Inconsistent

Recreational Use/ Facilities

*Policy "(*i) To maintain and improve the quality of facilities to encourage increased use of the park."

Policy Intent – Facilities should support and enhance public use of the park

Assessment - The floating sauna does not function as a public facility. It is a private commercial activity with restricted access, and its placement reduces the usefulness of the existing public jetty.

Inconsistent

*Policy (*ii) To allow development that is appropriate for and generally acceptable for a reserve of its nature – additional projects will be assessed on a case by case basis."

Policy Intent – Development must be appropriate to the character of the reserve

Assessment - A commercial sauna facility with potentially up to 168 users per day introduces a level of commercial activity that appears inconsistent with the passive recreation character of Lake Henry.

Inconsistent

Policy – (iii) To keep the number of structures on the reserve to a minimum."

Policy Intent – Built development should be limited to protect the parks character.

Assessment – The proposal introduces multiple structures including two saunas, a changing room and pontoon infrastructure on the lake. The explanation states that Ivon Wilson Park offers visitors peace and tranquillity, and its important that any developments recognise and complement these. It's possible that the level of activity at the floating sauna would disrupt the peace and tranquillity on Lake Henry.

Inconsistent

Leases and Temporary Use

Policy "(ii) To grant leases when they are considered to be in the public interest and in accordance with the reserve's purpose, objectives and policy."

Policy intent - Leases should clearly benefit the public and align with the management plan.

Explanation from the plan: "As a general rule the rights of the public take priority over the requirements of a prospective lessee."

Assessment - The proposal allows a private commercial operator to occupy part of the lake and utilise a public jetty for access for up to 30 years. The loss of public amenity and access appears disproportionate to the benefit to the public. The explanation states that the rights of the public should take priority over that of a prospective leasee. The floating sauna proposal appears to reverse this principle by prioritising the needs of a commercial lessee over the public's ability to use and enjoy the northern jetty and lake access point.

Inconsistent

*Policy -(*iv) To require all leases to act in accordance with this management plan."

Policy Intent – Any lease must comply with the management plan.

Assessment - As identified above, the proposal conflicts with multiple objectives and policies in the management plan, so it is not possible for the lease for the sauna to act in accordance with the management plan.

Inconsistent

Buildings and Structures

*Policy (*ii) " When upgrading existing or constructing new structures and buildings to use materials and colours that are in harmony with the environment."

Policy intent - Structures and buildings should use materials and colours that blend with the surrounding natural environment and minimise visual impact.

Assessment - The changing room is proposed to be constructed of Dampalon, a semi-opaque polycarbonate material, which will appear white. This material and colour are unlikely to blend with the surrounding natural environment of the lake and park. In addition, the floating sauna pontoon will be enclosed by a solid hardwood fence, which will block views from the northern viewing platform and introduce a visually dominant built element on the lake edge. These features do not appear to be in harmony with the surrounding environment.

Inconsistent

*Policy (*iii) To restrict the number of buildings, utilities and structures to a level which facilitates the safe and appropriate use of the reserve."

Policy Intent -Structures should only be provided where necessary to enable safe and appropriate public use of the reserve.

Assessment - The proposal introduces multiple new structures on Lake Henry, including two saunas, a changing room, fencing and pontoon infrastructure. The explanation to the policy states that buildings and structures are permitted when they facilitate the public's enjoyment of the reserve and activities. In this case the floating sauna is a private commercial facility with restricted access, enclosed by fencing, and therefore does not facilitate general public use or enjoyment of the reserve.

In addition to introducing several new structures onto Lake Henry, the proposal also alters the function of an existing public structure — the northern jetty — by effectively converting it into the access point for a private commercial facility.

Inconsistent

Development

*Policy -(*i) To undertake such development as is required to achieve the objectives, and implement the policies, contained in this management plan."

Policy Intent - Development should help achieve the objectives of the plan.

Assessment - The proposal conflicts with multiple objectives and policies of the management plan, including those relating to maintaining Lake Henry in its natural state, facilitating public access and recreational use, protecting scenic values, restricting fires, and keeping structures within the reserve to a minimum.

Inconsistent

Policy - (ii) Developments may range from landscaping to sports/recreation facilities, buildings, lighting and carparking.

Each development project will be assessed on its effect on the environment, existing activities, fauna, flora or the unique feature of the reserve.

Policy intent - The plan recognises that development may occur within the park, but each proposal must be assessed for its environmental effects and its impact on existing uses and the unique features of the reserve.

Assessment - The floating sauna proposal would introduce a prominent built structure directly onto Lake Henry, the central feature of the park. The proposal would also alter the use of the northern jetty, which is currently used by the public for viewing the lake and accessing the water. The structure may also affect existing recreational use of the jetty and lake edge. Given these effects on the lake environment, existing recreational activities, and the unique feature of Lake Henry itself, the proposal does not appear to satisfy the policy requirement that development be carefully assessed and compatible with these values.

Inconsistent

Development Proposals – Lake Henry

Explanation - (1) Lake Henry and surrounding bog vegetation as central point.

This area has important native qualities that need to be maintained. Any future development in this area would need to be sensitive to the natural environment. Tracks and jetty like structures to facilitate access and fishing would be a typical type of development."

Policy Intent - Development near Lake Henry should be minimal and focused on facilitating public access and fishing.

Assessment - The floating sauna is not a structure facilitating public access or fishing. Instead it is a private commercial facility occupying part of the lake and restricting use of the existing jetty, and as such it prevents public access to the lake and fishing in the lake from that jetty.

Inconsistent

[redacted]

From: Glenys Needs [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2026 10:44 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Re: Intention to grant licence to occupy

This message is from an external sender

Kia ora

I am very disappointed and disagree with the council's intention to grant a license to occupy part of Ivon Wilson Park.
Ivon Wilson park is a great destination on windy or damp days as it offers shelter from the regional winds that can make life trying.
It is a wonderfully peaceful, commerce-free zone. This proposal would destroy that serenity.
The proposed development is completely inappropriate and unacceptable for a reserve of this nature, thus contravening the management plan.
Any facilities that are developed should benefit the residents of Te Anau region, not the pocket of a single business owner. How does it benefit southland residents to have more tourists, visual pollution and potentially physical pollution in a formerly tranquil environment (suggested to be a junior fishery area)?
Just as motor vehicles are not permitted, the presence of a floating sauna would also diminish the value of the park. While it may increase the use of the park by visitors to the region, as there is already a sauna offering in almost the same area of Te Anau, this proposal offers locals nothing but takes away a lot.
The proposed business should be operated on privately owned land.

Regards
Glenys

From: Megan Cowley <Megan.Cowley@southlanddc.govt.nz> on behalf of Contact Property <ContactProperty@southlanddc.govt.nz>
Sent: Tuesday, March 3, 2026 3:48:27 pm
To: Glenys Needs [redacted]
Subject: RE: Intention to grant licence to occupy

Kia ora Glenys,

Thank you for your email.

Please find attached a copy of the proposed Licence to Occupy document for your information.

No, there is no format you need to follow. We would not wish to limit/restrict your feedback in anyway. If you wish to make a submission, please just write what you want.

Ngā mihi

Megan Cowley
Senior Property Advisor
Southland District Council

From: Glenys Needs [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 3 March 2026 3:13 pm
To: Contact Property <ContactProperty@southlanddc.govt.nz>
Subject: Intention to grant licence to occupy

This message is from an external sender

Kia ora
Is there further information about the proposal to rent out part of Ivon Wilson Park?
Is there a format that a submission should follow?
Thank you
Glenys

Attention: The information contained in this message and/or attachments is intended only for the person or entity to which it is addressed and may contain confidential and/or privileged material. Any review, retransmission, dissemination or other use of, or taking of any action in reliance upon, this information by persons or entities other than the intended recipient is prohibited. If you received this in error, please contact the Southland District Council and delete the material from any system and destroy any copies.
Ph - 0800 732 732 | Email - emailsdc@southlanddc.govt.nz

[redacted]

From: Laura Grigg [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 3 March 2026 3:50 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission: Opposition to the Intention to Grant a Licence to Occupy – Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

Submission: Opposition to the Intention to Grant a Licence to Occupy – Ivon Wilson Park

To: Southland District Council
Re: *Intention to Grant a Licence to Occupy – Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve*

I am writing as a parent of young children, a dog owner, and a long-time user of Ivon Wilson Park to express my strong opposition to the proposal to grant a Licence to Occupy over any part of the reserve.

1. Ivon Wilson Park Holds Deep Personal Meaning for Our Family

Ivon Wilson is not just a park to us—it is woven into our family story.
In 2019, we chose this very reserve as the place to hold our wedding. We chose it because of its peacefulness, its natural beauty, and its sense of openness and tranquillity It. As dog owners we would walk our dogs there most days, have picnics, catch up with friends and enjoy the space

The setting was perfect: quiet, calm, surrounded by nature, and free from commercial structures.
Had there been a floating sauna on the lake at the time, our wedding simply would not have been the same. Its presence would have completely changed the atmosphere and the natural backdrop that made that day so special.

This park is now even more meaningful to us and seeing part of it altered or commercialised would feel like losing a piece of our own personal history.

2. A Safe, Natural Environment for Toddlers Is Irreplaceable

As a parent of toddlers, I rely on Ivon Wilson Park as one of the very few safe, open, natural places where they can explore freely.

- The park's current layout allows me to keep them in sight while giving them space to play and learn independence.
- Any area being occupied, fenced, or repurposed reduces that safety and openness.

Small children are unpredictable, and having consistent, hazard-free areas is essential. The proposal threatens the quality of one of the only environments that genuinely works for families with very young children.

3. A Vital Space for Dog Exercise and Socialisation

Ivon Wilson Park is also crucial for dog owners like our family.

- It provides the space, visibility, and calm environment needed for safe off-lead walking and training.
- Introducing a commercial operation or additional activity alters the dynamics of the park, creating new blind spots, distractions, and potential conflict points.

The park currently functions exceptionally well for dogs and their owners. Reducing or disrupting this space directly impacts a huge portion of its regular daily users.

4. The Recreation Reserve Status Must Be Respected

The reserve was designated for recreation, community use, and natural enjoyment.
Allowing a Licence to Occupy feels like shifting away from those core values.
Once part of the park is allocated for a commercial or exclusive activity, it opens the door for future encroachments.

As a parent, a dog owner, and someone with a deeply personal connection to this place, I worry about the long-term implications of this decision.

5. The Natural, Peaceful Character Is What Makes the Park Special

Families come to Ivon Wilson Park precisely because it is quiet, spacious, and close to nature.

- A floating sauna, along with the associated activity and infrastructure, could disrupt wildlife and diminish the peaceful atmosphere.
- Parents of young children often rely on calm, low-stimulus environments, and this proposal would alter that character permanently.

6. No Clear Public Benefit to Offset the Loss

The proposal does not demonstrate meaningful public benefit.

- The space would become less accessible.
- The reserve's natural character would be compromised.
- Everyday users—families, dog walkers, locals, playgroups, kindy, frisbee golfers—would bear the impact while gaining nothing in return. (the loos are functional already)

Conclusion

For all these reasons—practical, emotional, and personal—I strongly oppose granting a Licence to Occupy over any part of Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve.
This park is uniquely important to my family. It is where our children play, where our dog exercises, and where we celebrated our wedding and subsequent anniversaries.

I ask the Council to protect the reserve's recreational purpose and its natural beauty for current and future generations.

Kind regards,
A concerned parent, dog owner, and long-time user of Ivon Wilson Park. Please note, I am aware the last photo is in a different area of Ivon Wilson Park, but I have added to show how much our dog loves the park













[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 3 March 2026 4:25 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission Opposing Licence to Occupy - Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve

This message is from an external sender

Kia Ora,

I am writing to oppose the proposed Licence to Occupy over part of Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Park.

I do not wish to be heard in support of this submission.

Ivon Wilson Park is classified as a Recreation Reserve under the Reserves Act 1977. The Act provides that recreation reserves are to be managed for the recreation and enjoyment of the public while protecting the natural environment and maintaining public access.

While the proposed commercial activity may be recreational in nature, it would operate as a private commercial enterprise within a public reserve. It would create an exclusive, privately controlled space on Lake Henry, which is currently used for informal, shared community recreation including walking, picnicking, and children's fishing.

In my view, granting this licence would shift part of the reserve from open and broadly accessible public use toward restricted, fee-based use. I am concerned that this does not align with the Act's emphasis on providing for the recreation and enjoyment of the public at large while maintaining the open character and accessibility of the reserve.

I also wish to note concern regarding the limited awareness within the community about this proposal. Many local users of Ivon Wilson Park appear to have only recently become aware of the proposal. Given the long term implications for a valued public reserve, earlier and more proactive community engagement would have been appropriate.

For those reasons, I respectfully request that Council decline the proposed Licence to Occupy.

Nga mihi,

Hayden Quinn

[redacted]

From: Katherine Morrow [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 3 March 2026 9:45 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission - Opposition to the intention to Grant a Licence to Occupy - Ivon Wilson Recreational Reserve

This message is from an external sender

To the Southern District Council,

I have attached my submission in Opposition to Grant a Licence to Occupy - Ivon Wilson Recreational Reserve

Kind regards,
Katherine Morrow



Submission- Opposition to the intention to Grant a Licence to Occupy - Ivon Wilson Recreational Reserve.pdf

Submission: Opposition to the intention to Grant a Licence to Occupy - Ivon Wilson Recreational Reserve

To: Southland District Council

Re: Intention to Grant a Licence to Occupy – Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve

I am writing as a parent of young children and a dog owner, as well as a long time user of Ivon Wilson Park, to express my strong opposition to the proposal to grant a Licence to Occupy over any park of the reserve.

Ivon Wilson should be a place for recreational use for all in our community – not for a sole person to monetise a section with a recreational activity. The park is a reserve built with the intention for all in our community to enjoy, a safe place for our four legged family (dogs) to be off leash while accompanying family walks, a safe and calm place for our young tamariki to explore and learn, as well as a tranquil place many have held weddings or milestone photo's precisely where the saunas are being proposed.

The reserve is irreplaceable as a safe natural environment I know many rely on for our young tamariki to explore and develop. It gives our young ones an open, natural landscape which they can explore and learn. The layout of the park currently means we as a family can choose a unique and different path every time and not have to worry we might stumble upon commercial use. Small tamariki are unpredictable, and having this commercially hazard free space is essential for many young families in our area. Especially with how Te Anau is growing and the amount of young family's coming to the area, evident with 65 new primary students starting the beginning of this year alone – no including over 20 who will be starting throughout the year. Thus allowing a company or sole individual commercial use of any section of the reserve limits their safe exploring with family and takes away from the natural landscape of Ivon Wilson which was created for our community and its future residents.

As a vital open space for Dog exercise and socialisation – Ivon Wilson Park has and will be in the future, a vital and crucial space for dog owners, like our family. It provides a space with visibility, a calm environment, and is large enough for safe off lead walking and training. I have personally utilized Henry Lake for teaching our dog to swim, and retrieve (sticks), which the use of a commercial site would inhibit. Lake Te Anau being so immense, having a smaller safer alternative means training our then puppy at Lake Henry was by far safer than the unpredictable weather condition on Lake Te Anau. The introduction of a commercial operation or additional activity that alters the dynamic of the reserve creates safety hazards for us off lead dog owners which we do not have an alternative space to use instead.

Our family has strong ties to this reserve, and its natural and open tranquillity. That is why we chose to have our wedding photos directly at the wharf the saunas are proposed to be by. Had there been a floating sauna at the time of our event, choosing the reserve would not have had the same quiet and calm quality we all love. This reserve has been for many, and should be for many after us, a place for our community to create memories in a safe and

accessible natural environment without the addition of commercial structures prohibiting all of the community from enjoying it.

The Recreation Reserve Status must be respected – the reserve was designated for recreational use for the community and natural environment, not for commercial entities to benefit from using the reserve for their own recreational use. The natural and peaceful character is what makes the reserve special. Families in the community come to Ivon Wilson precisely because it is spacious, close to nature and quiet while also being safe. By adding commercial permanent structures the reserve is no longer any of those qualities for our community to utilise.

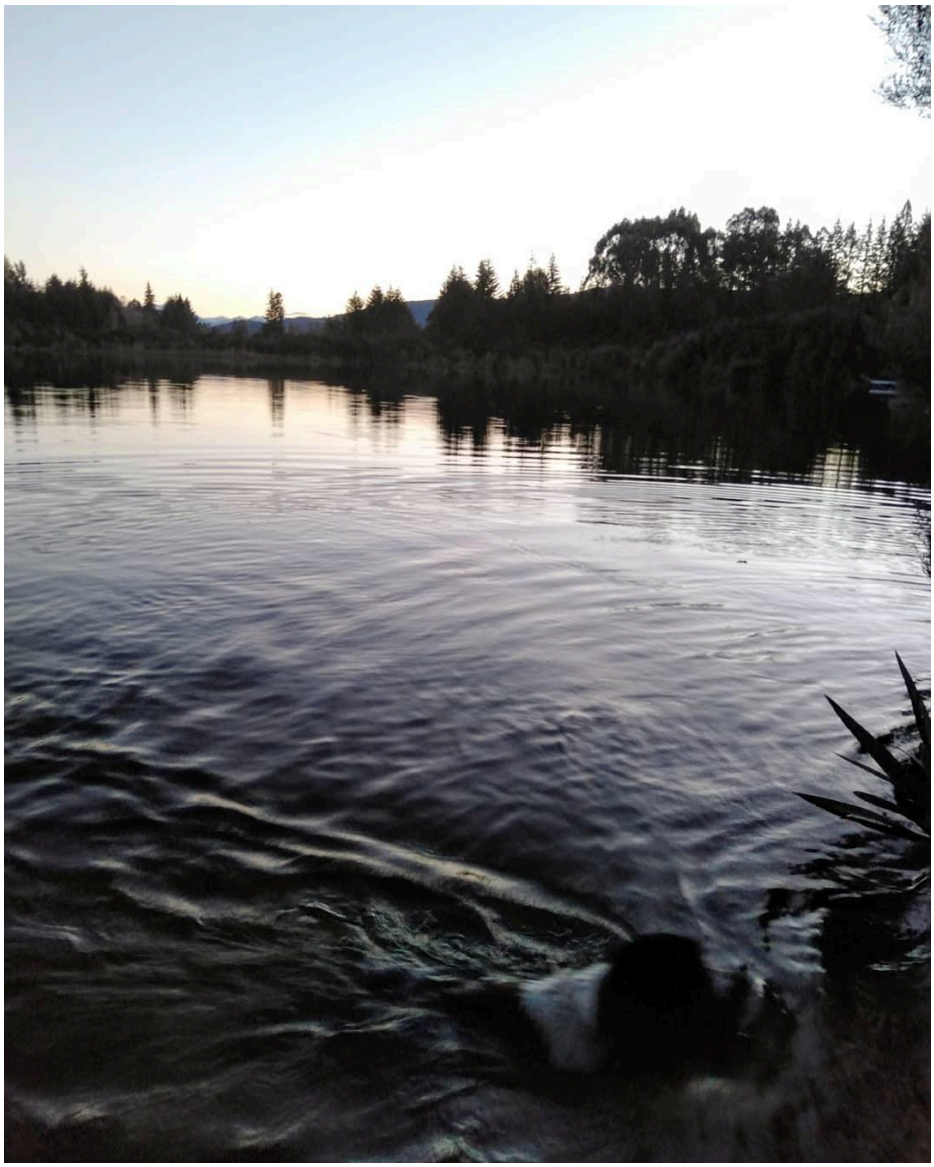
There is no clear public benefit that would offset the loss of even a section of our reserve for commercial use. The space would be less accessible to the community; the reserve's natural character would be compromised. And the everyday users such as families, dog walkers, other locals, would be bearing the impact while not gaining anything in return.

For all of my reasons above, be that practical, emotional and personal, I strongly oppose the granting of a License to Occupy over any part of Ivon Wilson Recreational Reserve. This reserve is uniquely important to many in our community, not just my family. It is a place our tamariki can learn and play, a safe place for our dogs to exercise, where many have married, engaged or have had milestones celebrated at. Thus I ask the council to protect the reserve’s recreational purpose for our community and its natural beauty for our current and future generations.

Sincerely a long time user, parent and dog owner who loves Ivon Wilson as it is, a space for all in our community to utilise.

I have attached photos of our various uses in Ivon Wilson around the proposed commercial use area, which would not be possible in the future if this submission is approved.





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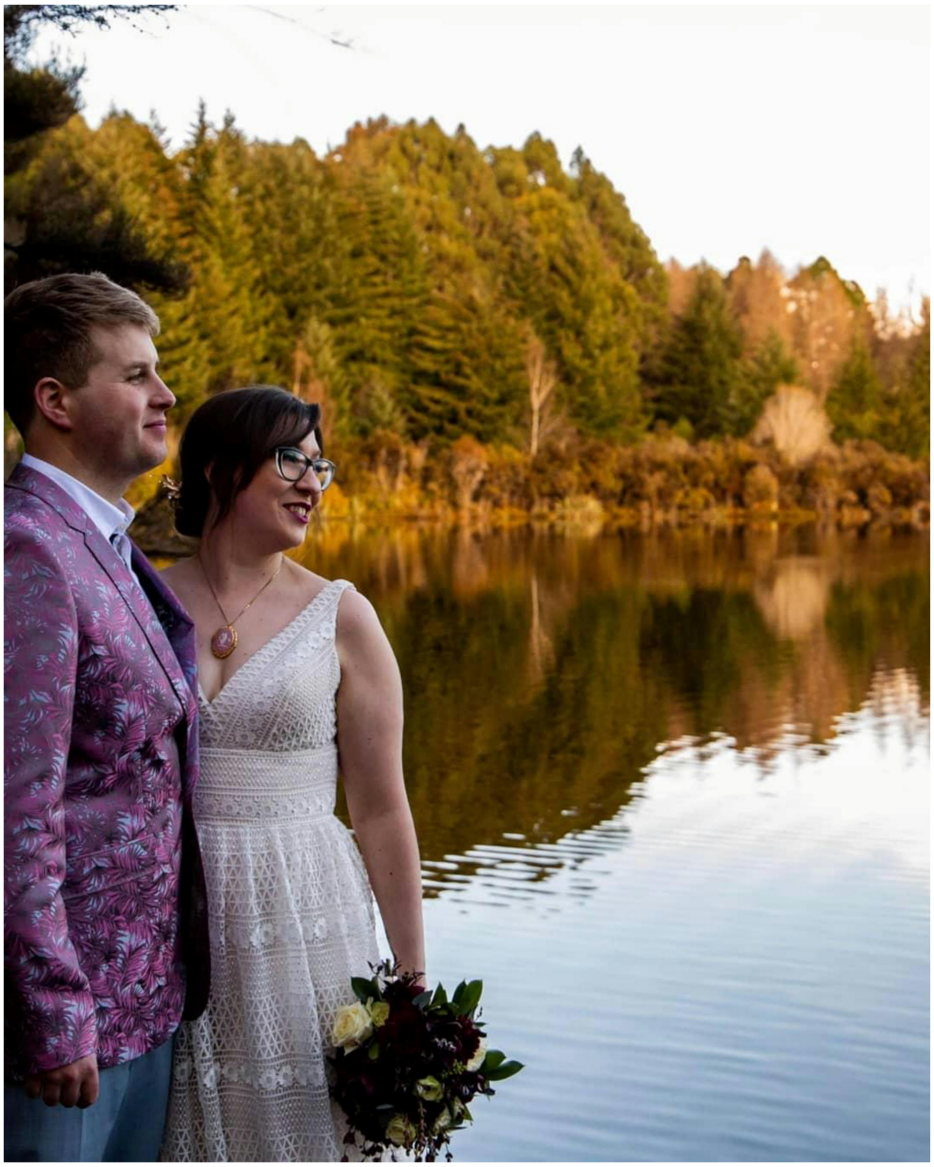

[redacted]

From: Les Ladbrook [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 4 March 2026 9:53 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Ivon Wilson recreation reserve

This message is from an external sender

Dear Council,

I think to allow someone to use an infrastructure paid for by council funds which come from public rates is a bad decision.

I would like to bring to your attention, the reason why you should "not" allow this.

There are a very large number of overseas tourists add/include Southland to their holiday plans to travel south to see or capture the Southern Lights (Aurora Australis)

This platform is used for photographing the Aurora due to it view south and being in a dark pollution free area.

These tourists provide a huge money spinner not only for accommodation, and food outlets in the Te Anau area but for the whole of Southland.

There are currently 193k members on the Aurora Australis (NZ) Facebook page and growing all the time.

Here is an example of the questions we get on a regular basis, received this morning.
[*Hi, new here. I am in the midst of planning a trip to New Zealand to see the southern lights. Can anyone help with a route that I can take to catch those -*

Daryl Wong]

I urge you to seriously consider this place as being very special to a large number of people for night photography including tourists. That we should not loose our precious night sky areas. Any commercial venture should build their own jetty and leave this one alone for public enjoyment. The other aspect of any commercial venture/business any in Southland should also be allowed only if it does not increase light pollution in the area and all lights have downward facing light that does not escape upwards (like street lights).
Enjoyment of our night sky should be preserved at all costs otherwise we will never get it back.

Thank you
regards
Les Ladbrook

[redacted]

From: Ann Campbell [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 4 March 2026 10:37 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Intention to grant licence to occupy

This message is from an external sender

NEVER!!
This is a public park not for sale.
A small lake it may be but it is one of the few places children can go fishing. This park is used by many locals including the kindergarten, day care and schools.
Go find a pond somewhere else and leave our park alone!
Ann Campbell
Sent from my iPhone

[redacted]

From: Ian Griffin [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 4 March 2026 12:51 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission in Objection

This message is from an external sender

SUBMISSION IN OBJECTION
Proposed Licence to Occupy – Floating Sauna Pontoon
Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau

To: Southland District Council

I wish to lodge a formal objection to the proposed Licence to Occupy for the installation and operation of a floating sauna pontoon within Lake Henry at Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau. While not local, I am passionate about preserving and interpreting the wonder of the southern night sky.

My objection is not directed at the proponents personally, nor at the concept of a sauna facility in principle. Rather, my concern relates to the appropriateness of locating this activity within this particular reserve environment, and the potential adverse effects on the landscape, amenity values, and night-sky qualities of this site.

1. Context of the reserve and the statutory framework

The proposal involves granting a Licence to Occupy over part of Ivon Wilson Park under the provisions of the Reserves Act 1977.

Under the Act, the administering body must ensure that any licence or concession is consistent with the purpose of the reserve and does not compromise the amenity, natural, scenic, and recreational values for which the reserve is held.

Public reserves exist primarily for the public's benefit and enjoyment. Commercial activities may be permitted where they support that purpose, but they must not undermine the character or amenity of the reserve environment.

In this case, the proposal would introduce a commercial floating structure containing two saunas and a changing room, mounted on a pontoon approximately 10.2 metres by 7.7 metres.

This represents a long-term commercial occupation of part of the lake within the reserve

2. Effects on landscape and visual amenity

Residents and visitors widely value Ivon Wilson Park for its tranquil character and open landscape qualities. The lake edge and viewing platforms provide unobstructed views across the water toward the southern sky and the surrounding mountain landscape.

The installation of a floating pontoon structure within the lake would introduce a permanent built element into what is currently an open and largely natural visual environment.

The scale and commercial nature of the proposed structure have the potential to alter the character of this part of the reserve, transforming it from a passive recreational landscape into a location dominated by a private commercial activity.

Given that the structure would sit within the lake's open water, it would likely be a visually prominent element in the landscape.

The protection of landscape and visual amenity is a fundamental consideration for reserve land and should carry significant weight in the assessment of this proposal.

3. Night-sky values and aurora viewing

An important aspect of amenity associated with this location is its value as a night-sky viewing site.

The southern outlook across Lake Henry offers a particularly clear, unobstructed view of the horizon. This makes it one of the more accessible locations in Te Anau for observing the southern night sky and natural phenomena such as the Aurora Australis.

Auroral displays are an internationally recognised natural phenomenon and are increasingly appreciated by visitors to southern New Zealand. Locations with unobstructed southern horizons, minimal artificial lighting, and accessible public viewing areas are relatively rare and therefore particularly valuable.

The Lake Henry shoreline currently provides these qualities.

The introduction of a commercial sauna facility operating in the evening increases the likelihood of artificial lighting, with associated safety, operational, and visitor-use considerations.

Even relatively low levels of artificial light can significantly affect dark adaptation and reduce the visibility of faint astronomical phenomena such as aurora and the Milky Way.

The proposal documentation does not appear to specify the lighting design, operating hours, or measures to control light spill. In the absence of this information, it is difficult to properly assess the potential effects of the activity on night-sky values.

4. Expert perspective on night-sky effects

As an astronomer with long-standing professional involvement in public astronomy and night-sky observation, I am particularly conscious of the importance of preserving locations that retain naturally dark conditions.

From an astronomical perspective, the visibility of auroral displays and faint celestial features depends strongly on maintaining low levels of artificial light in the surrounding environment. Even small sources of poorly shielded lighting can significantly degrade night-sky visibility by increasing sky glow and reducing contrast.

Locations with clear southern horizons and minimal lighting are therefore particularly valuable for observing the Aurora Australis. The Lake Henry shoreline currently provides one of the more accessible such viewing locations in Te Anau.

Introducing new lighting into this environment, particularly over water where reflections amplify visual effects, has the potential to noticeably degrade the quality of the night-sky experience available to the public.

5. Dark-sky tourism and regional value

The wider Fiordland region is internationally recognised for its natural landscapes and pristine environmental qualities, including its exceptionally night skies.

In recent years, dark-sky tourism has emerged as a growing component of the visitor experience in southern New Zealand, with increasing interest in stargazing and aurora observation.

Accessible public locations that offer clear southern horizons and minimal artificial lighting contribute to this experience. Ivon Wilson Park, with its open southern outlook across Lake Henry, is one such location.

Introducing permanent lighting and commercial activity into a site that currently offers excellent night-sky viewing conditions risks undermining this natural asset.

In this context, the preservation of dark-sky conditions should be recognised as a legitimate environmental and recreational value when considering proposals that may introduce additional lighting.

6. Appropriateness of this location for the activity

The proposed activity — a sauna experience combined with cold-water immersion — is not inherently dependent on this specific site.

Such facilities could operate successfully at several locations around the Te Anau area without occupying a prominent public viewpoint or affecting night-sky viewing.

The key question, therefore, becomes not whether the activity is acceptable in general, but whether this specific location within a public reserve is the most appropriate location for it.

Given the site's recreational and night-sky qualities, there is a strong argument that the site should remain focused on passive recreation and scenic enjoyment rather than on permanent commercial infrastructure.

7. Public interest and licence fee

The proposed licence fee of $2,391.30 plus GST per annum appears modest given that it enables a commercial tourism activity to operate on public reserve land.

The licence is proposed for a term of 15 years with a further 15-year renewal option, potentially allowing occupation of the site for up to 30 years.

Where public reserve land is used for commercial purposes, it is important that the arrangement clearly serves the public interest and that the return to the community reflects the site's value.

It is not clear from the proposal that this threshold has been met.

Conclusion

While the proposed sauna facility may be a worthwhile recreational business in principle, the Lake Henry shoreline within Ivon Wilson Park may not be an appropriate location for such a development.

The proposal raises legitimate concerns regarding:

- effects on landscape and visual amenity
- potential introduction of artificial lighting affecting night-sky values
- the suitability of a commercial installation within a valued public reserve environment
- the long-term occupation of the site for relatively modest public return

For these reasons, I respectfully ask that the Council carefully consider whether the proposed licence is consistent with the purpose and values of the reserve and whether alternative locations could better accommodate the activity without compromising the amenity and environmental qualities of this site.

WITHOUT PREJUDICE – RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS IF THE PROPOSAL PROCEEDS

Without prejudice to the objection outlined above, if the Council is nevertheless minded to grant the proposed Licence to Occupy, I respectfully request that the following matters be addressed through explicit conditions to minimise adverse effects on the reserve environment.

Lighting controls: All lighting associated with the facility should comply with dark-sky principles, including fully shielded downward-facing lighting, minimal light spill, warm-colour-temperature lighting, and automatic timers to ensure lighting is extinguished when the facility is not in use.

Night-time operations: Consideration should be given to restricting operating hours after dark, particularly during winter months when auroral activity is most visible.

Design and visual impact: Structures should minimise visual intrusion through low-profile design, subdued colours, and minimal signage.

Review of the licence fee and public benefit: Council may wish to review whether the proposed licence fee appropriately reflects the commercial value of long-term occupation of a prominent public reserve site.

Monitoring and review: The licence should include provisions allowing the Council to review or amend the activity if adverse effects on the amenity or environmental values of the reserve become evident.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide input on this proposal and trust that the Council will give careful consideration to the long-term landscape, recreational, and environmental values of Ivon Wilson Park when assessing the appropriateness of this activity.

I would appreciate being kept informed of any further steps regarding this proposal. I would welcome the opportunity to appear in support of this submission should the Council decide to hear submissions on the matter.

Yours faithfully,

Dr Ian Griffin

Astronomer and Resident of Dunedin & Middlemarch Otago.

[redacted]

From: Derene Christie [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 4 March 2026 1:51 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Intention to grant licence to occupy

This message is from an external sender

I wish to oppose the granting of a license for a floating sauna in Ivon Wilson Park in Te Anau. The area is a beautiful place to go to for tranquility & peace as well as a lake where children can fish. The idea of a sauna is appalling. Derene Christie.
Sent from my iPhone

[redacted]

From: Devon Crouchley [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 4 March 2026 3:15 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Opposition to Licence - Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

To the Southland District Council,

I wish to formally submit my opposition to the proposal to grant a Licence to Occupy approximately 79m^2 of Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Park to Floating Sauna Limited.

Ivon Wilson Park, and particularly Lake Henry, holds a unique and special place within the Te Anau community. It is one of the few freely accessible, peaceful public spaces available to everyone, regardless of age, background, or financial means. The park is regularly used by toddlers feeding ducks, families enjoying picnics, elderly residents walking the track, and community groups gathering in a quiet natural setting. It is also a cherished location for weddings and funerals, occasions where cost can often be a barrier elsewhere in Te Anau. The ability to gather in this beautiful space without financial pressure is rare and deeply valued.

Introducing a commercial operation into Lake Henry risks fundamentally changing the character of the area. The tranquillity of the lake;one of its most defining qualities, would be impacted by the presence of a permanent business structure and its associated activity. Lake Henry is small and intimate in scale. Unlike larger bodies of water, it does not have the capacity to absorb commercial development without noticeably altering its atmosphere.

While I am not opposed in principle to the concept of a floating sauna, I believe Lake Henry is not an appropriate location. A larger body of water, such as Lake Te Anau, would be far better suited to accommodating such a venture without compromising a community-focused environment.

There is also concern about precedent. Granting a Licence to Occupy for a private commercial enterprise on Lake Henry could open the door for further business ventures within Ivon Wilson Park. Over time, this may erode the park's core purpose as a freely accessible, community-centred public space. The heart of this park lies in its inclusivity and shared ownership by the community; not in private enterprise.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask the Council to decline the proposal and preserve Lake Henry and Ivon Wilson Park as a tranquil, non-commercial space for all.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Yours sincerely,

Devon Crouchley

[redacted]

From: Jocelyn Hodges [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 4 March 2026 8:37 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission re Te Anau proposal to grand licence

This message is from an external sender

We would like to submit against the proposal to grant a licence to operate a floating sauna business on Lake Henry for the following reasons:

- We feel the structure will not be in keeping with the nature beauty of the lake and surrounding area.
- We cannot see why it even needs to be there or what the Council are even thinking to allow this proposal.
- There are so many people who spend time in this area including weddings, picnics, events etc. This would totally destroy their tranquil experience.

Please stop this ridiculous idea or any other similar ones now.

Kind regards
Neil and Jocelyn Hodges

[redacted]

From: Dawn Dowling [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 4 March 2026 8:35 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Intention to grant licence to occupy

This message is from an external sender

I would like to make a submission re the above licence being granted.

I totally object to this licence being given to operate any commercial activity on Lake Henry. It is the wrong place and was not given to our community for this type of operation. There are many places on the shores of Lake Te Anau to operate a commercial business.

Kind Regards
Dawn Dowling
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Gwen Chaloner [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 12 March 2026 7:09 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission re licence to occupy Lake Henry, Te Anau by Floating Sauna Ltd

This message is from an external sender

I wish to submit my objection to the proposal for a floating sauna on Lake Henry.

I have no objection to the idea of a floating sauna but the location is quite wrong. Although not in a National Park it is an open public space and too many are being used for commercial gain.

Ivon Wilson Park should be left alone to be enjoyed by people just as it is, a peaceful reserve with beautiful trees and quiet spaces and a small lake always meant for kids to fish in.

I do not wish to be heard on this. I just want my vote counted as NOT IN FAVOUR.

Thank you

Gwen Chaloner
[redacted]
Te Anau
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Nina Barker [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 9:07 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission regarding proposed floating sauna - lake Henry
Attachments: Lake Henry Floating Sauna Proposal - Submission.pdf

This message is from an external sender

Hello

Please find attached my submission in response to the proposed licence to operate a floating sauna business on Lake Henry, Te Anau for a term of 15 years plus a right of renewal for further term of 15 years.

Can you please confirm receipt of this submission.

Thank you for your consideration

Nina Barker

Southland District Council
Southland
New Zealand

24/03/2025

To whom it may concern.

Re: Proposal to allow floating Sauna at Lake Henry, Te Anau

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your time and consultation of feedback for the proposed licence to operate a floating sauna business on Lake Henry in the Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve.

I am a Te Anau local, I spent my entire childhood here and have moved back permanently as an adult after several years overseas.

Initial considerations

- Setting precedent for future ventures – choosing to say no to this venture now sets the precedent that we do not want commercial operations taking over recreational areas. Due to increasing tourism and our location, Te Anau is at high risk of over commercialisation or local areas, reducing places for locals to escape busy tourism and commercial activities. Ivon Wilson park is a quiet local gem that locals can enjoy with little disruption from the tourists and commercial activities outside of the park. Let's keep it that way.
- Floating Sauna is a non-local company based out of Tasmania and Mosgiel. I expect that most of the profits from this venture would not go back into the local economy rather, they will be removed from the Te Anau township. Yes there may be some rental and a small employment opportunity – but overall, this would be small. There is now already a company run by people living (and spending) locally, with a removable sauna near lake Te Anau, it is better to support that business than to add international competition.

I have consulted the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan January 2008 and the Southland District Council – Licence to Occupy unsigned Agreement with Floating Sauna Limited to aid my response to this proposal. I have outlined below, how the addition of this sauna will contradict the management plan of Ivon Wilson Park, disrupt the intended and current use of the park, and overall should not be allowed to progress.

- The Management Plan aims to protect all indigenous Flora. An original motive for the area was to plant trees to provide winter food and shelter for birds.
    - Over my lifetime I have observed many bird species in Ivon Wilson Park including NZ Falcon, Fantail, Tui, Bellbird, Wood Pigeon, grey warbler and many other non-native species including pond dwelling birds mallards and grey ducks.

    - I am concerned that the birdlife in the park will be negatively impacted by the Sauna – specifically – bird strike of windows in the building.
    - Bird strike leads to injury and death of birds and is most common when birds see reflections of trees, foliage and sky in windows, it is worst with clean windows they are more reflective (Urban Wildlife Trust, 2026).
        - Lake Henry is surrounded by trees and foliage which I am concerned will reflect in windows and increase bird strike risk.
- Addition of a building is against the management plan aim to keep the number structures in the park to a minimum as per the recreational use/facilities policy. It further aims to restrict the number of buildings, utilities and structures to a level that facilitates safe and appropriate use of the reserve.
    - The addition of the floating sauna and associated infrastructure is not a necessary addition to the park to aid general use/safety or enjoyment for most people accessing the park.
    - The addition of this building will be in the main focal point of the park and be disruptive to the natural and relaxed scenery it currently presents.
    - The park currently offers peace and tranquillity and the management plan recognises that developments should complement these characteristics.
        - Addition of a commercial sauna is directly out of line with this aim.
    - Addition of this building is not an appropriate use of the reserve, it will not serve the majority of park users.
- Addition of the sauna is against the management plan objective to facilitate activities compatible with the character of the park.
    - The sauna is a commercial enterprise in a recreational park, although some may argue that the sauna is a 'recreational activity' most park users will not be able to benefit from the sauna due to cost, potential opening hours, and potential capacity limits. This is a commercial venture for few people to enjoy that will disrupt others.
    - Consistent with the management plan, Ivon Wilson Park in its current state remains a popular location with locals to stroll, picnic, and now also walk dogs, catch up with friends and play frisbee golf in a very relaxed and casual manner which does not align with commercial enterprise.
- The Ivon Wilson Park Management Objective include enhancing and maintaining **scenic** values and attractions of the park
    - The addition of a floating sauna directly contradicts this objective and will take away from the natural scenery of the area.
    - The addition of the floating sauna will take away from scenery that is specifically enjoyed by locals and visitors including
        - Disruption of viewing for Aurora Australis and stars. Viewing the southern lights over the lake looking south is a scenic attraction for photographers and star gazers, addition of a building will have a direct and negative impact on these activities. This is currently a location and direction that has little light pollution so close to town and easily accessible for all.
        - Disruption of photography for family photos, wedding parties and other events which people currently photograph over looking lake Henry.

- The Ivon Wilson Park management plan aims to as far as possible maintain Lake Henry and surrounding bog as a **central point** in its **'natural state' and maintain its native qualities.**
    - Addition of a building is in direct contrast to this aim. A building and the activities within it occurring on or near the lake are significantly unnatural and unnecessary additions to the lake.
- The Ivon Wilson Park management plan aims to support fishing for junior anglers.
    - Addition of a busy sauna on the water is likely to have a negative impact on young people's ability to successfully and enjoyably fish on Lake Henry.
- The management plan aims to manage the park in a way that does not affect Lake Henry's water quality
    - Addition of the sauna is likely to lead to increased littering which may impact water quality
    - The structure itself as well as the construction of the building on the water may impact water quality.
- Construction of a building will go against motor vehicle policy
    - Vehicle access is currently limited to fire fighting, emergency purposes or essential management
        - Vehicles used to construct the sauna shall not be permitted as they are not part of essential management or emergency purposes.
        - Presence of construction and/or towing vehicles will be disruptive to other park users.

Thank you again for your time and consideration in reading this submission.

Additional References

Urban Wildlife Trust. (2026). https://www.urbanwildlifetrust.org/portfolio/project-window-strike/

[redacted]

From: Eve Thomas [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, 7 March 2026 9:57 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Intention to grant licence to occupy

This message is from an external sender

Submission against sauna in ivon Wilson

It concerns me the a popular deck area that's used by many families and photographers to see the lake would now be in accessible.
The prime photo spot for Aurora photography with no light from area facing south.

A lot of children use these platforms to fish in the lake also.

The nature of the park is refreshing used by children, outdoor playgroups, dog walkers, frisbee players to see a structure would be intrusive to the parks existence.

Also cleaning of the sauna would have a negative effect on the area.

Another location would be better suited.

Eve Thomas.
Sent from my iPhone

[redacted]

From: Lindsay King [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, 7 March 2026 11:11 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Sauna Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

This is my submission regarding the proposal to place a floating sauna in Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau.

I disagree with this Licence to Occupy being granted.

I have been, and still are, a user of this park and very much enjoy the beauty, the views, the variety of trees and the generally peaceful ambiance of it.

I am happy to see weddings, picnics and schools using this park for events. I am not so happy about the Frisbee Golf activity as I find it intrusive, noisy, and slightly dangerous but I accept that many people do enjoy it.

I have seen the sauna installation picture and it has a path down to it. The proposed direct path is an eyesore from the opposite side of the lake.

Is there to be a charge to use, in other words is it to be used as a business venture? Was/is that the aim of the park?

I am a resident householder in Te Anau.

Lindsay King
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Jo Mann [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, 7 March 2026 4:55 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission Re: Intention to grant licence to occupy over part of Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve

This message is from an external sender

Dear SDC,

Please find attached my submission:

Submission Re: Intention to grant licence to occupy over part of Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve

Jo Mann
[redacted]

I would like to submit my objection to the above proposal to grant a license to occupy part of the Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve with a floating sauna business.

Having read the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan and knowing the park well and how it is used by both the local and visiting population, I do not believe this proposal is consistent with the objectives of the plan.

In the plan, the park is described as follows :

The primary values of the area lie in the open parkland character with its mixture of conifer, deciduous and evergreen trees; and the central focal point provided by Lake Henry with its contrasting surrounding indigenous bog vegetation. These, together with the area's close proximity to Te Anau and easy accessibility, make it ideal as a family or individual recreation facility.

In Management policies, the plan states:

Management Policy - Recreational Use/Facilities: "To keep the number of structures on the reserve to a minimum".
Management Policy - Leases and Temporary Use: " To consider leases when they are considered to be in the public interest and in accordance with the reserve's purpose, objectives and policy".
Management Policy - Buildings and Structures: " To restrict the number of buildings, utilities and structures to a level which facilitates the safe and appropriate use of the reserve."

Management Policy - Development: " Each development project will be assessed on its effect on the environment, existing activities, fauna, flora or the unique feature of the reserve".

Ivon Wilson Park, is a unique reserve in the Te Anau Basin, being the only one with a rich diversity of flora and a variety of landscape and recreational opportunities utilised by people of all ages. The park currently provides a quiet opportunity to walk, run, walk dogs, play frisbee golf , freshwater swimmers to meet and for children to fish. It is regularly (every week) utilised by local schools and early childhood education centres. Families visit and are able to access the lake from several jetties.

Children learn to fish here. The lake frontage is used for wedding ceremonies, and wedding photography. Keen wildlife and flora photographers use the park. Both local residents and visitors appreciate the unique tranquility of the park.

The construction of a floating sauna building (regardless of colour) will detract from the natural feature of the focal point of the reserve. It will need to be staffed with facilities for the staff member to sit and monitor activities on the lake. This will not be an inconsequential structure. It will neither add to the 'parkland character' of the reserve or contribute recreational opportunities for families. It is most likely to attract visitors to the area (which I understand is one of the business owner's intentions). I question whether this is the intent and purpose of the reserve (a tourism opportunity) and also whether the reserve is set up to cater for the by-products of tourism eg. Litter collection, no freedom camping enforcement officers etc. Since there is already a local sauna business which offers everyone the opportunity to enjoy a sauna and cold water plunge (literally across the road on Steamer's Beach), I question why we would compromise the special features of Ivon Wilson Park to establish a commercial business that threatens to detract from the natural state of the reserve.

I do not believe that this proposal meets the expectations laid out in the Park Plan.

I look forward to receiving your acknowledgement of my submission,

Ngā mihi nui,

Jo Mann

[redacted]

From: William Petrie [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, 8 March 2026 2:41 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission on Proposed Floating Sauna – Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

I am a long-time Te Anau resident with young children who enjoy spending time around Lake Henry. It's a place our family, and many other local families, regularly visit. One of the things that makes it special is that it still feels quiet, natural and largely unchanged.

From a landscape perspective, Lake Henry is a remnant of the much larger Lake Te Anau system. Around 6,000 years ago moraine ridges enclosed what is now Lake Henry. When Lake Te Anau eventually dropped to its current level, the stranded gravels formed the smaller lake that exists today. The lake is oval shaped and measures roughly 210 metres across at its widest point. It is surrounded by a fragile peat bog that varies in width but averages about three metres deep.

Because of its setting, Lake Henry forms the centre point for a number of scenic views within Ivon Wilson Park. These views are an important part of the experience for both locals and visitors. The open water framed by natural vegetation creates what could best be described as postcard-like scenery.

The edges of Lake Henry are still largely natural, with very little built development. The surrounding vegetation is mainly mānuka shrubland mixed with other native plants such as lowland flax, along with a few introduced species. The wet peat margins are dominated by wire rush, and in places there are small patches of sphagnum moss separated by shallow pools of water. These small moss islands provide ideal nesting habitat for ducks and New Zealand scaup.

At present there are only a few built features around the lake. These are the three wooden viewing decks located at different points around the edge. They are low-key structures that fit well within the environment and provide good

viewing points across the lake without dominating the landscape. Just as importantly, they help protect the fragile peatland by limiting damage from foot traffic.

Lake Henry has long been a place where families bring children to enjoy the outdoors. Water naturally attracts kids, and this was recognised in earlier planning when the lake was stocked with brook trout and designated as a junior fishery.

Research associated with earlier management planning indicated that Lake Henry is naturally sensitive due to its biochemical and physical characteristics. As a result, the lake is already under environmental pressure and is particularly vulnerable to cultural enrichment. The applicant has stated publicly that up to twelve people could use the sauna at any one time, cooling down by jumping into the lake during hour-long sessions. In my view this type of activity is not appropriate for a small, shallow moraine lake like Lake Henry.

It is also worth noting that the applicant's existing floating sauna operates on Lake Derby in Tasmania. That lake is a deep, man-made reservoir formed behind a dam approximately 120 metres high. This is a very different environment to Lake Henry.

The documentation provided with the application appears limited to a location and layout plan. There is no detailed list of construction materials. However, a media release states the structure will be clad in translucent polycarbonate sheeting. From experience, this material can have a noticeable shine and reflective quality that may stand out in what is otherwise a very natural setting. The plans also show a 1.2-metre fence around the pontoon, but the materials for this have not been specified. It could be glass, mesh or timber railing. There is also the potential risk of cleaning products entering the lake accidentally, which could have negative effects on the lake's aquatic life.

Traditional Finnish saunas are normally heated using wood fires to generate steam, although some modern versions use electric or gas heating. Images of the Lake Derby sauna show a chimney with smoke visible. Because Lake Henry sits within a shallow basin, smoke could potentially linger over the lake during calm winter conditions. Firewood would also need to be stored on the pontoon itself.

Emergency access is another concern. If someone experienced hypothermia after entering the cold water, it may be difficult for emergency services to reach the site. The nearby public car park is surrounded by bollards which may restrict vehicle access. It also appears no toilets are proposed as part of the development. The nearest public toilets are about 195 metres away, which seems impractical given that users would likely be in bathing attire.

Swimming also appears to be an essential part of the sauna experience being proposed. However this does not sit comfortably with the current character and use of Ivon Wilson Park. The park's main recreational activity is disc golf, which is a low-impact activity enjoyed regularly by families. The disc golf baskets can be relocated if necessary, but the park's undulating terrain makes it particularly well suited to the activity. By comparison, a floating sauna structure would likely require significant foundations and would be costly and difficult to remove or relocate, especially given its exposure to the prevailing south-westerly winds.

There is also no realistic way to visually screen the proposed sauna from the existing viewing platforms, as there is a clear stretch of open water between them. The proposal places the structure only about 95 metres from the main viewing deck.

Allowing this type of development would also set a precedent for further private commercial activity within Ivon Wilson Park. Lake Henry is a small, shallow moraine lake that is valued for its natural character and scenic qualities. Introducing a commercial floating sauna would change the nature of the area and reduce those values.

For these reasons I believe the proposal is not appropriate for this location and that the application should be declined.

I do not wish to be heard at the hearing.

[redacted]

From: Michael Horn [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 9 March 2026 4:25 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Licence to occupy over part of Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve

This message is from an external sender

We object strongly to the intention of Southland District Council to grant a licence to occupy over part of Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve (the Reserve) for the purpose of operating a floating sauna business.

We, together with our family, friends and visitors to Te Anau have enjoyed many hours of pleasure over the past 35 years on regular visits to enjoy the lake, the wildlife and the natural beauty of the Reserve.

The thought of compromising the tranquility of the lake and the Reserve itself, with a man made structure despoiling the lake together with the commercial activity associated with it, is totally inappropriate and abhorrent to envisage.

We are strong supporters of the Ivon Wilson Recreational Reserve and also of the retention and upgrading of the wildlife park across the road.

Michael and Jill Horn

[redacted]
Te Anau

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: megan balchin [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 9 March 2026 8:34 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Intention to grant licence to occupy - Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

Submission in Opposition to the Proposed Licence to Occupy – Ivon Wilson Park

I write in response to the proposal to grant a licence to occupy approximately 79m² of Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Park to Floating Sauna Limited.

While I am not opposed in principle to the concept of a floating sauna business operating in Te Anau, I have significant concerns regarding the proposed location, the impact on public use of the reserve, and the appropriateness of the proposed licence terms.

1. Impact on Public Use of the Walkway and Jetty

The proposed location utilises an existing walkway and jetty that is one of the most popular and heavily used areas of Lake Henry. Although the jetty is said to remain available for public use, positioning the floating sauna directly in front of it will materially compromise its amenity and function.

This jetty provides one of the best south-facing views across the lake and is particularly valued during Aurora events. Even if the night sky remains partially visible above the structure, the lighting required for the operation of the sauna — as seen in similar installations by this company — is likely to detract from dark-sky viewing and significantly diminish the experience for the public.

In practical terms, the presence of a commercial structure immediately in front of the jetty will reduce the open, natural character of this space and limit the enjoyment currently available to all members of the community.

2. Disproportionately Low Licence Fee

Under the proposed licence, the operator would pay:

- $2,400 per annum in lease fees (approximately $6.58 per day), and
- $1,000 per annum toward toilet maintenance (approximately $2.74 per day).

For a private, profit-driven business that reportedly charges approximately $65 per person per hour at other locations, this contribution appears minimal.

The operator would effectively be granted use of a publicly owned and ratepayer-funded space at a nominal cost, while generating private revenue. The proposed fee does not appear to reflect:

- The commercial advantage gained from occupying a lakefront location;
- The opportunity cost of removing or limiting public use of that space; or
- The broader value of access to a highly desirable recreational setting.

The arrangement risks creating a perception that public land is being subsidised for private commercial gain.

3. Alignment with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan

While I acknowledge that the current Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan permits commercial activities where they promote recreational use, I question whether a paid sauna experience constitutes recreation in the sense intended by the Plan.

The activity is not freely accessible to the public and is contingent upon the ability to pay. It is therefore distinct from the open, shared recreational uses that parks are traditionally designed to support.

There is a material difference between facilitating inclusive public recreation and enabling a commercial wellness venture operating for private profit on public reserve land.

4. Equity and Consistency in Council Decision-Making

Over the years, small community groups have sought modest permissions within this reserve — such as erecting small storage sheds or minor structures to support volunteer-run programmes — and have faced difficulty obtaining approval. The common response has been that such structures are inconsistent with the park's purpose or design.

It is therefore difficult to reconcile those past decisions with the current proposal, which would allow a relatively substantial commercial installation in a prominent location.

This raises legitimate concerns about consistency and fairness in decision-making, and whether commercial investment is being prioritised over community-led initiatives.

Conclusion

In summary, while I support thoughtful and appropriate activation of public spaces, I do not consider the proposed licence — in its current form and location — to be in the best interests of the wider community.

My concerns relate not to the concept of a floating sauna itself, but to:

- The loss of amenity and enjoyment of a highly valued public space;
- The limited financial return to the community for commercial use;
- The questionable alignment with the intent of recreational reserve land; and
- The apparent inconsistency with how other community proposals have been treated.

I respectfully request that the proposed location and licence terms be reconsidered, and that greater weight be given to protecting public access, amenity, and equity in the use of this reserve.

Regards

Megan Balchin

[redacted]

From: jade watt [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 11 March 2026 7:04 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Intention to grant licence to occupy

This message is from an external sender

Kia ora, I wish to make a a submission against the proposed sauna at lake Henry in Te Anau.
From what I have heard and understand I believe it would be a real tragedy to see the sauna be granted rights to operate in one of Te Anau's favoured green spaces. From the many people I have heard speak about this subject, we/I are not against the idea but the location is just not suitable, now more than ever I believe we must protect and keep our few remaining green spaces, just that, a place for recreation, peace and tranquility- not a place for commercial activity.
We do currently have a local operator successfully running a transportable/ removable sauna on our lake front,(creating minimal impact on the environment and not causing any long term obstruction. why can't this proposed plan be implemented as such for a space like lake Te Anau where commercial operations are already taking place? Is this persons proposed plan for lake Henry a local entity or an international investor? Have you really listened to what your local community wants and needs? How does this proposed plan and sauna give back to the established green space?, or will its footprint impact this area in a negative way?, does this then green light and pave the way for other commercial activities to infiltrate our natural spaces? Who's really benefiting out of this commercial plan? Because if it's not our local community who have been relatively loud about not wanting this in our green space, who is the true benefactor?
I hope that these things have been carefully considered and this is not a case of another local council body not listening to their people.
Nga mihi,
Jade Watt
Sent from my iPhone

[redacted]

From: chris lebiecki [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 11 March 2026 7:11 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Intention to grant licence to occupy

This message is from an external sender

Submission: Proposed Floating Sauna – Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau

I wish to lodge a submission opposing the proposed floating sauna structure on Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Park.

My primary concern relates to the proposed location directly in front of the existing public jetty. This jetty is a key public access point to the lake and an area where people currently gather to enjoy unobstructed views and water access. Placing a 79m^2 floating structure immediately in front of this jetty would significantly obstruct views across the lake and materially interfere with how the space is currently used by the public.

The jetty and surrounding area are also regularly used by community groups to stage and organise recreational activities on the lake. Schools and kindergarten groups frequently use this area as a safe and accessible place for children to interact with the water and take part in outdoor learning and recreation. Positioning a large floating structure directly in front of the jetty would compromise the practicality and safety of these activities and reduce the usefulness of the area for organised community use.

Ivon Wilson Park is an important recreational space for both residents and visitors. The open visual connection between the jetty and the lake is a defining feature of the park. Introducing a relatively large floating structure in this exact location would be visually intrusive and would diminish the sense of openness that currently exists.

The proposed scale of the structure is also notable. A 79m^2 floating building is substantial and would become a dominant element in what is currently a simple and accessible public waterfront setting.

It is difficult to understand why this specific location was chosen given the obvious conflicts it creates with existing public use and amenity. The placement appears particularly problematic because it directly impacts one of the few easily accessible lake access points within the park.

While new recreational activities can be positive additions to a community, they should not compromise the public character, accessibility, or visual amenity of established public spaces.

For these reasons, I oppose the proposal as currently described and particularly oppose the location directly in front of the public jetty.

I do not wish to be heard in support of this submission.

Name: Christopher Lebiecki
[redacted]
Date: 11/03/2026

Chris Lebiecki
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Roanna French [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 11 March 2026 1:26 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Floating sauna

This message is from an external sender

Kia Ora
As much as I like the idea of the floating saunas, a BIG FAT NO THANK YOU in Ivon Wilson park at Henry lake, this holds a special place for a lot of our tamariki around in the community, a quiet tranquil space to be able to re group when life gets heavy , please leave it as its natural environment to be enjoyed for the beauty it is .

Ngā mihi
Ro

[redacted]

From: Barbara Sutton-Adams [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 11 March 2026 6:50 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission on Floating Sauna @ Lake Henry

This message is from an external sender

Dear Sir/Madam

I have been a Te Anau rate payer for many years, and spent many hours over the last 50 years enjoying the serenity of Lake Henry.

I strongly oppose the proposed Floating Sauna in Ivan Wilson Park - this is an area for everyone to enjoy in peace. Many of us have our relatives ashes spread in the park, with tasteful memorial seats also around.

It's a treasured place for many.

If this commercial venture must go ahead I imagine they might find less opposition if located on the main lake, where there are other commercial ventures.

Please do not allow the desecration of this Lake and Park.

Barbara Sutton-Adams

Barb Sutton-Adams
[redacted]

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[redacted]

From: selina wright [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 12 March 2026 12:11 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Re: Submission Opposing License Application for Sauna in Lake Henry

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

This message is from an external sender

Dear Council Planning Team,

I am writing to lodge a submission opposing the application for a licence to establish and operate a sauna within the Ivon Wilson reserve area.

Public reserves are intended to provide open, natural spaces for community recreation, environmental protection, and quiet enjoyment. Introducing a commercial sauna facility within this reserve would fundamentally change the character and use of the space. I am concerned that granting this licence would set an undesirable precedent for commercial activities in an area that should remain primarily for public and environmental benefit.

My concerns include the following:

1. **Commercialisation of public reserve land**
   The reserve is a shared public asset. Allowing a private commercial operation within it risks prioritising commercial use over the open and accessible public use that reserves are intended to provide.
2. **Impact on the natural environment, wildlife and character of the reserve**
   A sauna structure and its associated infrastructure, such as utilities, waste management, and increased foot traffic, could negatively affect the natural setting and tranquility of the reserve.
3. **Increased activity and pressure on the area**
   A sauna business is likely to increase visitor numbers and parking demand.
4. **Precedent for further development**
   Approving this licence may encourage additional commercial proposals in the reserve, gradually eroding its purpose as a protected public space.

Reserves play an important role in preserving natural environments and providing free, accessible places for the community to enjoy. For these reasons, I respectfully request that the council decline this licence application.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Kind regards,
Selina Wright

[redacted]

From: kenandsharen [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 12 March 2026 12:54 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Proposed Floating Sauna in Ivon Wilson Park/Lake Henry

This message is from an external sender

Morena,

My name is Sharen Yvonne Bradley, and I have been a resident in Te Anau for over 52 years.

I would like to register my objection to putting this commercial business on Lake Henry in Ivon Wilson Park.

Whilst I think this business has a place in our community I would prefer to see it elsewhere.

Over the years, my children have fished, kayaked and had the odd involuntary swim, and now my husband and I take our grandchildren there, the younger to fish, the older just walking.

On a weekly basis (occasionally more depending on weather) I walk through this park, enjoying the ambience and solitude of this lovely area. I regularly meet dogs and owners, other walkers, runners, frizbee golfers etc all enjoying using this Park for " activities" as Ivon Wilson initially intended. Nowhere have I read that he ever dreamt that the word "commercial" preceed activities. That word doesn't appear in any original documents.

This special place has no need for anything commercial within its boundaries. It is one of the few places you can go in our town without the madness of our tourism industry encroaching, just peace and quietness.

So again I state **not in Ivon Wilson Park.**

Sharen Bradley
Te Anau

Sent from my Galaxy

Lake Henry Submission.

My Name is Kenneth Frederick Bradley QSM.

Date March 12th 2026.

Subject, Submission regarding commercial use of Lake Henry, Ivan Wilson Park, for a floating Sauna.

Background History, I have been involved with this location since 1967, I was a volunteer for tree planting during 1967 and 68. During by employment by Lands and Survey 1976 to 1987 and DOC 1987 to 2017, I have worked with staff during this period within the park boundaries, prior to SDC, taking over day to day control.

I have used this park area, for recreation, over the period of 59 years, my children and grandchildren have all caught fish from Lake Henry. My wife and I generally walk through or around the park at least once a week, since retirement. Sitting on the Lake Henry viewing platforms is part of our walks.

Ivan Wilson Park is one of Te Anau's best assets, and is enjoyed by all locals and visitors alike, as it is.

Objection to the proposal, I don't object to the concept, but object to the location of a commercial operation on Lake Henry. It will be intrusive to the views, from all three lake viewing locations. There is an alternative option the proposer could investigate. There is an area located between the cycle track and Lake Te Anau, west of the Bird Park. The site has old Brown Teal (Pateke) breeding pens, which are no longer used. This site would be big enough, to build several sauna huts, with a plunge pool in front, feed by the spring water running into the old Internal Affair's Fish Hatchery building.

This location has far better views of Fiordland, than Lake Henry. It also has a huge number of people visiting the location, compared with Ivan Wilson Park. With the proposed revamp of the Bird Park, this commercial option could well be the venture, with others that could built, to save, this local tourist attraction.

Thinking outside the square here, is required for the benefit of all. I fully support any venture that will bring added attraction to Te Anau, but not in this case to the location proposed.

[redacted]

From: Submissions
Sent: Thursday, 12 March 2026 4:13 pm
To: [redacted]
Subject: FW: Contact property Lake Henry

In our submissions inbox

From: General <emailsdc@southlanddc.govt.nz>
Sent: Monday, 2 March 2026 10:58 am
To: Submissions <Submissions@southlanddc.govt.nz>
Subject: FW: Contact property Lake Henry

From: beekeep[redacted]
Sent: Monday, 2 March 2026 10:31 am
To: General <emailsdc@southlanddc.govt.nz>
Subject: Contact property Lake Henry

This message is from an external sender

I wish to make a submission with regard to the proposal to allow a floating sauna on Lake Henry.

I am against this happening for several reasons.

1) it is a public recreation reserve, set aside for all the public to use on a non commercial basis, as per the district plan.

2) Parking is limited & would require extensive upgrade, not only for parking but also accessibility.

3) A commercial venture will take away from the design purpose of the whole area, where people often walk, have wedding photos taken & enjoy Frisbee golf & a popular of the leash dog walk.

4) Better alternative would be on Lake Te Anau or Manapouri. Better access & better commercial visibility. If DOC consider it a non compliant venture on the lake, then the same reason should apply to Lake Henry.

Regards
Jeffrey Arthur

[redacted]

From: Nicky Pealing [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 12 March 2026 3:52 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Shocked at private company consent in a public recreation park Te Anau.

This message is from an external sender

Dear Megan,
I have just recently been made aware of this consent being granted for a private company to set up a business in a public recreation park in Te Anau!
I am shocked this has been given the green light.
Ivan Wilson Park is a well loved park used by many many groups.
The Kindergarten go there every week to allow the children to play and discover interesting stuff.
It has many types of ground that people use for training runs, dog walking, frisbee golf, collecting horse chestnuts and conkers, swimming, picnicking.
Scout events. School visits
Some local orienteering.
I think this business should look elsewhere such as near the yacht club or down towards the Marina.
Allowing such a long lease is also crazy! 15 years!!
Why not set a shorter time frame if it has to go ahead and assess the environmental, social and traffic impact.
This does not sound like a robust and transparent process at all.
Te Anau folk would welcome this chaps business if it was ANYWHERE ELSE BUT IVAN WILSON PARK.
Kind regards
Nicky Pealing

[redacted]

From: Dave Sutton [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 16 March 2026 5:51 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Floating Sauna at Lake Henry

This message is from an external sender

Dear Sir/Madam

I am a Te Anau property owner. I am a regular user of Ivan Wilson park and spent many hours over the last 60 years enjoying the peace and quiet of Lake Henry.

I strongly oppose the proposed Floating Sauna in Ivan Wilson Park - this is an area for everyone to enjoy in peace. My family and many others have relatives ashes spread in the park, and many other families have supplied memorial seats around the park.

It's a treasured place to be able to enjoy in peace.

If this commercial venture must go ahead I imagine it would be find less opposition if located on the main lake, where there are other commercial ventures.

Please do not allow the desecration of this lake.

Ngā mihi
Dave Sutton

[redacted]

From: Robert Allen [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 18 March 2026 11:19 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Intention to grant a licence to occupy over part of Ivon Wilson recreation reserve
Attachments: Submission on Lake Henry Sauna proposal.pdf

This message is from an external sender

Please find attached my submission on this matter.

Rob Allen

Sent from my iPad

18 March 2026

Senior Property Advisor
Southland District Council

Via email: contactproperty@southlanddc.govt.nz

Dear Sir/Madam

Opposition to proposal to grant a licence for a commercial floating sauna on Lake Henry

I oppose the proposal to grant a licence for a commercial floating sauna on Lake Henry in Ivon Wilson Park primarily on the basis that the licence fee (and additional one-off charges) amount to little more than a peppercorn fee ($2,391 per year) and locks the Council in for an excessively long-time (up to 30 years, at the discretion of the licence holder).

This is an extremely low fee for exclusive commercial use of a public natural resource. The arrangement would effectively enable a private business to monetise public space while returning minimal or no financial benefit to the community that owns it.

For the local community and rate-payers to benefit from the floating sauna, the annual fees should: (i) compensate the community for reduction in amenity value to existing users of the Lake and Park; (ii) be sufficient to recover all additional expenses the Council may incur as a consequence of the sauna; and (iii) reflect the value to the licence holder for access to the public amenity/be sufficient to help reduce rates for other rate-payers.

This raises a fundamental fairness issue. If public land is to be used commercially, the public should receive a meaningful financial return. That is not evident here.

Public amenity compromised

The structure is substantial (the footprint of the pontoon (79sqm) would be the size of a modest house) and will impact on the public amenity of the Park and jetty area. I consider that it would undermine the peaceful enjoyment of the lake and its tranquil setting.



The capacity of the proposed sauna facility is also material relative to the limited carparking at the Park.

This is distinct, say, from the trailer-sauna that is being currently operated at Lake Te Anau across the road from the Park. The trailer-sauna is fully portable, takes up minimal space at the Lake front and is removed when not in use.

Likely overstated local benefits

There may be potential modest benefits from the development, but it is unclear the extent to which these would extend beyond the commercial operator and benefit the wider community and town.

The robustness of claims from the developer such as that "An economic study on my Tasmanian operation showed that every $AUS1 spent generates $AUS3.75 for the local town" should be treated with extreme caution and scepticism.[1]

It is widely recognised by Economists that benefits of "multiplier effects" are of questionable merit. For example, how much would the sauna add to tourism interest in Te Anau relative to other activities, including the Kepler and Milford Sound versus simply substituting for existing Sauna services available at the town? Are tourists going to spend less time in Queenstown, which has its own Sauna in a prominent location on the lake because of an alternative option at Ivon Park?

Precedent Risk

I am also concerned about the precedent this sets for other commercial operators.
If one business can operate on public reserve land under these terms, it becomes difficult to refuse similar proposals in the future. Over time, this risks gradual commercialisation of public parks. Public reserves should not become low-cost platforms for private enterprise.

This is not a NIMBY submission

Caution is needed with any proposal to have commercial operations in a public park.

This is highlighted by the extremely long-period (up to 30 years) the right will be granted for. It is difficult to imagine that the peppercorn rent and low one-off fees (the signage won't last 30 years) would go anywhere near remotely compensating the local community for reduced amenity value let alone providing benefits to ratepayers i.e. through lower rates.

The Council should only consider going ahead with the licence if it takes a commercial approach to the annual fees, ensures that the operator covers all reasonable council expenses over the entire lifetime of the agreement, and the Council does not lock the community into an unnecessarily long-term commercial arrangement.

The application should have been more prominently advertised and notified

I was surprised that there is no signage or notification in town (that I could see) or at Ivon Park notifying the local community and Park users about the proposal. This falls well short of good regulatory practice.

[1] https://southlandapp.nz/NewsStory/te-anau-heats-up-over-floating-sauna-proposal/69a3529489899c002ec5b150

Given the significance of the structure and impact on the Park I am very concerned that the resource consents for the proposed enterprise were not notified and that this is the first time the community are able to provide feedback on this matter.

Yours faithfully,

Rob Allen
Manapouri

[redacted]

From: Tom & Wendy Holder [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2026 1:52 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission: Floating Sauna - Lake Henry Ivan Wilson Park
Attachments: SCN_0052.pdf; SCN_0053.pdf

This message is from an external sender

Please find attached our submission regarding the Licence to Occupy for the Floating Sauna on Lake Henry, Ivan Wilson Park Te Anau.

Please reply to [redacted] indicating you have received this submission.
Thanks.

Regards
Wendy and Tom Holder
[redacted]

Outlook

submission

From Tom & Wendy Holder [redacted]
Date Mon 23/03/2026 5:00 AM
To Wendy Holder [redacted]

Submitter: Wendy and Tom Holder
Position: **Oppose**
We wish to be heard supporting our submission.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit on the proposal to grant, a Licence to Occupy for the floating sauna on Lake Henry in Ivan Wilson Park.

Having raised our family using Ivan Wilson Park frequently, knowing and appreciating the peace and tranquility, the educational opportunities for our children and now grandchildren, the fishing and other adventures we have enjoyed, and relishing the spiritual calm while enjoying the ability to disengage from the outside world, make this park a special place to us.

It is fair to say this application has shocked us both. Where was the community's input, prior to the Community Board letter of support to council?

Our concerns:

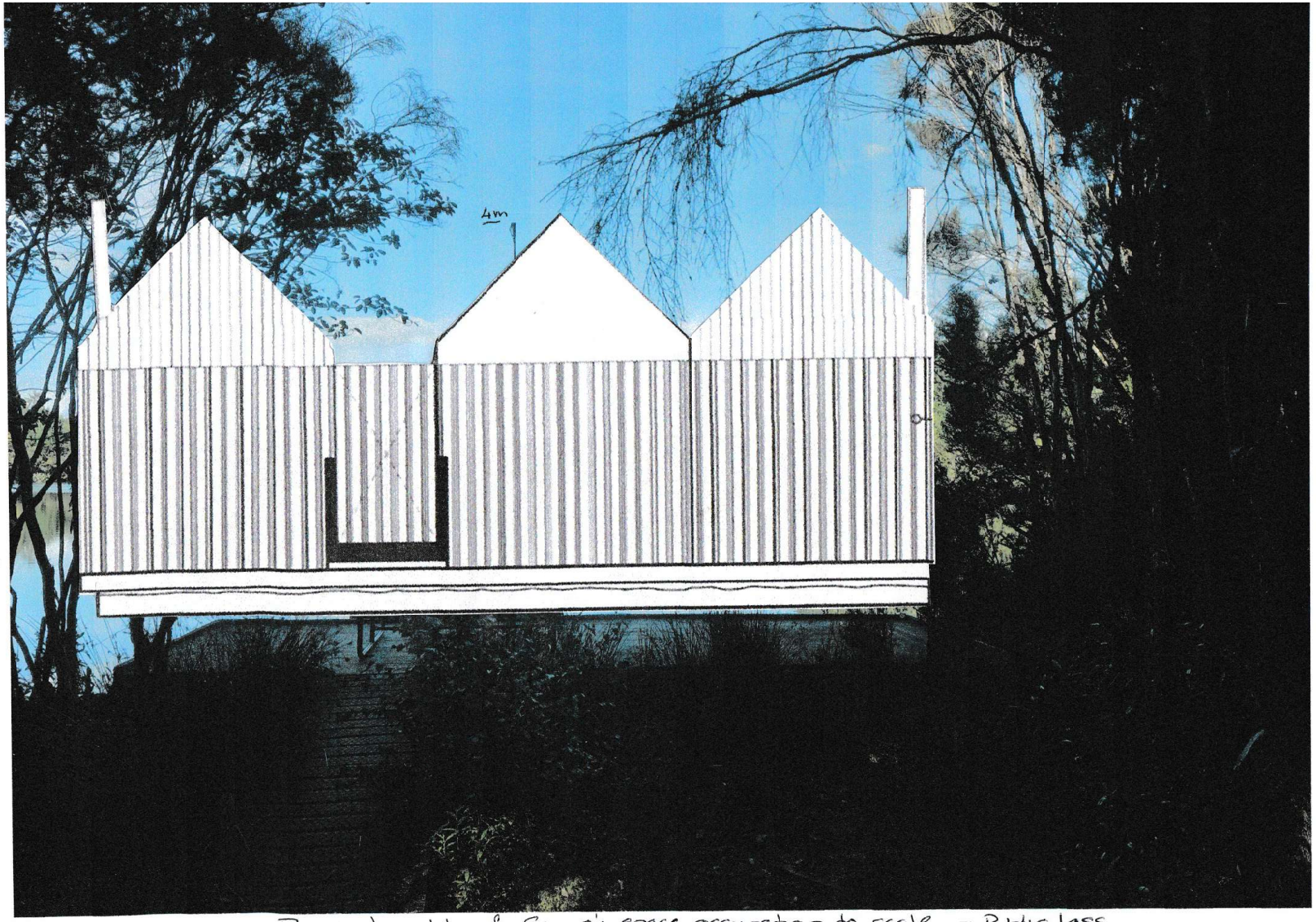
1. That the public park would be used for a commercial/private enterprise to the detriment of the public, in the losing of one third of the current access to Lake Henry.
2. That many environmental assessments have been skimmed over or omitted altogether.
3. The proposed lease agreement is financially inadequate, and the community will end up picking up the gap. Also the length of the proposed lease.
4. The proposed numbers of people using the sauna facility (168/day) would interfere with the peace and tranquility of the park, and limit other community and private functions.
5. This proposal does not comply with the vision and management plans for Ivan Wilson Park.

<u>The Floating Sauna position; Public loss of lake access:</u>
Whilst we are not against tourism developments in Fiordland, there is ample scope to purchase land and build a private sauna/plunge pool, without causing loss to the community through using Ivan Wilson Park. Lake Henry is clearly (and documented) the focal point of the park.
We note the Northern (proposed) platform has the unequivocally best view of the three platforms. It looks out across tranquil Lake Henry toward the south and Fiordland's mountains, show casing Mt Titiroa. This is a view cherished by photographers, artists, picnicking families, and the backdrop to children learning to fish.
This view and the activity on and from this platform will be lost.
The current platform is 7.7m x 2.7m and hosts a picnic table. The report keeps referencing the sauna as three small buildings on a 10.2m by 7.7m floating pontoon. In reality the three small buildings are 3mx3m and to a height of 4.3m across a width of 10.2m. For reference a standard New Zealand roof height is 3m - 4.6m high. The buildings are not unobtrusive, they will occlude all views and any lakeside activity from the northern platform. See appendix 1 photo.
This sauna and pontoon removes one third of the public's access to the lake, placing private commercial interests above public enjoyment. This is inconsistent with the Ivan Wilson Management plan 2008; 4b (iv)

Environmental effects; Interference with the Natural Park Enviroment:
Visual Landscape- This sauna and pontoon will be clearly seen from the remaining two lakeside platforms. In relation to the size of Lake Henry they will stand out clearly as, not a natural part of the habitat, and **will therefore not maintain the lake in it's natural state. Park Plan 2008 4b(iii)**
Glazed front walls will reflect light, not being recessive over water. Smoke, and smoke odour will spill out over the lake area, on still days hang in the air, and in winter inversion cloud days maybe not disperse at all. This will be both visually impairing and malodorous, decreasing the public enjoyment of the park, and the natural beauty. Along with, the added noise of people plunging into the natural still lake, gasping and squealing at the contrast of hot to cold. We have never sighted anyone swimming in lake Henry, let alone potentially nude, which is highly likely as European tourists typically sauna naked. (another visual impairment for children on the other platforms)
Water Quality- It is fair to say we didn't see any water testing results in the application, at the very least we would expect ongoing testing of the water. The scale of the operation predicts up to 168 persons/day using the sauna and plunge experience. Each person using the sauna will lose 1.5L to 2L in sweat (average sweat loss) Where will that go? Into the lake during their plunge as potentially will urine, due to the distance back to the toilets of 160m and the need to change or get dressed. Wash down of the buildings and pontoon surfaces including glass will be difficult to prevent entering the lake water, we saw no provisional plans to remediate this potential. **Therefore the lake will not remain in it's natural state. Plan 4b(iii)**
Natural Fauna- The natural beauty of Ivan Wilson Park is caught in an instant as delightful bird song reaches your ears, as the wind rustles the leaves, and murmurs of children's voices are heard, all integral parts of the pleasure and enjoyment in the park. What about those native birds? Will the sauna smoke drive them away, or will they fly straight into the glass walls of the sauna dropping injured or dead into the lake. (birds have delicate lungs and wood smoke is full of particulates) Many of these things have been omitted in assessments to the natural fauna and flora regarding the application. We must not put at risk the natural state of the park, or we do **injustice to those gone before and the Ivan Wilson Park Plan**
Cultural Values- Who can assess cultural and spiritual value but the people. This is where there needed to be public consultation prior to selling out to tourism, selling our park formed by the community for the community. The community pays in their rates for the up keep of parks and reserves, and it irks us that you would basically sell us out to tourism.
Lease
How can a $2400/annum payment ever be sufficient for what you wish to take away from us? Every rate payer pays more than double that, and they extended themselves to purchase/pay for there own property in the first place. Council would effectively be giving the lease to Floating Saunas Ltd, and what would be the expected return? We put to you that tourism will not increase with this venture. Yes, some visitors will partake but nobody is going to make a special trip to Te Anau in winter, for a sauna experience they can get in Queenstown or Wanaka. How is this economically viable for Southland? A fifteen year lease is too long, by the time assessments have been remade the "birds will have flown the coup", quite literally.

This proposal is not consistent with the vision and Management plan for the Ivan Wilson Park 2008.
Please decline the Licence to Occupy.

Regards
Wendy and Tom Holder
[redacted]

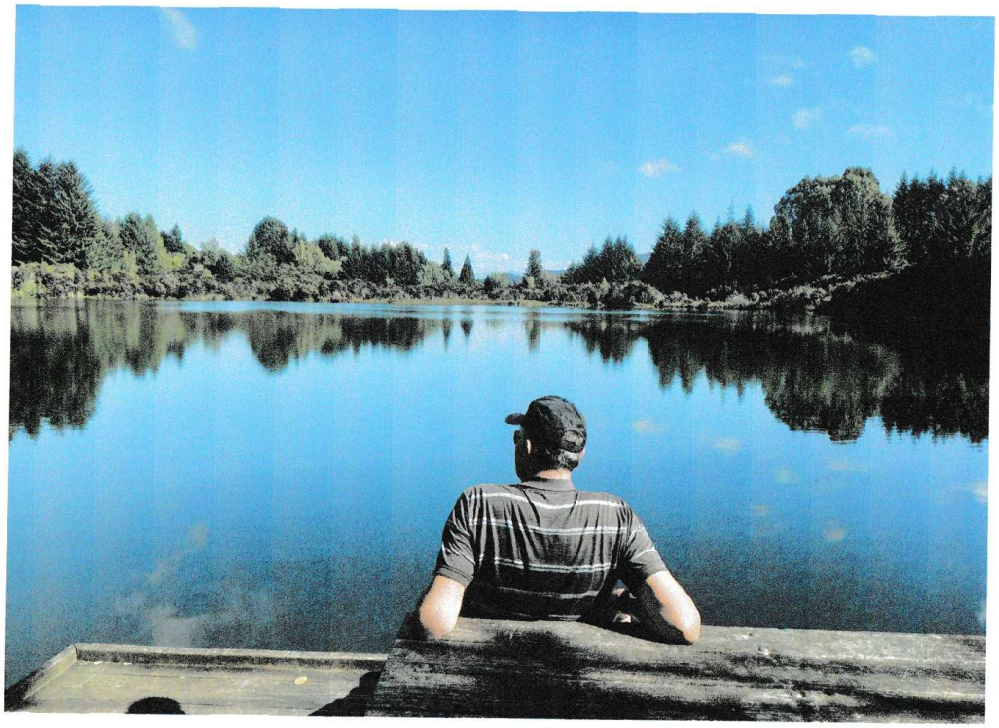


Proposed reality of Sauna's space occupation to scale. – Public loss

Page 199



Exsisting deck 7·6m x 2·7m
Deck to top of walking pole 4m



Current views and lake access

[redacted]

From: John Carter [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 20 March 2026 1:54 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission opposed to Ivon Wilson sauna

This message is from an external sender

Tēnā koe

Please accept this submission by email, I don't wish to speak to this further unless required.

I'd like to express my disappointment with the council process for revealing the intention to grant very cheap and extended commercial use of public space in Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau reserve: namely the sauna initiative led by Nigel Reece.

Whilst I support provision of sauna and wellbeing services locally, I don't think this proposal is in keeping with current use of this space, and would encourage council to either charge far more for rent, to benefit the park users more, or to pitch the idea somewhere else, like the water park or bird sanctuary, but ideally on private land.

I have been using Ivon Wilson reserve in many ways as a local resident ratepayer for thirty years. It is not a preferred reserve to me but my uses have given me an extensive understanding of it. I'm active as kaitiaki: last winter I was conversing with council about the volume of dog excrement in the park and providing local biological solutions.

My uses have been as a kindergarten teacher with preschool akonga nature based learning, as a frisbee golfer and as venue for weddings and funerals like Frana Cardno's.

Ivon Wilson reserve is a rare reserve in Te Anau: sheltered from commercial tourist activity that sees a cultural cringe on conversations along the Kepler Track or Main Street. I enjoy cycling in the allowed places of the park in the evenings, often seeing people eating fish and chips on the proposed wharf to be used, enjoying quiet time by the lake will no longer be possible with the sauna there.

I enjoy the unruly wild nature of the wilder dog walking areas which also connect to the boardwalk near the proposed sauna when I treasure whānau kuri hikoi.

Further more - I've trained in the lake Henry as an open water swimmer in summer and winter and am of the experienced opinion that the water isn't nearly as healthful as the proposed operator expects for sauna clients bathing needs after their sweat sessions. Particularly in summer, the lake is not nearly as dynamic or ecologically balanced as Lake Te Anau. It's warm and stagnant in that corner in summer but much colder in winter than Lake Te Anau. I expect it isn't healthy for public use and should be investigated before opening to tourists too. I wonder if council has ever tested it? In my swims I've never seen the sponges, mussels or small fish ecology that keep Lake Te Anau healthy.

I pragmatically doubt that the sauna operator will be able to ensure that the skin care/lotions of their clients is "reef safe" for the Lake Henry biota. I expect the sauna operator will want to spray their structure for spiders, which will impact the local insect life, as will much of the cleaning requirements of the sauna to meet expected tourist cleanliness.

I wish the operator well in their endeavours to provide sauna elsewhere and am mostly frustrated the council process for proposing to grant such an invasive tenure of fifteen years at such a minimal rent and to offer to renew this tenure too. A rowboat operation might suit the recreation on this lake but opening this reserve to commerce should be very carefully considered and not ambushed on the community after a crushingly huge summer of mass tourism growth.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer my opinion. I respectfully ask you refuse the right to occupy to this venture and look forward to seeing more considered proposals earlier in future

Me ngana tonu kia mōhio ake te atawhai i te wā e hiahiatia ana.

/Always try to be kinder than necessary

John Carter

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Colin Paterson [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 20 March 2026 3:28 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Comment on Lake Henry sauna proposal

This message is from an external sender

Dear Sir/Madam
I am a resident of Te Anau who uses Henry Park for recreation in the form of walking along the tracks, watching bird life, observing the lake from the platforms, enjoying views from higher areas, and enjoying the native vegetation. This is a quiet space for enjoyment and reflection to get away from the hustle and bustle of the Te Anau township, especially during tourist season.

I strongly object to the proposal to install a floating sauna on Lake Henry for commercial purposes. This will bring unwanted noise and traffic, as well as interruption of the natural surroundings. Ivan Wilson Park is a natural jewel whose heritage must be preserved, in tune with the desires of the founders of the park.

Your management objectives are "to enhance and maintain the scenic values and attractions of Ivon Wilson park" and "to as far as possible maintain Lake Henry and surrounding bog in its natural state". This sauna proposal does NOT support these objectives, in fact it will denigrate these objectives.

Other management objectives are "to allow development that is appropriate for and generally acceptable for a reserve of its nature". A floating sauna and the increased noise and traffic are NOT appropriate for Ivan Wilson Park.

The proposer is welcome to install his operation on his private land, which he is free to purchase, and thereon construct a lake, maybe in an industrial area or in the developed area of Te Anau.

If the council is interested in generating income for maintenance as a result of this proposal, then please consider a donation box by the parking area. I am sure most users would be happy to contribute to ensure preservation of the natural aspect of Ivan Wilson Park.

I sincerely hope that you will reject the proposal for installing a floating sauna on Lake Henry.

Sincerely,
Dr Colin J Paterson
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Becci Paterson [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 20 March 2026 7:53 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Ivan Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a resident of Te Anau who regularly uses Henry Park for recreation, including walking the tracks, observing birdlife, enjoying the lake from viewing platforms, and appreciating the native vegetation and elevated viewpoints. For many of us, this park provides a quiet space for reflection and respite from the busier atmosphere of the township, particularly during peak tourist seasons.

I write to express my strong opposition to the proposal to install a floating sauna on Lake Henry for commercial purposes. Such a development would introduce increased noise, traffic, and activity that would detract from the park's tranquil character and natural environment.

Ivan Wilson Park is a treasured natural space whose character and heritage deserve to be preserved in keeping with the intentions of its founders. The proposal appears inconsistent with the Council's own management objectives, including enhancing and maintaining the park's scenic values and attractions, and preserving Lake Henry and its surrounding environment in as natural a state as possible. A commercial floating sauna would undermine, rather than support, these goals.

Additionally, while the management plan allows for development that is appropriate and generally acceptable for a reserve of this nature, a commercial sauna operation—along with its associated noise and increased visitor traffic—does not align with the purpose or character of the park.

There are more suitable alternatives for such a venture. The proposer could establish this business on privately owned land, in an appropriately zoned or developed area of Te Anau, where it would not compromise a treasured natural setting.

This is ultimately a question of priorities: whether to safeguard a unique and peaceful natural space, or, to allow incremental commercialization to take hold. I urge you to make the right decision and reject this proposal.

If the Council's interest in this proposal is partly financial, I encourage consideration of less intrusive options, such as installing a voluntary donation box near the parking area. Many park users would likely be willing to contribute toward the maintenance and preservation of this special place.

I respectfully urge the Council to reject the proposal to install a floating sauna on Lake Henry and to prioritise the long-term protection of Ivon Wilson Park's natural character.

Sincerely,

Ms. Becci J. Flanders-Paterson
[redacted]

Sent from my iPhone

[redacted]

From: S. Peoples [redacted]
Sent: Saturday, 21 March 2026 9:08 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission Opposing the proposal by SDC to grant a licence to Occupy part of Lake Henry
Attachments: Formal Submission Opposing Proposed Licence to Occupy.pdf

This message is from an external sender

To Whom It May Concern,
Please find my submission attached.
Regards

Dr S.J. Peoples
Te Anau

Formal Submission Opposing Proposed Licence to Occupy – Lake Henry (Section 1 SO 384696)

Dear Sir/Madam,

I write to formally lodge this submission in opposition to the proposal by the Southland District Council ("Council") to grant a licence to occupy part of Lake Henry, legally described as Section 1 SO 384696 and classified as a Recreation Reserve pursuant to the **Reserves Act 1977** ("the Act").

For the reasons set out below, I submit that the proposal is inconsistent with the statutory purpose of the reserve, fails to meet the relevant legal thresholds under the Act, and gives rise to significant adverse environmental, ecological, and amenity effects. Accordingly, the application should be declined.

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1. Failure to Meet Statutory Requirements under the Reserves Act 1977

The reserve is classified as a **Recreation Reserve** and is therefore subject to the purpose provisions set out in **section 17 of the Reserves Act 1977**, which require that the reserve be managed for public recreation and enjoyment, while safeguarding the natural environment.

Further, under **section 48 of the Act**, the granting of any lease or licence is contingent upon the structure or activity being *necessary* to enable the public to obtain benefit and enjoyment of the reserve.

It is submitted that:

- The proposed floating sauna is **not "necessary"** for the public's use or enjoyment of the reserve.
- The activity is **commercial in nature** and could be readily located outside the reserve.
- The proposal does not enhance, and is in fact likely to **detract from**, the existing recreational and amenity values of the reserve.

The necessity threshold under section 48 is a high one. It is not sufficient that a structure is desirable or novel; it must be demonstrably required to enable the reserve's purpose to be fulfilled. That threshold is not met in this instance.

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2. Incompatibility with the Character and Purpose of the Reserve

Lake Henry, situated within Ivon Wilson Park, is a small, enclosed, and highly valued recreational and ecological environment. It is widely recognised for its:

- Tranquil and passive recreational character.
- Role as a designated **children's fishery**.
- Scenic qualities, including uninterrupted natural views and reflections.

Given the lake's limited scale (approximately 3.5 hectares and 230 metres in diameter), any permanent or semi-permanent structure would have a **disproportionate visual and spatial impact**.

The introduction of a commercial floating structure would fundamentally alter the character of the reserve, undermining its existing use as a quiet, nature-focused space. This is inconsistent with both the **purpose of classification** and the Council's obligations under the Act.

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3. Adverse Effects on Ecological Values

Lake Henry and its surrounds constitute a sensitive ecological habitat supporting a range of indigenous species, including:

- Native longfin eel (*Anguilla dieffenbachii*);
- Indigenous waterfowl (including Pūtangitangi, Pāpango, and Kōau);
- Native forest bird species (tūī, korimako, kererū);
- Native vegetation (mānuka, tī kōuka, ferns);
- Freshwater invertebrate communities integral to ecosystem functioning.

The introduction of a commercial activity of this nature creates a material risk of ecological disturbance, contrary to the requirement under section 17 to **safeguard the natural environment**.

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4. Adverse Environmental Effects

The proposal gives rise to a range of foreseeable adverse effects:

a. Air Quality

a. The use of wood-fired heating systems is inconsistent with contemporary environmental standards. Scientific evidence demonstrates that wood burners emit significant particulate matter. The European Environmental Bureau has revealed,

"Burning just one kg of wood [in a modern wood heater] will pollute 500,000 cubic meters of completely clean air up to the level of the current WHO air quality guideline for fine particulate matter."[1]

Given the sheltered nature of the lake environment, there is a high likelihood that emissions would accumulate, resulting in:

- Degradation of air quality;
- Adverse effects on wildlife;
- Diminution of the amenity values of the reserve.

b. Noise and Amenity Effects

The proposed activity is inherently inconsistent with the existing quiet enjoyment of the reserve. The potential for:

- Elevated noise levels (including music and group use);
- Night-time disturbance;

represents a clear adverse effect on the amenity values protected under the Act.

[1] https://sustaintrust.org.nz/blog/the-dark-side-of-wood-burning-air-pollution#:~:text=Wood%20burning%20is%20a%20key%20contributor%20to,pollution%20from%20domestic%20fires%20were%20$4.6%20billion(accessed 04/03/2026)

c. Water Quality

The absence of on-site sanitation infrastructure presents a foreseeable risk of contamination, including:

- Human waste entering the lake;
- Introduction of pollutants through increased recreational use;
- Litter and refuse entering the water body.

Given the lake's limited size and low throughflow, it is particularly vulnerable to contamination.

d. Land and Visual Effects

The proposal would result in:

- Increased foot traffic and associated degradation of surrounding land;
- Increased litter and waste;
- Significant visual intrusion within a currently natural landscape.

The visual impact alone is sufficient to conclude that the proposal is inconsistent with the reserve's purpose.

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5. Insufficient Information and Failure to Address Key Operational Matters

The proposal, as presented, lacks sufficient detail to enable a proper assessment of its effects. In particular, there is inadequate information regarding:

- Access arrangements and infrastructure requirements;
- Lighting and its effects on the natural environment;
- Waste management and sanitation;
- Ongoing maintenance and monitoring responsibilities;
- Noise control and user behaviour management;
- Security and enforcement mechanisms.

In the absence of this information, the Council cannot be satisfied that the statutory requirements of the Act are met, nor that adverse effects can be appropriately avoided, remedied, or mitigated.

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6. Precedent Effects and Commercialisation of Reserve Land

Granting this licence would set a significant precedent for the introduction of **commercial activities within a protected reserve**.

Such a precedent risks incremental commercialisation, undermining the long-term integrity and purpose of the reserve. The Act does not contemplate reserves being used as platforms for private commercial enterprise where such use is not necessary for public enjoyment.

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7. Cultural and Historical Considerations

Lake Henry is intrinsically linked to the legacy of Richard Henry, a pioneering conservationist in Fiordland and New Zealand, for whom the lake is named. His work, including the establishment of

one of New Zealand's earliest reserves in 1891 to protect native bird species such as kiwi, kākāpō, and piopio, reflects a clear commitment to preservation and environmental stewardship.

The creation of Lake Henry and Ivon Wilson Park embodies these values—providing a tranquil, scenic environment for public enjoyment. The introduction of a commercial enterprise of this nature is inconsistent with that legacy and undermines the intended purpose of the reserve as a protected natural space.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, it is submitted that:

- ***The proposal fails to meet the statutory requirements of the Reserves Act 1977, particularly sections 17 and 48;***
- ***The activity is not necessary for the public's use and enjoyment of the reserve;***
- ***The proposal will result in significant adverse environmental, ecological, and amenity effects;***
- ***The application lacks sufficient detail to enable proper assessment;***
- ***The granting of the licence would set an inappropriate precedent.***

Accordingly, I respectfully submit that the application should be **declined**.

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]

Dr S.J. Peoples

[redacted]

From: Bryan and Nicola Stout [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, 22 March 2026 8:17 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Licence to Occupy Floating Sauna Ivon Wilson

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern

I strongly object to the granting of this licence.

Ivon Wilson Park is a public space where people go to recreate, walking with or without dogs, disc golf, enjoying the serenity of the park. Lake Henry is a beautiful spot to sit and enjoy the peaceful surroundings.

Having a business in the park will alter the feel of the park and does not sit within the parameters of being available for all to enjoy.

A public park is not the place for a private business.

Thanks
Nicola Stout

[redacted]

From: Evelyn Morison [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, 22 March 2026 10:13 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Floating sauna proposal at Ivan Wilson Reserve

This message is from an external sender

I am a permanent resident of Te Anau, living here for 12 years.

I am against the application to establish a floating sauna at Ivan Wilson park.

Lake Henry is a peaceful area for our community to enjoy away from the bustle of a tourist town. The trees, tracks and scenery provide the residents and visitors a safe space to think,meditate and enjoy the beautiful surroundings all year round.

The proposed sauna impacts on all of this by its presence and operation of a commercial building and associated infrastructure.

I have concerns that allowing the sauna to proceed will be a "gateway" to allow other commercial ventures to proceed in this area.

I support the concept of a sauna but NOT in the Ivan Wilson reserve.

I do not wish to speak at the hearing in April,
Ev Morison.

22 March, 2026

Senior Property Advisor
Southland District Council
contactproperty@southlanddc.govt.nz

To the Senior Property Advisor

We, the signatories, are writing this submission to declare our opposition to the 'Intention to Grant a Licence to Occupy over Part of Ivon Wilson Park Recreation Reserve to Floating Sauna Limited'.

We oppose the above application on the grounds that we do not believe it is in compliance with The Reserves Act 1977 or the Ivon Wilson Park management plan 2008.

The Reserves Act 1977 states:

3(1)(a) The general purpose of the Reserve Act 1977 is: *…providing, for the preservation and management for the benefit and enjoyment of the public.*

> 3(1)(c) *ensuring, as far as possible, the preservation of access for the public to and along the sea coast, its bays and inlets and offshore islands, lakeshores, and riverbanks, and fostering and promoting the preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment and of the margins of lakes and rivers and the protection of them from unnecessary subdivision and development.*

This is unnecessary development. The appeal of Ivon Wilson Park (IWP) is its peace and tranquillity; its inherent value lies in it being untouched by development.

> 54(1)(d) *grant leases…provided that the trade, business or occupation must be necessary to enable the public to obtain the benefit and enjoyment of the reserve or for the convenience of the persons using the reserve.*

This proposal is not necessary to enable the public to obtain the benefit and enjoyment of Ivon Wilson Park. The benefit and enjoyment of Ivon Wilson Park lies in its peaceful and undeveloped parkland character.

Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan 2008

3. Values
Scenic and Recreational Values. *The primary values of the area lie in the open parkland character with its mixture of conifer, deciduous and evergreen trees; and the central focal point provided by Lake Henry with its contrasting surrounding indigenous bog vegetation.*

These together with the area's close proximity to Te Anau and easy accessibility, make it ideal as a family or individual recreation facility. (p.11)

4. Objectives
Vision: *To build on Ivon Wilson's dream of creating a landscape of trees that attracts people and wildlife.*
Management Objectives
(ii) *To enhance and maintain the scenic values and attractions of Ivon Wilson Park.*
(iii) *To as far as possible maintain Lake Henry and surrounding bog in its natural state.* (p.12)

5. Management Policies
Recreational Use/Facilities
Policy (iii) *To keep the number of structures on the reserve to a minimum.*
Explanation: *Ivon Wilson Park, with its parkland character, offers visitors peace and tranquillity. It is important to ensure that any upgrades and developments recognise and complement these characteristics.* (p.18)

Leases and Temporary Use
Policy (ii) *To grant leases when they are considered to be in the public interest and in accordance with the reserve's purpose, objectives and policy.*
Explanation: *The Reserves Act clearly establishes that leasing and other occupational rights must be considered as one aspect of the total management requirements of a reserve and that as a general rule the rights of the public take priority over the requirements of a prospective lessee.* (p.21)

Buildings and Structures
Policy (ii) *To restrict the number of buildings, utilities and structures to a level which facilitates the safe and appropriate use of the reserve.* (p.22)

6. Development Proposals
Lake Henry and surrounding Bog Vegetation as Central Point
This area has important native qualities that need to be maintained. Any future developments in this area would need to be sensitive to the natural environment. Tracks and jetty-like structures to facilitate access and fishing would be typical acceptable type of development. (p.24)

Lake Henry is a naturally occurring lake and is considered a remnant of Lake Te Anau. It is also almost circular and approximately 200m in diameter. This equates to approximately 3.14 hectares.

Lake Derby in Tasmania is a result of an abandoned mine hole gradually filling up since the mine's final closure in the late 1940s. While the gradual filling may be considered natural, the origin of the mine hole could not be considered the same. It is approximately 9 hectares.

Lake Burley in ACT is a result of the damming of the Molonglo River in the 1960s. It is approximately 664 hectares.

The lakes used in Australia by this company for floating saunas are very different propositions than Lake Henry. Lake Henry is tiny and circular. The visual effects on Lake Henry would be seen from virtually all vantage points. Lake Henry is a naturally occurring lake with features that need to be maintained. The primary value of IWP lies in its predominantly natural setting and tranquil nature.

No matter how award-winning the architecture of it might be, a floating sauna situated on a small, naturally occurring lake does not enhance the overall landscape.

Whilst, technically, Ivon Wilson Park would still be freely available for the public to access and use, the introduction of a commercial interest on Lake Henry, the central focal point of the park, would more than likely change the nature and character of the entire park.

With 2 saunas proposed, that is up to $650 per hour (based on Australian figures of 5 persons per sauna at $55AUD per person, per hour. This being approximately $65NZD at time of writing). Up to 10 people per hour alternating between warming-up in the sauna and cooling-down by jumping in the pristine waters of Lake Henry will create noise, and is therefore likely to change the serene nature of IWP.

Selling the soul/focal point of IWP for around $3,500 (licensing fee + contribution to toilet cleaning) per annum is in contravention of the role of Southland District Council as custodians.

Peace and tranquillity are the gifts that Ivon Wilson Park freely and equitably provides. We have a responsibility to protect them.

The jetty-like structure does not facilitate public access. It facilitates user pays access. It is not an essential structure so does not comply with keeping the number of structures to a minimum. Due to the circular nature of Lake Henry it would be visible from all shorelines, detracting from the objective of maintaining Lake Henry in its natural state. It would also make enjoying the existing public jetty for reasons such as rest and reflection, scenic values, or fishing for young anglers, virtually impossible. The rights of the public take priority over a prospective lessee.

In a world of increasing noise and encroachment by commercial interests, we are lucky/privileged in Te Anau to still have areas free of this. IWP is one of these areas. IWP, whose humble purpose is to grant ease of access to nature at no cost, at any time.

IWP does not discriminate. It provides a quiet and uncommercialised connection to nature for anyone and everyone.

Our role as temporary custodians of the whenua is to care for it and preserve it, not use it for commercial gain.

We do not believe the proposed licence is in keeping with the purpose and vision of the Ivon Wilson Park management plan; nor the Reserves Act 1977. With respect to this, we, the signatories, strongly object to the proposed licence to occupy. Please do not grant this licence to occupy.

Yours sincerely

Bernie Cournane
Amy Doig
Stephen Doig

[redacted]

From: james Hobson [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, 22 March 2026 8:20 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission Opposing Proposed Licence to Occupy – Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to formally oppose the proposed Licence to Occupy for a floating sauna operation on Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Park.

I strongly believe this proposal is inconsistent with both the intent and appropriate use of this reserve.

Ivon Wilson Park is a valued community recreation reserve, established for passive enjoyment of nature, family use, and preservation of a peaceful environment. The introduction of a long-term commercial operation (15 years plus a further 15-year renewal option) represents a significant shift away from that purpose. It risks setting a precedent for further commercialisation of public reserve land, which should remain accessible and free from private enterprise dominance.

The proposed activity is not minor or temporary. A 30-year potential occupation of public lake space for private business use is substantial and effectively privatises part of a shared natural asset. This is particularly concerning given the reserve's classification under the Reserves Act 1977, where the primary purpose is for public recreation and enjoyment.

There are also broader concerns including:

- The visual and environmental impact on what is currently a natural and tranquil setting
- Increased pressure on the lake and surrounding infrastructure
- Loss of amenity for existing users who value the quiet and open nature of the park
- The appropriateness of commercial activity within a reserve of this type

While I support local business and tourism initiatives, these should be located in areas that are zoned and intended for commercial activity and not within a community recreation reserve that holds significant local and historical value.

Once commercial use is established in a space like this, it becomes increasingly difficult to prevent further encroachment. This proposal therefore has implications far beyond the footprint of the sauna itself.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that Council decline the application.

Yours sincerely,
James Hobson

[redacted]

From: Johanna Seibel [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 23 March 2026 9:03 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,

As a Te Anau local and frequent user of Ivon Wilson park, I write to formally oppose the proposed Licence to Occupy to Floating Sauna Limited over part of Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve.

While I understand that resource consent has been granted for the land use component under the Resource Management Act, that approval does not override the separate statutory requirements that apply under the Reserves Act 1977. The granting of a Licence to Occupy must still be consistent with the purpose of the reserve and the applicable reserve management plan.

In this case, both the applicant and Council planning staff have acknowledged that the proposal does not comply with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan. This is a critical issue, as it calls into question whether Council can lawfully grant the Licence to Occupy without first amending the Management Plan.

Statutory framework and Management Plan consistency

Under the Reserves Act 1977, any licence to occupy must be consistent with the classified purpose of the reserve and, where a management plan exists, must align with that plan. Where a proposal is not contemplated by or is contrary to the Management Plan, it is my understanding that Council cannot properly grant a licence without first undertaking a formal plan change process.

Given that the current proposal has been identified as inconsistent with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan, it is difficult to see how the statutory requirements for issuing a Licence to Occupy can be satisfied.

Conflicts with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan

The proposal appears to depart from the Management Plan in several key respects:

- **Restriction of public access**: The granting of exclusive occupation over part of Lake Henry reduces public access to what is a shared community asset, contrary to the principle of open and accessible recreation space.
- **Visual and landscape effects**: The proposal includes a changing structure that does not appear to blend with the surrounding environment (notably its white appearance), which is inconsistent with maintaining the natural character and visual amenity of the reserve.
- **Use of wood-fired heating**: The proposal includes two wood-burning heaters, despite provisions within the Management Plan that prohibit fires. This represents a direct conflict with established reserve rules.

Taken together, these inconsistencies are not minor or technical in nature—they go to the core intent of how the reserve is to be managed and experienced by the public.

Statutory purpose of recreation reserves

Section 17(1) of the Reserves Act 1977 requires that recreation reserves be managed primarily for public recreation, physical wellbeing, and enjoyment, while also protecting the natural environment and landscape values. Any commercial activity must remain clearly secondary to these purposes.

The proposed licence would grant exclusive occupation for a commercial operation for 15 years, with a further right of renewal extending occupation to up to 30 years. This represents a long-term private use of public reserve land and risks elevating commercial activity beyond an ancillary role.

It is unclear how this level of exclusive, long-duration commercial occupation can be reconciled with the requirement that the reserve remain principally available for public use.

Environmental and reserve character considerations

The establishment of a floating commercial structure on Lake Henry introduces potential cumulative effects on water quality, ecological values, and the natural character of the reserve. These effects require careful consideration, particularly given the statutory obligation to protect natural features.

In addition, Ivon Wilson Park is valued for its passive recreational character, open access, and low-impact use. Increased commercial activity and permanent infrastructure risk altering this character and changing how the reserve is used and experienced.

Infrastructure capacity and public use effects

The reserve's infrastructure, including parking and accessways—appears designed for general recreational use rather than sustained commercial activity. Increased visitor numbers associated with a commercial operation are likely to place additional pressure on these shared facilities.

This may reduce accessibility and enjoyment for the general public through congestion, reduced parking availability, and increased intensity of use.

Effects on existing recreational activities

Lake Henry is widely used for recreational fishing, particularly by children and families, as a safe and accessible environment. Increased swimming and water-based activity associated with the sauna operation may create conflicts with fishing use, including safety concerns and reduced suitability for its current purpose.

More broadly, the reserve supports a range of activities including walking, dog walking, mountain biking, disc golf, and passive recreation. If these activities are displaced or constrained due to commercial use, it raises serious questions about whether the reserve continues to fulfil its primary function.

Duration of occupation

The proposed licence term of up to 30 years further compounds these concerns. Such a lengthy duration risks establishing a de facto permanent commercial presence within a public reserve and

limits the ability to reassess environmental effects, infrastructure capacity, and impacts on public use over time.

I also note the relatively low level of financial return to Council associated with this proposal. Based on the information available, the occupation equates to approximately $43 per week for the use of part of a public asset over a potential 30-year period. This raises questions as to whether the proposed arrangement appropriately reflects the value of exclusive commercial use of reserve land, particularly where that use may restrict public access and enjoyment.

Taken together, the long duration and minimal financial return further reinforce concerns that the proposal does not represent an appropriate or balanced use of recreation reserve land.

Management Plan review

I also note that the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan is outdated and has previously been identified as requiring review, with indications that this process has been deferred. While a review may be necessary, this does not justify approving activities that are currently inconsistent with the operative plan.

Approving a long-term commercial licence in advance of any plan review risks pre-empting proper public consultation and strategic planning for the reserve's future.

Conclusion

In summary, the proposal is inconsistent with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan, introduces restrictions on public access, increases built development within the reserve, conflicts with rules regarding fires, and raises broader concerns under the Reserves Act 1977.

Given these issues, it is difficult to see how Council could lawfully or appropriately grant the proposed Licence to Occupy without first amending the Management Plan through a proper statutory process.

For these reasons, I respectfully oppose the application and request that Council decline to grant the Licence to Occupy.

Kind regards,
Johanna Seibel
Te Anau

[redacted]

From: Lyn Bentley [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 23 March 2026 1:54 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Lake Henry Proposal Submission
Attachments: Lake Henry Submission.pdf

This message is from an external sender

Please find attached Submission For Lake Henry Proposal

L S Bentley
[redacted]

[redacted]

I wish to submit my OBJECTION to granting Land Use consent for a floating sauna on Lake Henry.

This consent will absolutely destroy the natural beauty of the area. It is a very scenic and peaceful place to visit, and views of the proposed sauna building from anywhere round the lake will be destroyed by its presence.

I urge notice to be taken of many Te Anau residents who are also objecting to this proposal. Many are not aware of this due to lack of digital communication. But once made aware would wish to object.

I do NOT wish to speak to this submissi

Yours sincerely

Lyn Bentley

[redacted]

From: Kate Murray [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 23 March 2026 4:05 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission in Support of Business Operating Within Ivon Wilson park

This message is from an external sender

Dear Council Members,

I am writing to express my support for the operation of the Floating Sauna within Ivan Wilson Park, while also acknowledging a key concern that has been raised within the community.

The business itself provides a valuable service to park users and contributes positively to the atmosphere of the park. It enhances the experience for visitors by offering a recreational activity, encouraging people to stay longer and make greater use of this shared public space. It also supports the local economy through employment and local sourcing.

However, it is clear that there is a level of community concern—largely stemming from a lack of accessible information about the business, its operations, and the decision-making process behind its presence in the park. This uncertainty has understandably led to frustration and speculation.

I believe this concern can be constructively addressed through improved communication and transparency. Providing clear information about matters such as operating hours, environmental considerations, lease or licensing arrangements, and how community feedback is being incorporated would go a long way toward building trust and reducing apprehension.

With better communication, I am confident that much of the current concern would be alleviated, allowing the community to more fully appreciate the benefits the business brings.

In summary, I support the operation of the Floating Sauna in Ivon Wilson Park and I encourage Council to prioritise open and proactive communication with the community to ensure confidence in this and similar initiatives.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Peter Zessin [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 23 March 2026 4:54 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission against Floating Sauna Limited Proposal on Lake Henry

This message is from an external sender

Kia Ora,

I would like to make a submission against the proposed floating sauna on Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Park.

As an avid user of this recreational reserve, I am appalled that the SDC have proposed to grant a license to a commercial venture within the park.
Such an activity is not in line with the current aspects of the park which I enjoy, including a quite and peaceful area to spend time in, photography of aurora's over the lake, and general well being.

A floating sauna on Lake Henry would create waves from people jumping into the lake, which makes it impossible for photographers like myself to photograph capture the aurora's reflection over the lake. There are many other area's on Lake Te Anau which would be more suited to such a commercial activity.
The intrusion of smoke across the park from the sauna's chimney's will also detract from the fresh air quality which the park currently has and is enjoyed for all recreational users.

I would like to draw your attention to section 10.2 of the lease agreement which states: The Licensee will not carry on or permit to be carried on upon the Licence Area any noisy or offensive trace or business or permit anything in or about the Licence Area which is or may become a nuisance or annoyance to either the Licensor or the owners or occupiers of land in the vicinity of the Licence Area. Clearly the activities and noise generated from the proposal are not in line with the agreement.

Section 10.4 of the lease agreement also states that the Licensee shall not carry out any activity on the Licence Area that my damage or destroy any natural, scenic, historic, cultural, archaeological, biological, geological or other natural or scientific features or indigenous flora and fauna.

I believe that the proposed floating sauna will destroy the natural features, and scenic features of the area, so again, I am totally against this proposal.

Finally, the Reserves Act clearly establishes that leasing and other occupational rights must be considered as one aspect of the total management requirements of a reserve and that as a general rule, the rights of the public take PRIORITY over the requirements of a prospective lessee. With the number of submissions that SDC has already received against this proposal, I trust that you will adhere to due process and decline the lease for Floating Sauna Limited to occupy Ivon Wilson Park with a commercial activity. It would be a further waste of rate payer money if the Ombudsman were to be brought in on the matter.

Kind regards,

Peter Zessin.

[redacted]

From: Katherine Walker [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 23 March 2026 6:46 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Intention to grant a licence to occupy over part of Ivon Wilson recreation reserve

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern

I support the granting of a licence for the Floating Sauna in Ivon Wilson Park.

The Ivon Wilson reserve is extremely underutilised and it will be a fun all-year-round activity for Te Anau locals and visitors.

I don't think I have ever seen anyone else on that particular lake ramp.

It does not stop other users from leisure activities whether frisbee, dog walkers or kids running around. There is room for everyone.

It would be good if all three sauna buildings could be brown and not have the middle one white – this stands out and is not a colour in tune with the natural environment.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information.

Ngā mihi mahana
Katherine

Katherine Walker
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: ani havlat [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 23 March 2026 8:45 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Floating Sauna

This message is from an external sender

I want to express my strong support for the floating sauna. What an amazing project.

The benefits of this type of development includes bringing people to the area which increases the length of stays and means more money coming into the community.

The project is clean and healthy supporting people to refuce stress.
I look foward to coming to Te Anau to experience it.

Sincerely

Ani Havlat.

[redacted]

From: Julie Murray [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 23 March 2026 9:06 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Proposed Sauna at Lake Henry in Te Anau.

This message is from an external sender

I'd like to show my 100% support towards this project. I think it will be an amazing asset to our town.

I can see the proposed floating sauna will represent a low-impact, nature-based tourism and wellness activity that aligns with the planning scheme and the Ivon Wilson Management Plan 2008.

I think it also fits in with the tourism character of Fiordland's growing demand for sustainable, experience-based tourism.

Thank you,
Julie Murray,
Te Anau.

[redacted]

From: Kate Cotter [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 23 March 2026 9:07 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Floating Sauna TeAnau

This message is from an external sender

Hello
As a Southland ratepayer I wish to strongly oppose the construction of a floating sauna on Lake Henry in the Ivon Wilson Reserve.
I am opposing this venture as I believe this location is not appropriate. I am concerned about infrastructure such as toilets, rubbish facilities, lighting and safety. I am also concerned about access for emergency services. The reserve was intended for, and is currently used as a place for individuals and especially small children to enjoy nature.

The mobile Te Anau lakefront sauna provides an appropriate sauna experience for the community.

Thank you for the opportunity to have input into what really should not go ahead in that location.

Kind regards
Kate Cotter
Get Outlook for iOS

[redacted]

From: Ingrid Savell [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 23 March 2026 9:13 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Floating Sauna Te Anau

This message is from an external sender

I am writing to express my full and enthusiastic support for the floating sauna initiative.

I greatly look forward to traveling to Te Anau to experience this unique facility firsthand.

Cheers, Ingrid Savell

[redacted]

From: Murray & Tarn [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 23 March 2026 9:02 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Floating Sauna Ltd submission
Attachments: Floating Sauna Ltd submission.docx

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern
Please find attached our submission to Floating Sauna Ltd
Regards
Tarn & Murray Willans


Virus-free.www.avast.com

[redacted]

Te Anau

23/03/2026

Submission

Licence to occupy to Floating Sauna Ltd

Lake Henry, Te Anau

To whom it may concern

We wish to submit this document in opposition to the floating sauna proposal on Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau.

Reading through the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan, we can see many inconsistencies between the proposed sauna activity and the values, policies and objectives of said Plan, particularly in relation to the special character and water quality of Lake Henry…

The Plan constantly alludes to Lake Henry and the surrounding bog vegetation as the central point of the reserve. While in the past the lakes pure waters provided spring water for the Te Anau fish hatchery, in recent times the trout hatchery facility and water has been used for rearing the endangered Whio (Blue Duck). It seems that Lake Henry is a very important part of the Park, and that ensuring that this remains as natural as possible is vital.

Under the Ecological Values the plan notes "the lack of induced enrichment and eutrophication in Lake Henry together with the virtually natural state of its surrounding vegetation ensure the water supply to the Wildlife Park … is of very high quality".

"Management objectives – (iii) to as far as possible maintain Lake Henry and surrounding bog in its natural state"

Management Policies - "to manage the Park in such a manner as to not negatively impact on Lake Henry water quality". This refers to nutrient run-off – fertilisers and pesticides – but with increased numbers of people jumping in daily, there could be impacts from skin care products, bodily excretions.

Development Proposals – Lake Henry and surrounding bog environment – "this area has important native qualities that need to be maintained. Any future development in this area would need to be sensitive to the natural environment. Tracks and jetty-like structures to facilitate access and fishing would be a typical acceptable type of development"

Lake Henry is an ideal location for junior anglers, and Fish & Game periodically introduce trout to maintain fish stocks at a suitable level. Having the sauna exclusively occupying one of the 3 jetties reduces the areas available to these young fishers.

It is noted in the special conditions in the Licence to Occupy document, it states that "there are to be no discharges into the lake or surrounds from the activity…including biological and chemical substances". It is hard to imagine people not urinating in this lake in between sauna intervals. Depending on the use of this facility, the effect of this sewerage input could have a significant negative impact on the water quality in this special place.

Despite the comments and assurance from Edgar Planning Application that the water quality of Lake Henry would not be compromised we feel that after reading the Management Plan in detail, noting the relevant points from the Plan as above, the application does not align with these points.

As a local regular recreational user of Ivon Wilson Park (walking, running, adventuring with young children from a local ECE centre), I value this park for its natural open spaces, an area close to town to wind down, spend some time in the peace and quiet. This is reiterated in the Plan …

"The local community value Ivon Wilson park as a tranquil, natural space to enjoy. One of the Management Objectives is "to foster public appreciation for the park, facilitate public access to, and recreational use of the area"

The Management policies include "leasing of reserves enables private enterprises…to provide recreational facilities to the public". However this particular private enterprise seems to be in conflict with many of the other objectives and policies of the Plan ie water quality, quiet recreational

The Management policy - recreational use/facilities (iii) to keep the number of structures on the reserve to a minimum, with the following explanation "Ivon Wilson Park, with its parkland character, offers visitors peace and tranquility. It is important to ensure any upgrades and developments recognize and compliment these characteristics".

The Management policy for leases and temporary use "(ii) to grant leases when they are considered to be in the public interest and in accordance with the reserve's purpose, objectives and policy" and (iv) "to require all lessees to act in accordance with the Management Plan"

As is noted in the Management Plan, public opinion must be a significant determinate in the outcome of this process. "The Reserves Act clearly establishes that leasing and other occupational rights must be considered as one aspect of the total management requirements of a reserve and that as a general rule the rights of the public take the priority over the requirements of a prospective lessee"

In closing we would like to stress that we feel that approving this long term lease (15 years, plus 15 years) will materially change the feel of the entire reserve. Having a commercial business such as this was never envisaged in this park, from its early inception, through Lands & Surveys, to its present management by the Council. We believe this will create a permanent negative change to this reserve. We are not anti development but in our opinion, Ivon Wilson Park is an inappropriate place for this floating sauna.

We respectfully ask that this application is declined, and we would like to be heard in support of this submission.

Thank you for your time

Tarn & Murray Willans

[redacted]

From: Rebecca Howe [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 23 March 2026 9:31 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission Opposing Licence to Occupy – Floating Sauna, Lake Henry (Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau)

This message is from an external sender

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to formally oppose the proposal to establish a floating sauna in Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau.

My name is Rebecca Howe. I have lived in Te Anau for 9 years, and have spent every summer of my first 18 years holidaying in Te Anau. This is a park I frequent most days while walking my dog, and it holds significant personal and community value. It is a place of tranquility, natural beauty, and peace. Importantly, it is one of the few locations in Te Anau where visitors can reliably find shelter from wind, rain, and sun regardless of the weather. The park serves as a vital shared space for locals and visitors alike, offering a quiet and restorative environment that should be protected.

My opposition to the floating sauna proposal is based on the following concerns:

1. The proposal appears to be inconsistent with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan. Developments within the park should align with its intended purpose and guiding principles, which prioritize public use, environmental preservation, and passive recreation.
2. The proposed structure would significantly impact the existing dock/jetty area at Lake Henry by restricting views and diminishing the sense of serenity currently enjoyed by park users. It is inappropriate for a commercial enterprise to alter the layout, visual landscape, and public use of a community park for private profit. The dock is an established and valued spot to enjoy Lake Henry from, and its current accessibility and openness should be preserved.

If, however, this proposal is proceeding regardless of community opposition, and consultation is not genuinely being considered, then at a minimum the following issues must be addressed:

1. The floating sauna must not be permitted to utilize the existing public jetty for access. This infrastructure is intended for public use and should remain freely accessible without interference from private commercial operations.
2. The proposed rental arrangement is inadequate. If rental income is intended to contribute meaningfully to the upkeep of park facilities, then the amount must be substantially increased. As it stands, the rent appears disproportionately low for a commercial venture operating in a prime public location.
3. The proposed lease duration of 15 years, with an additional 15-year right of renewal, is excessive. Such a long-term arrangement limits future flexibility and locks the community into a decision that may not serve its long-term interests.

I strongly urge decision-makers to reconsider this proposal and to prioritize the preservation of Ivon Wilson Park as a peaceful, accessible, and community-focused space. I wish the application for a Licence to Occupy for a commercial floating sauna on Lake Henry be declined.

Please note, that I am not opposed to a floating sauna in Te Anau, but the location of said sauna in Ivon Wilson Park.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback.

Yours sincerely,

Rebecca Howe

[redacted]

From: Jenny Hodges [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 23 March 2026 8:59 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Floating sauna

This message is from an external sender

Hi I would like to express my strong support for the floating sauna in Te Anua . I think it is a fantastic idea and can't wait to come and try it .

Jenny Hodges
Sent from my iPhone

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 23 March 2026 10:06 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission: Opposition to Proposed Sauna at Lake Henry

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposal to install a sauna at Lake Henry.

I live nearby and regularly walk my dog around the lake. It is part of my daily routine and an important space for quiet reflection and wellbeing. One of the things I value most is the tranquility of the area — particularly standing on the deck overlooking the lake, watching the water and enjoying the peaceful surroundings. It is a rare and special place that feels calm, open, and uncluttered.

Lake Henry is valued by the community for its peaceful, natural environment. It is one of the few places where people can walk, reflect, enjoy wildlife, and experience quiet recreation without commercial or built distractions. Introducing a sauna structure would fundamentally change the character of the lake from a simple, serene natural setting to a more developed space.

My concerns include:

- Loss of tranquility and the quiet atmosphere currently enjoyed by walkers and visitors
- Increased noise and activity levels inconsistent with the existing environment
- Visual impact of a structure in an otherwise natural lakeside setting
- Potential increase in traffic and parking pressure in what is currently a low-impact area
- Precedent for further development around the lake in the future

I am originally from England, where many natural spaces have gradually become overdeveloped. I have seen firsthand how incremental additions — each small on their own — can eventually change the entire character of a place. One of the reasons I

value living here is the restraint shown in preserving natural areas like Lake Henry. I would hate to see this space begin heading in the same direction.

Lake Henry's value lies in what it is now — simple, peaceful, and minimally developed. Not every public space needs additional infrastructure. Maintaining areas that prioritise quiet enjoyment and natural character is important for community wellbeing.

I respectfully ask the council to reconsider this proposal and prioritise preserving the tranquil nature of Lake Henry for current and future residents.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Heather Naylor

Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone

[redacted]

From: Ian Murray [redacted]
Sent: Monday, 23 March 2026 10:11 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Proposed Floating Sauna at Ivon Wilson Park.

This message is from an external sender

I wish to show my 'support' for the proposed Floating Sauna at Ivon Wilson Park.

We promote Te Anau as the Hiking Capital of New Zealand and this proposed Sauna would be an excellent addition to this premise.

It's proposed location in the natural surroundings of Ivon Wilson Park would further enhance Te Anau's reputation as a 'Wilderness Wonderland'.

Thank you,
Ian Murray
Te Anau

[redacted]

From: Bronwyn Smith [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2026 9:01 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission against floating sauna on Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Park Te Anau

This message is from an external sender

I am writing to express my concern regarding the proposal to issue a permit for a commercial floating sauna on Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Park Te Anau.

Ivon Wilson Park was created as a peaceful, natural environment where individuals and families can relax and enjoy quiet recreations. It is already well used by the community, and in my experience, it is rarely, if ever empty. The lake and surrounding area provide a safe and calming space for children to fish from the wharf, and it is a popular setting for family and wedding photographs due to its tranquil character, and I have often seen the elderly sitting on the seat at the wharf enjoying time out in a sheltered area.

Introducing a commercial operation changes the nature of this space. A floating sauna is not consistent with the parks intended purpose as a public, low-impact recreational reserve. This proposal allows a business to benefit from an environment that has been developed and maintained over many years through ratepayer funding and community effort. If the business wishes to operate a floating sauna it should invest in its own land and facilities rather than compromising our cherished public asset.

There are also significant practical issues. The current carpark is already limited at times. Additional vehicles from paying clients would place further pressure on a space designed for casual public use. Will they be using the existing council owned toilets?
Residents pay rates for the upkeep of Ivon Wilson Park, if a commercial operator is granted access for profit will the ratepayers contributions be reduced or compensated accordingly?

For these reasons, I strongly oppose granting a permit for a floating sauna on Lake Henry. The proposal risks diminishing public enjoyment, changing the parks character and creating practical and fairness issues for the community.

Please protect Ivon Wilson Park as the peaceful, accessible and family-friendly environment it was intended to be. Keep our Ivon Wilson Park commercial free.

Bronwyn Smith
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Justine [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2026 10:04 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Floating Sauna
Attachments: Floating Sauna support letter.pdf

This message is from an external sender

Good morning,

I am sharing with you my letter of support.

Regards,

Justine Abernethy

24th March 2026

[redacted]

Property Southland District Council

To whom it may concern,

I am writing as a business owner and ratepayer to express my support for the proposed floating sauna project at Lake Henry.

From a business perspective, I see real value in initiatives like this that enhance the region's appeal through low-impact, experience-based tourism. The proposal aligns well with the existing planning framework, including the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan, and reflects the type of sustainable, nature-based activity that visitors are increasingly seeking.

Projects such as this help strengthen the local economy by encouraging visitors to stay longer and engage more deeply with what our region has to offer. Supporting small, innovative ventures is an important part of building a resilient and diverse local business environment.

I also appreciate that the concept is mindful of the natural surroundings and maintains the character of the area, while adding a unique amenity for both locals and visitors to enjoy.

As a ratepayer, I am supportive of Council considering proposals that balance environmental responsibility with economic opportunity, and I see this project as a positive step in that direction.

Kind regards,
Justine Abernethy

[redacted]

From: Kate Thompson [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2026 11:23 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Floating sauna Lake Henry Project submission

This message is from an external sender

Hi there,

I'd like to express strong support for the floating sauna project. This represents a low-impact nature based activity and will be great for tourism in the area.
I look forward to visiting Te Anau to experience this.

Thanks very much,
Kate Thompson

[redacted]

From: Beth Masser [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2026 11:37 am
To: Contact Property
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: Intention to grant licence to occupy

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern

Submission regarding request for consent for floating sauna, Ivon Wilson Park.

I, Beth Masser, object to the proposal on the basis that this private occupation of a public space would adversely affect the current quite enjoyment by all members of the community. The applicant could locate the sauna on their own private land, the park location is not necessary for the activity.

Beth Masser
[redacted]

Sara-Jane Fitzgerald

From: Bev Thorne [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2026 11:47 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Re: Intention to grant licence to occupy

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern

Submission regarding request for consent for floating sauna, Ivon Wilson Park.

I, Bev Thorne, object to the proposal on the basis that this private occupation of a public space would adversely affect the current quite enjoyment by all members of the community. The applicant could locate the sauna on their own private land, the park location is not necessary for the activity.
I regularly walk my dogs here.
I also head up there to photograph the aurora from the viewing decks & any structure would obstruct the natural view.
It is also used for children's fishing & swim training in the winter when our pool is closed.

Regards Bev

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: SDC <sdc@southlanddc.govt.nz>
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2026 11:59 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Fwd: Submission for support of Lake Henry Sauna
Attachments: Submission to SDC.docx; Submission-on-a-resource-consent-form-13.pdf

This message is from an external sender

From: [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, March 24, 2026 11:26 AM
To: sdc@southlanddc.govt.nz
Subject: Submission for support of Lake Henry Sauna

This message is from an external sender

Hey guys

Attached is a copy of support for the proposed sauna on Lake Henry in Ivon Wilson Park

Kind regards
Andrew Monk

[redacted]

To the Southland District Council,

I am writing to express my support for the proposal to establish a public sauna facility at Lake Henry in Te Anau. I believe this project would provide meaningful social, health, and economic benefits to the community while strengthening Te Anau's reputation as a welcoming destination for visitors.

Supporting Local Tourism and the Visitor Economy

Te Anau is widely known as the gateway to Fiordland and attracts visitors from across New Zealand and around the world. A lakeside sauna would add a distinctive and memorable activity for visitors, particularly during the shoulder and winter seasons when tourism typically slows. Experiences that combine nature and wellness are increasingly popular internationally, and a sauna by Lake Henry would complement the area's outdoor lifestyle and natural beauty.

By giving visitors another reason to stay longer in town, the facility could encourage additional spending at local cafés, accommodation providers, shops, and tour operators. Even a modest increase in visitor nights can have a noticeable positive impact on small businesses in Te Anau.

Encouraging Year-Round Use of Public Spaces

A well-designed sauna would encourage greater year-round use of the Lake Henry area. In colder months especially, a sauna provides a safe and enjoyable reason for both residents and visitors to spend time outdoors. Increased activity around the lake can contribute to a vibrant, well-used public space and help strengthen community connections.

Facilities that invite people outdoors in winter can be particularly valuable in towns where the colder season often reduces recreational options.

Health and Wellbeing Benefits

Saunas are widely recognised for their potential health and wellbeing benefits. They can support relaxation, recovery after physical activity, and overall mental wellbeing. In a community that values outdoor recreation—whether walking, cycling, fishing, or tramping—a public sauna would be a natural complement to these activities.

Providing accessible wellness facilities can contribute positively to community wellbeing and create opportunities for residents to gather and socialise in a healthy environment.

Alignment with Te Anau's Identity

Te Anau's identity is strongly connected to nature, outdoor activity, and quality of life. A modest, thoughtfully designed sauna that respects the surrounding environment would align well with these values. Similar facilities in other parts of New Zealand and internationally have become beloved local amenities and unique visitor attractions.

With appropriate environmental safeguards, design considerations, and community engagement, the proposed sauna could become a distinctive feature of the Lake Henry area while maintaining the character and natural beauty of the location.

Conclusion

For these reasons, I strongly support the proposed sauna at Lake Henry. The project has the potential to enhance local wellbeing, encourage greater use of public spaces, and contribute positively to Te Anau's tourism economy.

Thank you and Kind regards

Andrew Monk

SOUTHLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Submission on an application for resource consent

Form13 under Resource Management Act 1991

Email to: sdc@southlanddc.govt.nz

Send to: Southland District Council, PO Box 903, 15 Forth Street, Invercargill 9840, New Zealand

For enquiries please phone: 0800 732 732

SUBMITTER DETAILS			
Full Name	Andrew Barry Monk		
Telephone	[redacted]	Email	[redacted]
Street address	[redacted]		
		Post code	
Contact Email	[redacted]		

APPLICATION DETAILS	
RMA Number	
Name of Applicant	Floating Sauna LTD
Applicate site address	Ivon Wilson Park
Proposed activity	Floating Sauna

SUBMISSION DETAILS		
■ I/We support all or part of the application	☐ I/We oppose all or part of the application	☐ I/We are neutral towards the application

The specific parts of the application that my / our submission relates to are: (give details, using additional pages if required)

I support all parts of the application,

The reasons for my / our submission are: (use additional pages if required)

Please see document attached

The decision I / we would like the Council to make is: (give details including, if relevant, the parts of the application you wish to have amended and the general nature of any conditions sought. Use additional pages if required)
Approve the application
HEARING OF THIS APPLICATION
If a hearing is held, I / we: Andrew Barry <pml
☐ Wish to speak in support of my / our submission
■ Do not wish to speak in support of my / our submission
■ If others make a similar submission I / we will consider presenting a joint case with them at the hearing
☐ Request that the Council delegates its functions, powers, and duties to hear and decide the application to one or more hearings commissioners who are not members of the Council, under section 100A of the Resource Management Act.
Please note that a hearing will only be held if the applicant and/or any submitters wish to be heard, but all submissions will be taken into consideration regardless. Submitters who indicate that they wish to speak at the hearing will be sent a copy of the planning report. If you change your mind about whether you wish to speak at the hearing, please contact the Council..
SIGNATURE
Signature of submitter: [redacted]
Date: 24-03-2026

IMPORTANT NOTES	
(i)	The Council must receive your submission before the closing date and time for submissions on this application.
(ii)	You must also send a copy of this submission to the applicant as soon as practicable, at the applicant's address for service.
(iii)	If this application was limited notified the Council may adopt an earlier closing date for submissions once responses have been received from everyone who was notified.
(iv)	If you are a trade competitor, your right to make a submission may be limited by the provisions in Part 11A of the RMA.
(v)	The Council may strike out a submission (or part of it) in the following situations: • It is frivolous or vexatious • It discloses no reasonable or relevant case • It would be an abuse of the hearing process to allow it to be taken further • It contains offensive language • It is supported only by material that purports to be independent expert evidence, but has been prepared by a person who is not independent or who does not have sufficient specialist knowledge or skill to give expert advice on the matters.

PRIVACY INFORMATION

The information requested on this form, including your contact details, is required by the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA). The information will be held by the Council, and you may ask to check and correct any personal information that we hold about you. The RMA requires your submission, including your name and contact details, to be made available to the Council (including the Council decisionmaker) and the applicant.

Your submission, including your name and contact details, may also be made available to other submitters and to the public on the Council's website, or on request. If requested, the Council may legally be required to make all submissions available to the public (which can include the media), including the name and contact details of the submitter, subject to the provisions of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA).

If you believe there are compelling reasons why your contact details should be kept confidential from other submitters or the public under LGOIMA, please contact the processing Planner for this application prior to making your submission.

[redacted]

From: Lucy Hunt [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2026 12:42 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Floating Sauna submission

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in support of the Floating Sauna on Lake Henry, Te Anau.

It seems to me this is a low-impact, nature-based tourist activity that would be consistent with Fiordland's tourism goals.

I hope to enjoy this one day.

Yours sincerely
Lucy Hunt

[redacted]

From: Rebecca Anderson [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2026 1:30 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission in respect of SDC's intention to grant a licence to occupy to Floating Sauna Ltd

This message is from an external sender

Kia ora koutou,
I would like to express support for the Southland District Council's intention to grant a licence to occupy to Floating Sauna Ltd at Lake Henry in Ivon Wilson Park near Te Anau, New Zealand.
I'm really looking forward to visiting when the facility is operational and I plan to bring others from Southland, Central Plateau, and beyond to experience this enviable attraction. Granting a licence for such an enterprise, I believe, would indicate strong regional leadership. A favourable decision may also help others to create fresh tracks in both regional hospitality and general wellness by example.
Plus, granting a licence to occupy could demonstrate Southland District Council's willingness to foster visionary business talent. Thank you for considering my submission in favour of granting a licence to occupy to Floating Sauna Ltd.
I do not wish to speak to it.
Ka mihi,
Rebecca

Rebecca Anderson
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: wendy [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2026 2:27 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission - Re: Licence to occupy over part of Ivon Wilson recreation reserve, Te Anau

This message is from an external sender

Dear Sir/Madam,

Submission: Opposition to Proposed Licence for Floating Sauna Business on Lake Henry

I wish to lodge a formal submission opposing the proposal to grant a licence for a floating sauna business on Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson recreation reserve for a term of 15 years, with a further 15-year right of renewal.

1. Commercial activity on public land

This proposal would introduce a long-term commercial operation into a public reserve that was never intended for such use. The activity offers little to no benefit to Te Anau resident ratepayers or those with families who maintain holiday homes here. Comparable sauna businesses elsewhere in New Zealand operate on commercially zoned sites, not on public land set aside for community recreation.

It has been suggested that lease revenue from the proposed operation could offset park maintenance costs or contribute to upgrades and cleaning of the parks public toilets. This argument is misleading. Lease income cannot necessarily be ring-fenced for specific purposes, and relying on a commercial tenant to subsidise core council responsibilities sets an undesirable precedent for the management of public reserves.

Te Anau already has a portable, lakefront sauna business that operates without permanently occupying public space. This model is far more compatible with the intended use of a public area and avoids long-term encroachment on community assets.

2. Protecting Ivon Wilson Park and Lake Henry for public use

Ivon Wilson Park, including Lake Henry, is a cherished public space that is widely used by the community for a diverse range of activities. These include:

- Walking and running, with and without dogs
- Educational visits from preschool through to college groups
- Night-time photography, including aurora viewing
- Children's fishing competitions
- Disc golf and other informal recreation

Introducing a permanent commercial operation risks diminishing the open, accessible, and peaceful character of this area. The park was vested to Council for public enjoyment, and that purpose should be upheld.

Additionally, the proposed reliance on the existing public toilets raises practical concerns. The distance between the sauna facility and the toilets makes it unlikely that sauna clients will consistently use them, increasing the risk of inappropriate toileting behaviour around the lake edge. This would undermine both the environmental values of the park and the experience of other users.

3. Long-term vision for the area

There has been discussion about Fiordland National Park becoming part of a designated dark sky reserve, potentially extending into the township. This would be an extraordinary long-term asset for Te Anau—one that aligns with the natural values of the region and benefits a broad cross-section of residents and visitors.

A floating sauna, while currently a fashionable activity, serves a narrow user group and prioritises commercial gain over community value. It does not align with the long-term vision for preserving and enhancing the natural and recreational qualities of this public space.

Yours sincerely,

Wendy Hatwell

[redacted]

From: Sheree Carey [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2026 2:28 pm
To: Contact Property
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: Support for licence application associated with the Floating Sauna proposal at Lake Henry

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern

The Southland Business Chamber wishes to express its support for this application from the perspective of regional business growth, investment confidence, and the continued development of Southland's tourism economy.

Our interest in this matter is not based on the detailed operational aspects of the proposal, but rather on the broader principle that Southland should be a region where new business ideas, private investment, and responsible enterprise are given fair consideration and encouragement.

Southland and Fiordland benefit when our visitor economy continues to develop in a way that broadens the range of experiences available to both domestic and international visitors. In an increasingly competitive tourism environment, destinations need more than scenery alone. They need depth of offering, reasons to stay longer, and experiences that complement the natural environment and enhance the overall appeal of the region.

The applicant's material positions this proposal within that wider shift toward experience-based tourism and destination development.

From a business perspective, investment into the region should be welcomed where it is considered through the proper statutory processes and can contribute positively to local economic activity.

New ventures create energy in a community. They support jobs, stimulate additional visitor spending, and help build confidence that Southland is open to innovation and new enterprise. The applicant has clearly framed the project as one intended to contribute to economic activity, encourage people to stay longer, and support off-season visitation, all of which are important outcomes for towns such as Te Anau.

It is also relevant that this proposal has already been subject to significant scrutiny through the resource consent process, with an independent commissioner concluding that adverse effects would be no more than minor and that the proposal would have an overall positive effect on the environment, subject to conditions.

While we acknowledge that the current decision is a separate process, that finding does provide confidence that the proposal has been tested through an appropriate regulatory framework.

More broadly, the Chamber believes it is important that Southland sends a message that it is prepared to support good business initiatives that can add value to the region. Entrepreneurs and investors take risks when they choose to invest in smaller regional communities.

If we want Southland to remain vibrant, resilient, and economically diverse, we must be open to new ideas and to carefully considered developments that expand what our region has to offer.

Fiordland is one of New Zealand's iconic destinations. Continued investment in high-quality visitor experiences helps maintain its appeal, encourages repeat visitation, and supports the many businesses that

rely on a healthy tourism ecosystem, including accommodation providers, hospitality operators, retailers, and service businesses.

The applicant's presentation specifically notes the value of experiences that slow visitors down, encourage them to stay longer, and spend more in the local economy. That is consistent with the sort of sustainable regional growth many communities are aiming for.

The Southland Business Chamber supports this application because regions like ours need confidence, investment, and a willingness to say yes to well-considered new enterprise. Southland cannot grow by standing still. Expanding our tourism offering, welcoming private investment, and supporting entrepreneurs who choose to back our region are all part of building a stronger economic future

Yours sincerely
Sheree Carey
Chief Executive
Southland Business Chamber

Kia pai tō rā | Have a great day
Sheree Carey
CEO - Southland Business Chamber

www.southlandchamber.co.nz
Southland Business & Innovation Centre
25 Don Street
PO Box 856, Invercargill 9840
P 03 218 7188 |

[redacted]

From: Lester Stevens [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2026 4:37 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Intention to grant a licence to occupy over part of Ivon Wilson recreation reserve

This message is from an external sender

My wife Sandra Stevens and I both wish to make the following submissions;

When we both heard of this proposal we could not believe that such a ridiculous thing was being considered and had been allowed to reach this stage.

This proposed venture is not in keeping with the original intention of this area.

Ivon Wilson Park is a small area and Lake Henry is a small lake.

This area is very popular and is regularly used by locals for a quiet walk is a serene location. There is limited parking available there as it is. A commercial operation such as that being proposed, will not only occupy some of that parking but also detract from the serenity of the park.

This is the only quiet area of its type in Te ANAU. It is used by locals both as a quiet sanctuary and a place to walk their dogs. Families frequent the park for recreation and also children's fishing.

Although the proponents of this venture claim it is only a small structure, in relation to the size of Lake Henry and Ivon Wilson Park, it is in fact a large area that will be occupied by a large privately owned structure. Such a structure would be an eyesore and be completely out of character with the area.

We believe our council should strive to protect this small and beautiful park from any commercial venture such as this.

Any claim that such a venture will attract tourists to Te ANAU is also nonsense. An activity such as this will only be used by people who are already in Te ANAU for other reasons.

We might be mistaken, but we would bet that Lake Henry has been identified as a possible location by this company only after they found they would be unable to site their sauna on Lake Te Anau.

Maybe they should consider the Te ANAU Boat Harbour.

Regards

Sandra and Lester STEVENS

[redacted]

From: Abby Wangeman [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2026 4:47 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Fw: Intention to grant a licence to occupy over part of Ivon Wilson recreation reserve

This message is from an external sender

From: Abby Wangeman [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2026 4:44 pm
To: contactproperty@southlanddc.govt.nz <contactproperty@southlanddc.govt.nz>
Subject: Intention to grant a licence to occupy over part of Ivon Wilson recreation reserve

Attention: Council's Property Services Team

Formal Submission in Opposition to Commercial Occupation of Ivon Wilson Park

I write to **formally and strongly oppose** the application by a commercial entity to occupy land and water within Ivon Wilson Park / Lake Henry for the purpose of operating a commercial sauna business.

This objection is made on the basis that the proposal is fundamentally incompatible with the purpose, character, and community value of Ivon Wilson Park, and that it undermines the intent of recreation reserve land as protected under the Reserves Act 1977**,** as well as the principles expressed in Southland District Council's own reserve management framework.

1. Ivon Wilson Park is a Non-Commercial Recreation Reserve

Ivon Wilson Park is publicly described and promoted as a peaceful, open recreation reserve, valued for its natural character, quiet enjoyment, and unstructured public use such as walking, picnicking, fishing, and passive recreation around Lake Henry. [southlandnz.com]

The **District Wide Reserve Management Plan (2003)** establishes that reserves are to be managed primarily for public enjoyment, open access, and recreation, with buildings and structures expected to be modest, necessary, and appropriate to the reserve's function and character. [southlanddc.govt.nz]

Introducing a permanent or semi-permanent commercial structure and exclusive-use activity into this setting represents a clear shift away from open, shared public recreation and toward privatised commercial occupation of public land.

2. Commercialisation Undermines the Purpose of Recreation Reserves

Under **section 17 of the Reserves Act 1977**, recreation reserves are to be held:

"for the purpose of providing areas for recreation and sporting activities and the physical welfare and enjoyment of the public". [legislation.govt.nz]

While the Act allows licences or leases in some circumstances, it does not require councils to permit commercial activity, nor does it imply that commercial tourism ventures should be prioritised over free and open public use.

In this case, the proposed sauna:

- Charges for access to a public lake
- Occupies space otherwise freely available to all
- Introduces exclusivity, booking systems, and commercial control
- Alters how the public can experience the lake and reserve

This risks **normalising commercial encroachment** into a space that has historically been non-commercial and community-focused.

3. Loss of Uncommercialised Public Space for Ratepayers and Locals

Ratepayers and local residents already contribute to the acquisition, maintenance, and protection of Ivon Wilson Park through rates and public funding.

They are entitled to recreation reserve land that is not commercialised, where:

- No payment is required to enjoy the environment
- No business dominates the landscape or water body
- No precedent is set for further commercial expansion

Once a commercial activity is embedded in a reserve, it becomes significantly harder to prevent future commercial creep, eroding the very concept of a public reserve.

4. Visual, Natural, and Emotional Harm to the Site

Lake Henry and its surrounds are valued not only physically but emotionally and spiritually by the community. The stillness, openness, and natural feel of the area are central to its identity.

A floating or fixed commercial sauna:

- Introduces built form into a natural lake environment
- Detracts from scenic and visual values
- Changes the emotional experience from peaceful to transactional
- Alters the character of the lake from shared commons to commercial venue

These impacts cannot be meaningfully mitigated through design or colour choices; the harm lies in the presence and function, not merely the appearance.

5. Limited Community Benefit

While economic benefits are sometimes claimed for commercial activities, this proposal:

- Primarily benefits a private operator
- Does not provide free or guaranteed access for locals
- Does not demonstrably enhance public recreation
- Removes rather than adds to unstructured public enjoyment

This does not constitute giving back to the community in any meaningful or equitable sense.

6. Inconsistency with Reserve Management Principles

The District Wide Reserve Management Plan emphasises:

- Protection of natural character
- Public access and enjoyment
- Careful control of structures and uses [southlanddc.govt.nz]

While some commercial activities may be technically permitted, the spirit and intent of reserve management is clearly to avoid developments that diminish the reserve's openness, neutrality, and natural state.

This proposal appears inconsistent with those principles.

Conclusion

I respectfully urge Southland District Council to **decline this application**.

Ivon Wilson Park should remain:

- Fully public
- Free from permanent commercial activity
- True to its purpose as a recreation reserve
- Protected for current and future generations

Public reserves are not simply available spaces for economic opportunity; they are protected commons, and once compromised, they cannot easily be restored.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Yours sincerely,
Abby Caird



[redacted]

From: Elizabeth Jane Murray [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2026 6:03 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: FloatingSauna Lake Henry.

This message is from an external sender

Sent from my iPad I would like to express strong support for the floating sauna on lake Henry. TeAnau needs more to offer our visitors to our beautiful town. Looking forward to a positive outcome.

[redacted]

From: Wade Parkinson [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2026 6:20 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Lake Henry Sauna proposal

This message is from an external sender

Hi there SDC,
I am writing to submit my opinion on the proposed idea of a floating Sauna on Lake Henry, Te Anau. I am against this proposal, and will explain why below.

I have lived in Te Anau my whole life. Ivon Wilson Park is a lesser known place amongst tourists, and is used by locals as a bit of a quiet place. It's one of the very few (or only) places in Te Anau that is as big as it is, yet doesn't have any kind of commercial or tourism operations at all. No ticket office, no concrete, no crowds, a break from what the rest of Te Anau can be at times.

I feel like it is imperative to keep it this way. I would say that Ivon Wilson park positively and directly impacts the mental health of Te Anau residents. As I'm sure you know, the park is used for a range of outdoor activities and locals rely heavily on this space to take a break and have some down time. While having a floating sauna on the lake will not necessarily restrict or prevent such activities, I believe it will take away the serenity and purity of the park.

Losing an already existing platform is also something I also disagree with. There are just 3 permanent platforms on Lake Henry and with it being reduced to just 2 accessible to the public is a shame. The only 2 left would be on opposite sides of the lake and I feel there will be a degree of accessibility lost with people having to walk further to access a platform.

As a local Fiordland College student who has grown up in Te Anau, Ivon Wilson Park has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember. I spent hundreds of hours there as a kid. It has always been a place that felt natural, open, and untouched. I believe I speak not just for myself, but for many other young people in the community who have had similar experiences growing up. Introducing a commercial operation into this space will change that feeling permanently. It will no longer be the same place that generations of locals have known, and that sense of simplicity and freedom will be lost. I am not aware if the programme is still running but in the local kindergarten, there was something called 'Nature Discovery'. It was a day of the week where we would all go and play around IWP with the teachers. As you know, there is a dedicated shed in the park. The implementation of a commercial operation in the park will erase the serenity, purity and uniqueness of the park.
The addition of a floating sauna will not halt the programme but it will certainly have an effect on the kids and teachers. That dock on the lake was used extensively when I was involved in the programme and will be an asset lost if a floating sauna is erected.
Of course it will be no fault of Mr Nigel Reeves nor his intention whatsoever, but having tourists and visitors walking around that may not know New Zealand's culture or law around preschool aged children may present a risk.
Of course this is a risk right now with tourists and visitors that already use the park, but it will be increased with more people coming in to use the sauna.
This is certainly not Mr Nigel Reeves intention at all - and the risk is almost zero as it is - but the risk will never be *zero*. The risk is extremely, highly low as it is but you can never guarantee these things and *some* level of risk will always be present.

The platform in question is also widely used by photographers to capture the aurora. It is one of few easily accessible locations in Te Anau where you can catch the aurora from that specific angle, without any light pollution. If a sauna is installed, the community will lose a very unique and special place to shoot the beautiful auroras we get in Fiordland.

Another thing that will be a result of the sauna is rubbish. Firstly, I would like to say that it will be through *no* fault of their own. I fully believe and understand all necessary measures will be put in place to prevent litter, and it is absolutely not the intention of the business at all. However, with tourists and visitors it just tends to happen. Whether rubbish bins and guidelines are in place or not, it is inevitable that there will be the odd person who litters. Of course the problem won't see IWP being a sea of rubbish, but we will see the odd water bottle and plastic wrapper around the area. This is something that directly and negatively impacts the environment. The presence of rubbish will decrease the park's reputation and image - amongst tourists and locals.
Again, this issue will be no fault of the business owners, and they will of course put in all measures to reduce litter, but I feel like it is just inevitable with tourists and is out of anyone's control.

I also criticize Mr Nigel Reeves' engagement with the community.
On wednesday 11th March, he held a community drop in session at the Te Anau library. He chose the middle of the week - when most people are working and unable to attend. Furthermore, he was only present from 9am to 11am. Most people start work or are already working by 9am. Mr Nigel Reeves then left at 11am - before people got on lunch break or finished work for the morning.
So overall, he chose a weekday when most people are working, only staying for 2 hours and choosing a very specific time of day when people are likely to be busy with work.

I feel as if Mr Nigel Reeves was in a way, avoiding too much confrontation from the community. I assume community engagement was a requirement to get his show on the road (or if not, all respect to him for making the effort) and this case was simply a box ticking exercise.
Yes it was in the middle of the working week, yes it was at a time when most people are likely to be busy, but it happened and got the 'community engagement' box ticked.

I believe Mr Nigel Reeves did not make the most appropriate effort to engage with the Te Anau community and purposefully avoided too much confrontation from the community. For example, he could have held the session on a friday or saturday evening, when most people are done with work and have some free time. I feel it is very important for Mr Nigel Reeves to understand and hear (in a civilised, open minded, respectful manner of course) what the community thinks and answer any questions people may have.
I believe that some opposition against this proposal may come from misunderstanding. If more people came and got their questions answered or learned all their details before making a decision, it would even have worked in Mr Nigel Reeves' favour.

In conclusion, while I understand that this proposal may bring some economic or recreational benefits, I strongly believe that the costs to the local community, environment, and character of Ivon Wilson Park outweigh these positives. This space is valued not for what it could become, but for what it already is. That's a quiet, natural, and accessible area that locals rely on. Once that is changed, it cannot easily be undone and will leave lasting scars on the natural environment.

I urge the council to carefully consider the long term impacts of this decision, particularly on the wellbeing of residents and the preservation of one of Te Anau’s few remaining non-commercial public spaces. I also encourage more meaningful and accessible community engagement moving forward, so that a wider range of voices can be heard and properly considered.

Thank you for taking the time to read and consider my submission.

Kind regards,
Wade

[redacted]

From: Scott Taylor [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2026 8:36 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Intention to grant licence to occupy - Floating Sauna

This message is from an external sender

Hi, as a local Te Anau Business Owner and resident I would like to put my support behind the new floating Sauna on Lake Henry in Te Anau.

I think that as a small tourist based town we need to be supportive of new business ventures that help capture the tourist dollar in Te Anau rather than it just been a toilet stop between Queenstown and Milford, with tourist quickly passing though without staying to enjoy what this amazing place has to offer.

The Floating Sauna would also be a great activity for tourist on wet days when they are less likely to go and do some of the outdoor activities.

I think having it at Lake Henry is a great idea and it will bring tourists to the area so they can enjoy the park and the area around Lake Henry.

I think as a tourist town we need to be supportive of tourist businesses to be able to set up and start making Te Anau a must do destination, a bucket list place to visit. A place where Tourists want to travel from Queenstown to spend 3 days in Te Anau and make a day trip Milford then do other cool activities around Te Anau.

The new trailer sauna on the lakefront is another great idea and shows that there is demand for wellness based tourism activities.

We as the community need to remember that the tourist dollars helps everyone in this town.

A wee while ago my wife and I had a holiday in Tasmania and on our road trip came across the floating sauna in Lake Derby, it wasn't intrusive on the lake at all. It seemed really popular and a great asset to the township of Derby.

Im in full support of the Floating Sauna in Lake Henry.

Kind Regards,
Scott Taylor
Te Anau

[redacted]

From: Bill Needs [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2026 9:59 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

Good evening

I wish to record my objection to the sauna proposal for Ivon Wilson Park. I have had property interests in Te Anau since 2016 and use the park for walking, including dog walking. A family wedding was held there as well. The park is a pleasant place for these and other activities and is well used by residents and visitors.

I have several reasons for objecting to the proposal;

Although the park plan allows for commercial activities of a recreational nature I wouldn't regard a sauna as a recreational activity. I am sure that the context of this allowance did not envisage operation of a sauna on a long term basis.

The length of the lease is unreasonably long. This means that the sauna could potentially be on site for half a lifetime!

The proposed lease seems very low. I would have thought that a long term commercial operation on a public reserve would warrant a fairly substantial annual lease to compensate for the loss of public amenity for commercial gain.

The proposal does seem to me to be out of scope to a lay reading of the park management plan.

In summary I think the proposal is of little benefit to the community and will detract from the overall amenity of the park. I don't wish to speak to the proposal as I'm sure there will be others who will put their objections far more eloquently than I can.

Kind regards
Bill Needs

[redacted]

From: Nigel Reeves [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2026 10:29 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission to Council - Licence to Occupy Part of Ivon Wilson Park to Floating Sauna Ltd
Attachments: Decision RMA-2024-53230 Floating Sauna Ltd 117 Manapouri Te Anau Highway, Te Anau v1.pdf; Presentation to Fiordland Community Board.pdf; Evidence of Processing Planner for Hearing - RMA 2024 53230 - 117 Manapouri Te Anau Highway Te Anau (002).pdf; SDC Lake Henry Licence Submission 260323.pdf

This message is from an external sender

Dear Senior Property Adviser

Please find attached my submission for the above subject, including relevant reference documentation. I request to be heard at the Council meeting in Te Anau on 8 April 2026. If possible, as the applicant, I wish to request to speak last and to also have the right to reply to all the submissions heard in a closing statement.

Kind regards, Nigel.

--
Nigel Reeves
[redacted]

TO: SOUTHLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

FROM: Nigel Reeves FLOATING SAUNA TE ANAU LIMITED

SUBJECT: LAKE HENRY LICENCE SUBMISSION

DATE: 26 March 2026

Introduction

I am pleased to provide the following submission in support of my application for a Licence to operate a Floating Sauna at Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau.

In summary, I believe that the:

- Floating Sauna is consistent with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan 2008 and the Reserves Act 1977;
- Public benefit in establishing a sauna at the lake is greater than any potential negative impact on Ivon Wilson Park; and
- Revenue generated from the proposed Licence can be applied to the future development and maintenance of the reserve.

Consistent with the above, Council officers have determined that a licence is able to be issued for the business to operate lawfully in accordance with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan 2008 with a rental set by an independent qualified valuer.

The project is also strongly aligned with community values outlined in the Fiordland Community Board Plan 2021-2024. In particular, the number one future focus which is:-

> *"A community that attracts business, investment, people and visitors."*

On 4 February 2026, Independent Commissioner Steven Wilson in his decision to approve the Resource Consent for the Floating Sauna determined that:-

> *"Overall, any adverse actual and potential environmental effects generated on the wider environment, with respect to the floating sauna activities, are considered to be no more than minor. Further, relying particularly on the site visit and my observation of the site's current land use and context, I consider that the Applicant's proposal will have an overall positive effect on the environment.'*
>
> Ref. Floating Sauna Ltd Decision RMA/2024/53230 (see attached).

Background

The proposal for a floating sauna to operate at Lake Henry was first presented to the Fiordland Community Board on 27 March 2023.

The presentation slides from this meeting and subsequent site visit are attached.

The presentation gives background information about our sauna operations in Australia, the benefits of sauna from a recreational perspective, the concept of the project, about us, technical details and the economic impact.

In simple terms, the anticipated direct flow on (multiplier) effect to the local economy from 40 sauna visitors per day is now $3,740 or approximately $1.36M per annum. The project will directly employ 3 to 5 local staff and operate all year – producing much needed off-season income for locals and new visitor activity.

Following this meeting, the Fiordland Community Board wrote a letter of support for the project and a Resource Consent application was then prepared and lodged with the Council.

The application process generated independent expert consultant reports, namely:

- Traffic Management and Impact Assessment (Bartlett Consulting);
- Landscape Impact Assessment (Patch Landscape); and
- Planning Assessment Report (Edgar Planning).

These reports revealed that existing infrastructure at the Ivon Wilson Park is underutilised and has considerable capacity to accommodate increased usage. They also show how a well-positioned and designed floating sauna can operate alongside and be compatible with other park users.

The Resource Consent Application was considered at a Consent Hearing in Invercargill by Independent Commissioner Steven Wilson on 21 January 2026.

Resource Consent Approval was granted on 4 February 2026 and this decision and conditions of the approval are attached.

The Resource Consent conditions, together with the draft Licence conditions, serve to ensure there is a high degree of control over the operation of the business to minimise any impacts to the general public and the Reserve, and adhere ultimately to the goals of the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan.

There is a strong cross over between the issues considered at the Consent Hearing and the concerns raised by members of the public on social media in relation to this process.

Following the Council advertising its intention to issue a Licence, there was a high degree of attention directed at the project on social media. This resulted in my wife Debra and I running a Community Drop in Session at the Te Anau Library on 11 March 2026 to be available to answer any questions. Many of the negative comments on social media were based on mis-information and from people who were not fully informed or who had not read the draft Licence conditions. This situation is unfortunate and in hindsight, our project would have benefited greatly from better communication with the community.

The drop-in session was attended by 12 locals and was a really productive way to dispel issues being raised online. In particular, the issues such as the closure of the sauna sessions during wedding ceremonies etc (required under the draft Licence conditions), use of the pontoon by amateur southern aurora photographers (they can use the pontoon at night) and a good discussion about how our other floating sauna operations in Australia co-exist happily with other lake users was very useful.

A useful document to read that covers many issues raised by members of the community is the Evidence of Processing Planner for the Consent Hearing. I have attached this report to form part of my submission for the licencing process.

Whilst it is accepted that the outcome of the Resource Consent does not legally bind the Council to approve the Licence, the findings of independent expert consultants, Council's qualified planning staff and the ultimate decision by the Independent Commissioner to approve the project are useful insights and signals to show why the Licence can be granted for this lawful activity.

I firmly believe that my Floating Sauna proposal for Lake Henry:-

- Is an activity that connects people to the recreation values of the Ivon Wilson Park;
- Will create new jobs in Te Anau that will continue through the winter period;
- Will become a new drawcard for the area (new activities increase visitation);
- Provides positive mental health and physical outcomes for guests;
- Will encourage people to stay longer and spend more – generating a multiplier effect on economic activity and growth;
- Provide a new revenue/rental source for the Southland District Council to offset maintenance costs of the park;
- Will greatly assist in the promotion of Te Anau as a destination;
- Is a lawful activity under the Ivon Wilson Management Plan 2008; and

- Maintains Lake Henry and surrounding bog in its natural state (the pontoon is floating and is entirely removable at the end of the licence period) and will foster public appreciation of the Park through greater usage.

Conclusion

I am excited to have reached the final stage of the approvals process to develop a new business in Te Anau that connects people back to nature and will improve economic activity in the shoulder season.

I have managed to develop a project that meets the planning requirements, supports the outcomes of published community and Council strategic plans and complies with reserve management plans.

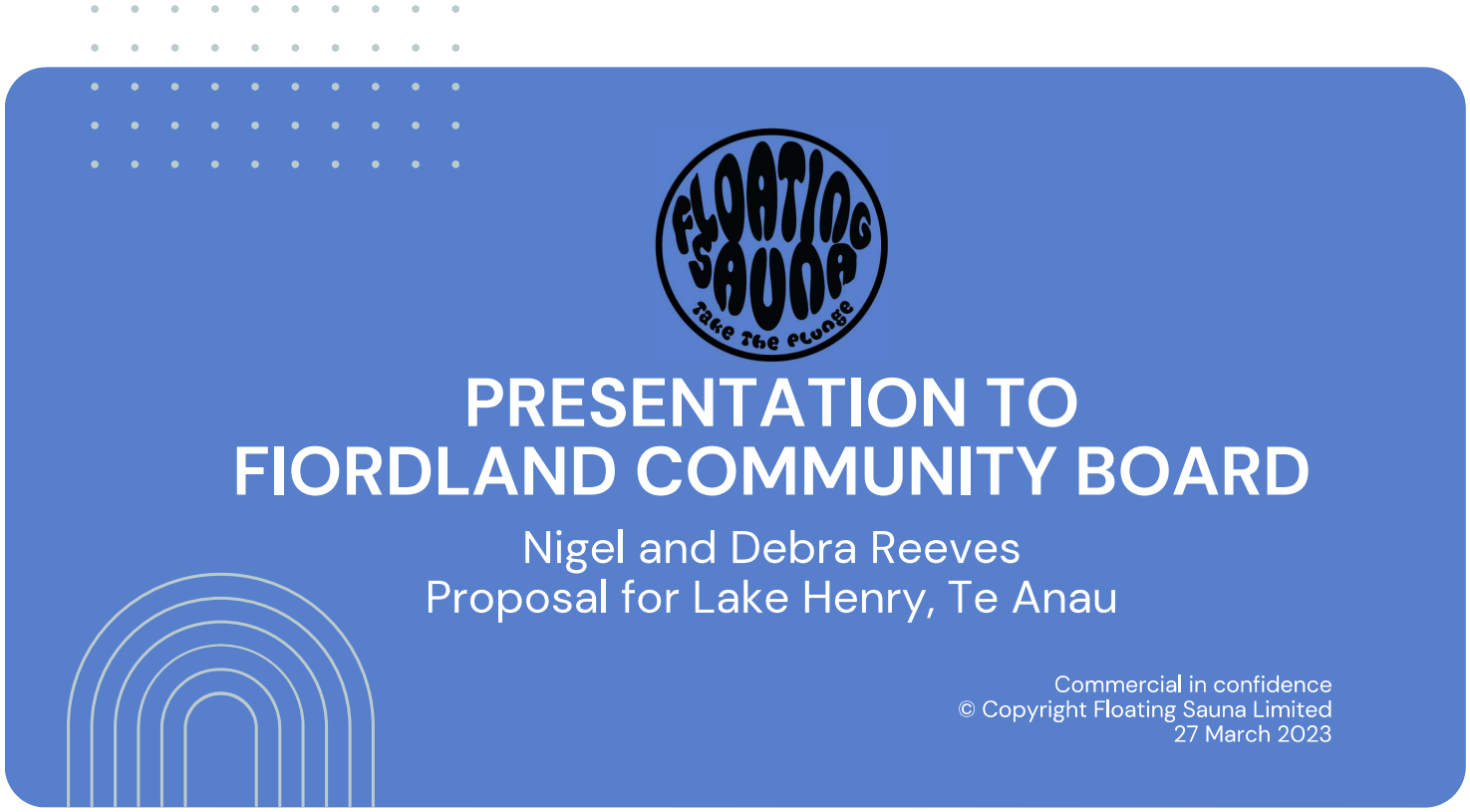
The approval of this Licence sends a strong message to other entrepreneurs that if you have a good idea, the Southland District Council will support you to build a strong and brighter future.

I request to be able to present to the Hearing.

Nigel Reeves

Attachments:

Community Board Presentation dated 27 March 2023
Floating Sauna Ltd Decision RMA/2024/53230
Evidence of Processing Planner for Hearing – RMA 2024 53230


FLOATING SAUNA
Take The Plunge
PRESENTATION TO
FIORDLAND COMMUNITY BOARD
Nigel and Debra Reeves
Proposal for Lake Henry, Te Anau
Commercial in confidence
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27 March 2023

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this presentation is to seek feedback from the Fiordland Community Board about the proposal for a floating wood fired sauna to operate on Lake Henry, Te Anau.

Lake Henry is located within the boundaries of Ivon Wilson Park, a short distance from the Te Anau township. The spring-fed lake is almost circular, 200 metres across with an average depth of 3 metres. The Park itself is popular as a place for a stroll, picnic or just to relax in.

Details about the previous use of the area is outlined in the Ivon Wilson Management Plan 2008.



Photo: Floating Sauna Lake Derby, Tasmania
(Source: Nigel Reeves)

OUR COMPANY

There is only one commercially operating Floating Sauna in Australia and New Zealand - which is our sauna at Lake Derby in Tasmania.

We built this sauna and have been operating for three years. Our four employees run sauna sessions daily from 8am to 9pm.

Similar saunas operate next to natural water bodies in many parts of Europe.



Photo: Floating Sauna Lake Derby, Tasmania (Source: Nigel Reeves)

BENEFITS OF SAUNA

The health benefits from sauna and cold plunge experiences are well documented – strong connections to mental health improvements, improved sleep and reduction in anxiety and stress.

Sauna has benefits for muscle and joint recovery, skin and internal organ de-tox, improved respiratory, blood pressure and circulation outcomes.

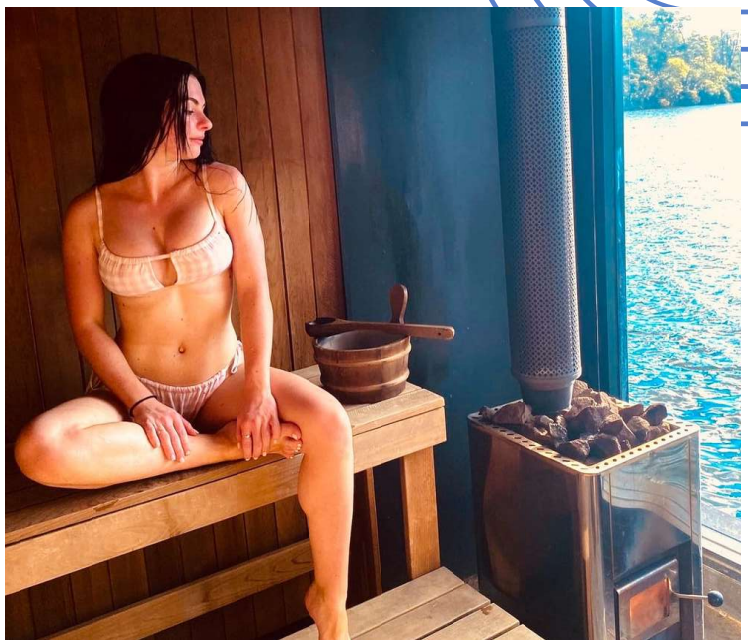

Photo: Guest in Floating Sauna Lake Derby, Tasmania (Source: Nigel Reeves)

ABOUT US - FLOATING SAUNA LIMITED

Floating Sauna Limited is a New Zealand Company 100% owned by Nigel and Debra Reeves.

Nigel Reeves is a Tasmanian born businessman who together with his New Zealand born wife Debra and three sons were inspired to invest in floating saunas after coming with up the idea in 2019. The family has been running the Floating Sauna Lake Derby successfully for three years and is excited to become more involved in the creation of further high-quality floating sauna tourism experiences.

Nigel is an economist with a Bachelor of Commerce, Graduate Diploma of Technology Management and Masters of Business Administration. Over the last 30 years he has held senior executive positions with all levels of the Australian Government and worked as a management consultant for multi-national companies on assignments within Australia and overseas.

ABOUT US – CONTINUED...

Nigel and Debra have also set up and run a number of small businesses, including a busy café in North Hobart, a health food production company, Tasmania's first internet café, a bookshop, art gallery and florist.

More recently Nigel has been involved in property development, including the delivery of the $65 million Cambridge Homemaker Centre for investors and a substantial childcare centre and office headquarters for Lady Gowrie Tasmania.

Nigel and Debra also run a New Zealand domiciled commercial property investment company with its main investment activities in Southland, having acquired the BNZ Bank and Milford Opportunity Project building in Town Centre, Te Anau.





ABOUT US – CONTINUED...

This varied background and experience places Nigel, Debra and their team in a good position to establish a successful and sustainable Floating Sauna at Lake Henry.

We want to contribute a fresh idea to generate economic activity in Southland.



Photo: Nigel and Debra Reeves with their sons (Source: Nigel Reeves)

LAKE HENRY, TE ANAU

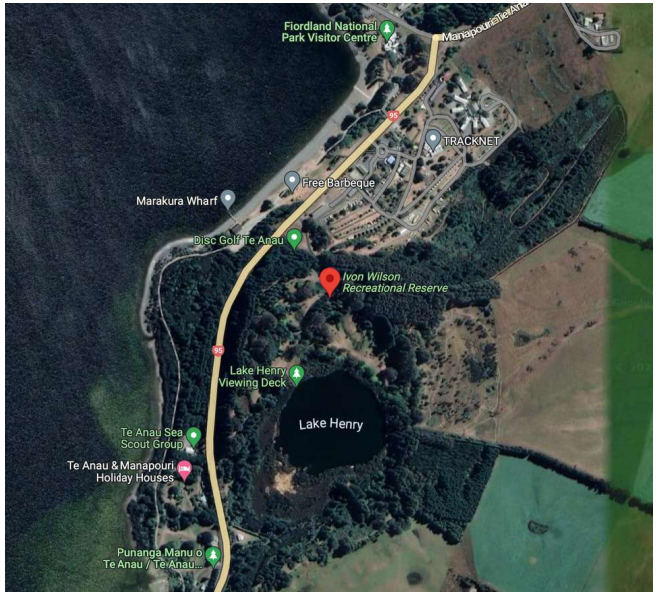

Photo: Lake Henry (Source Google Maps 2023)

THE CONCEPT

The concept is for a floating pontoon (built to meet or exceed all relevant engineering standards) to be situated at Lake Henry, with access from an existing platform or new gangway.

The pontoon will be 4.2 metres wide and 9.2 metres long. The deck sits 0.3 metres above the surface.

A swim ladder will be installed on the waterside of the pontoon to allow guests who plunge into the water to return safely and easily to the deck.



Photo: Ladder on Floating Sauna Lake Derby, Tasmania (Source: Nigel Reeves)

THE CONCEPT – CONTINUED...

The pontoon will contain two wood fired sauna rooms, change rooms, a small store room and outdoor bench seating. The capacity of the pontoon is 12 patrons at any time. Guests book and pay for a one hour experience online.

The exact location at Lake Henry for the floating sauna is flexible – there are a number of spots to anchor that would work well. Facing south would be ideal, however we have a strong desire to work in cooperation with the Council user groups to find a position that suits everyone.

The sauna pontoon is able to craned into place and removed or repositioned at any time leaving no impact on the environment.

OPERATIONAL AND LEGAL DETAILS

A team member arrives on site an hour before guests arrive to pre-heat the sauna. All of the sessions are fully supervised by staff who are skilled in water safety.

Safety equipment recommended by Surf Life Saving New Zealand as well as a de-fibrillation unit and a back up emergency beacon will be on board.

The sauna is wood-fired. There are no soaps, detergents or chemicals used in the delivery of the experience.

The business would operate on an appointment only basis, 7 days a week. The main users of the floating sauna are expected to be tourists looking to recover and relax after tramping, as well as other visitors who may be visiting Southland to enjoy the scenery and reconnect to nature.

OPERATIONAL AND LEGAL DETAILS - CONTINUED...

The business will provide certificates of insurance including public liability for $20 million prior to opening and the owners will indemnify the Council from any legal liability.

The Council is also able to have input into the design of the online liability waiver to be signed by each sauna user prior to use. It is envisaged that the existing carpark and toilets will be used by sauna guests. We are open to contribute financially to the upgrade of any infrastructure if necessary. A commercial lease is sought under the Reserves Act 1977.

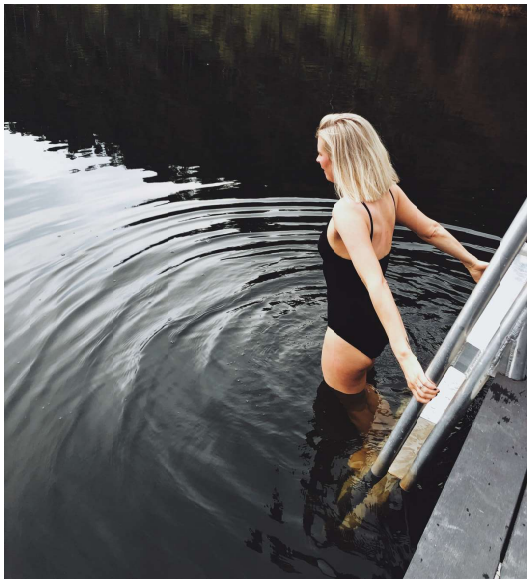

Photo: Guest in Floating Sauna Lake Derby, Tasmania (Source: Nigel Reeves)

TECHNICAL DETAILS

In terms of the impact of the installation of the floating sauna on the lake and its ongoing operation, no negative sustainability issues can be identified. The pontoon is able to be lifted into the lake from the shore without any disturbance of vegetation. A bond is offered to be set in place to ensure any damage that is inadvertently caused is able to be fully repaired.

The water used by the floating sauna (for steam) is sourced from the lake and either returns to the lake or is evaporated as part of the process. The plantation grown wood burned by the sauna stove will meet all current environmental standards for wood smoke.

There are three parts to the safe and effective connection of the pontoon to the shore, these are Docking, Walkway and Gangway and the Abutment.

TECHNICAL DETAILS - CONTINUED...

It is proposed that the Floating Sauna pontoon be anchored to Lake Henry with a simple Chain Anchoring method. Part of the attraction for us to use Lake Henry is that it is much more sheltered from the weather than Lake Te Anau.

A gangway, if required, will be 1.2 metres wide and from 3 to 8 metres in length.

The type of abutment is selected according to the type of soil and length of the gangway. It could be possible for an existing platform at Lake Henry to be used as an abutment.



Photo: Guest in Floating Sauna Lake Derby, Tasmania (Source: Nigel Reeves)

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Many tourism authorities are encouraging the development of new products to generate visitor demand post COVID-19 and borders re-opening.

The Floating Sauna will create a minimum of 1.5 new effective fulltime positions, spread across 3 to 5 part time employees. There is scope of course to increase the numbers employed depending on the success of the venture.

Based on advice from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, it is reasonable to apply a multiplier of 1.7 for every $1 spent by each visitor that visits Derby for the specific purpose of having a sauna.

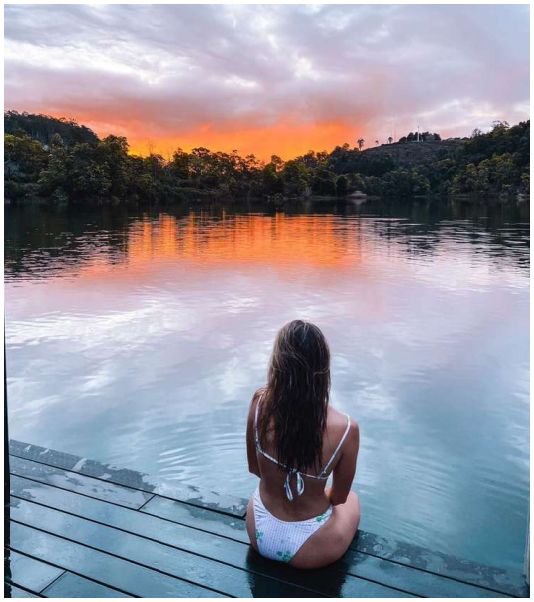

Photo: Guest in Floating Sauna Lake Derby, Tasmania (Source: Nigel Reeves)

ECONOMIC IMPACT – CONTINUED...

The current price for a sauna per person in Tasmania is $45. Our survey results show that approximately 40% of non-resident visitors have arrived specifically for a sauna. The remainder are visiting Derby for other reasons but choose to have a sauna experience which also results in them spending more time in the area.

In simple terms, the direct flow on effect to the local economy of 40 sauna visitors per day is $3,060 or approximately $1.1M per annum. This is in addition to the economic benefit associated with the increased employment generated by the venture and benefit of other sauna guests staying longer in the area.

The Floating Sauna Lake Derby has a growing number of followers on social media (currently 17,600 on Instagram) which is a valuable mechanism to promote the region to tourists.

ECONOMIC IMPACT – CONTINUED...

The sauna has also attracted social media influencers as well as national and international television coverage with programs such as Sunrise, The Living Room and Getaway Japan.

Also publications such as Virgin and QANTAS inflight magazines, New York Times, The Weekend Australian, Financial Review, local papers, radio and more.

The opportunity is for Te Anau to benefit from increased exposure.



Photo: Guest in Floating Sauna Lake Derby, Tasmania (Source: Nigel Reeves)

FIORDLAND COMMUNITY BOARD PLAN 2021-24

The proposal for a Floating Sauna is consistent with the Fiordland Community Board Plan and outcomes the community seeks to pursue, such as:

- A community that attracts business, investment, people, and visitors.
- Encouraging projects that connect with and enhance the natural assets of the area.
- Support promotion of the area as a great place for businesses.
- Finding a model which attracts quality visitors who will share our love of Fiordland, that slows them down, encourages them to stay longer, and spend more would bring about a greater synergy and understanding between locals and visitors alike.

TESTIMONIALS

"The Floating Sauna Lake Derby has been a tremendous tourism asset for the Dorset Council area and we love how it has helped to underpin more investment in accommodation in Derby." **John Marik, General Manager Dorset Council**

"Nigel has created something very special and iconic that complements Derby's Mountain Bike Trails – our customer's say there's nothing better to use the sauna after a ride. Nigel delivers a very unique and world class experience." **Buck Gibson, Owner Vertigo MTB**

"Last winter was our busiest yet due to the sauna operating every day and people wanting to stay in Derby overnight." **Caleb Buster, Owner Pilgrim Blue Accommodation**

CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

We believe it is important for Te Anau to continue to evolve as a destination through the development of unique experiences such as the floating sauna initiative, to maintain strong growth and repeat visitations. We all want visitors to leave Fiordland saying that the area was the best part of their New Zealand holiday.

Social media plays a big part in selling regional destinations these days and the opportunity for promotion of Te Anau through dynamic experiences such as the sauna on social media is unique and compelling.

We believe the introduction of a high-quality floating sauna experience on Lake Henry will be a positive contribution not only to Te Anau, but also Southland – encouraging visitors to stay longer and spend more. There is very little impact on the environment and community for the operation of a floating sauna at Lake Henry.

QUESTIONS AND FEEDBACK

Thank you for your interest and time.

Contact details

Nigel and Debra Reeves
Floating Sauna Limited
[redacted]

www.floatingsauna.com.au
Instagram floatingsauna_lakederby
Facebook Floating Sauna Lake Derby



Photo: Guest in Floating Sauna Lake Derby, Tasmania (Source: Nigel Reeves)

Floating Sauna Ltd **DECISION** **RMA/2024/53230**

BEFORE THE SOUTHLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

IN THE MATTER OF the Resource Management Act 1991

AND **An application to the Southland District Council** by Floating Sauna Limited for a land use consent to locate and operate a floating sauna on Lake Henry, 117 Manapouri Te Anau Highway, Te Anau (RMA/2024/53230).

DECISION OF THE HEARING COMMISSIONER APPOINTED BY SOUTHLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL PURSUANT TO SECTION 34A OF THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT 1991

Independent Commissioner
Steven Wilson

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1. Introduction

1.1. In November 2024 Nigel and Debra Reeves for Floating Sauna Limited ('Applicant') lodged an application with Southland District Council ('SDC') for resource consent to establish and operate a floating sauna on Lake Henry.

1.2. The application is granted with conditions for the reasons stated below.

2. Appointment

2.1. Acting under section 34A(1) of the Resource Management Act 1991 ('RMA'), the SDC has appointed and delegated to Independent Commissioner Steven Wilson the function of hearing submissions and determining the application. SDC are the land owners so wished to remove any actual or perceived conflict of interest in any determination.[1]

3. Process issues

3.1. Written approvals

3.1.1. Though not a written approval, the Fiordland Community Board provided a letter of support in principle for the proposal, dated 11 September 2024. The Board requested that the sauna be out of sight of the main viewing deck on Lake Henry. They anticipate the Applicant would construct and maintain a suitable pathway, so as not to impede other park users. The Board would like a one-off contribution to the upgrade of the toilets due to potential increase in usage. They would like the sauna operator to hold suitable public liability insurance.[2]

3.1.2. The Applicant appears agreeable to requests from the Fiordland Community Board and expects that will form part of any formal lease agreement.[3] The requests from the Fiordland Community Board do not form part of this decision as any lease agreement is separate to the consent.

3.2. Notification

3.2.1. The application was limited-notified in October 2025 to Te Ao Mārama Inc.

3.3. Submission

3.3.1. One submission was received from Te Ao Mārama Inc., on behalf of Ōraka-Aparima Rūnaka, ('Submitter') prior to the closing date of 10 November. The

[1] 02 October 2024, Email communication
[2] p 20, Application, Floating Sauna Limited
[3] Para 6.20 & 6.25, Application, Floating Sauna Limited

submission and the relief sought is summarised in section I of the s42A Report.

3.3.2. I discuss matters the Submitters raised and the relief sought in sections 6 and 7 of this Decision.

3.4. Pre-hearing meetings

3.4.1. No pre-hearing meetings were held in relation to this application.

3.5. Site Visit

3.5.1. I conducted a site visit by myself on 20 February 2026. On the site visit I noted the general āhua (ambience) of Lake Henry, visited the deck which the floating sauna is proposed to be anchored to, and viewed the proposed site from the north-western main viewing deck.

3.6. Section 92 requests

3.6.1. I was advised of no section 92 requests.

3.7. Hearing

3.7.1. The SDC s42A Report, the Applicant's evidence[4] and Submitter's evidence[5] was pre-circulated in conformance with SDC's Hearing Notice issued on 05 December 2025. I issued Minute 1 setting out the order of appearances at the hearing.

3.7.2. Copies of the submissions and statement of evidence are held by SDC.

3.7.3. I held a hearing on Wednesday 20 January 2026 at the SDC Council Chambers in Invercargill. At the hearing the following appeared:

3.7.3.1. Nigel Reeves – Floating Sauna Ltd, Applicant; Luke McSoriley, Resource Management Planner, WSP – Applicant's consultant; and Clare Lenihan, Advocate; and

3.7.3.2. Riria Cairns-Hakiwai and Miricara Kawe for Te Ao Mārama Inc. on behalf of Ōraka-Aparima Rūnaka, Submitter.

3.7.4. At my invititation, the hearing was opened and closed with mihi and karakia by Te Ao Mārama Inc.

3.7.5. At the hearing I requested further information from the s42A Report author and the Applicant regarding proposed conditions to manage effects, as outlined in Minute 2. Both indicated they would provide a written response,

[4] Nigel Reeves – Floating Sauna Ltd, Applicant; Luke McSoriley, Resource Management Planner, WSP – Applicant's consultant
[5] Te Ao Mārama Inc. on behalf of Te Rūnanga o Ōraka Aparima

with the Applicant also providing a written right of reply by way of closing legal submissions.

3.7.6. Upon receipt of the information from the s42A author and the Applicant's right of reply, I closed the hearing on 30 January 2026.

3.7.7. I do not separately summarise the matters provided in the evidence here, and noted above, but I refer to or quote from that material as appropriate in the remainder of this Decision. I took my own notes of the hearing and of any answers given to verbal questions that I posed to hearing participants.

3.8. Officer's recommendation

3.8.1. The SDC s42A report author, Maree Fraser-Keen (Senior Resource Management Planner Consents), considered that the proposal would have no more that minor adverse effects on the environment. Ms Fraser-Keen considered the proposal is consistent with the relevant objectives and policies contained within the Operative Southland District Plan 2018 (the District Plan) and Plan Change 2. She concluded that the application should be granted including suggested conditions which were provided in Section P of the s42A report.

3.8.2. I discuss the s42A Report, further information and recommendations in subsequent parts of this Decision.

4. Description of the activity

4.1. The proposal is for a land use consent for the establishment of a commercially operated sauna at 117 Manapouri Te Anau Highway, Te Anau on Lake Henry. It is described in detail in Section 4.0 of the Assessment of Environmental Effects (AEE) by Edgar Planning, dated 14 November 2024. and summarised in the s42A Report at section E. There is no need for me to repeat the level of detail here. Readers of this Decision should also read the resource consent application and the s42A report for a full description of the Applicant's proposal.

4.2. The key aspects of the proposal are summarised in the s42A report as follows:

4.2.1. The sauna structure will consist of three small timber buildings on a proposed floating pontoon: two saunas and a change room, each 3m by 3m, and will be un-serviced.

4.2.2. The buildings will be located on a proposed floating pontoon measuring 10.2m by 7.7m. The floating pontoon and buildings will be constructed off-site and then transferred onto the site. The layout includes the saunas on the southern side with lake-facing glazing, and the change room behind them to the north, featuring enclosed changing rooms and seating.

4.2.3. A fence with a gate will enclose parts of the pontoon, and a ladder will provide water access. The pontoon will be connected to the existing northern

deck via a gangway and anchored with ground lines. Safety measures include supervision by qualified staff, online and on-site screening of patrons, a first aid kit, emergency beacon, defibrillator, and life rings.

4.2.4. The proposal involves providing a sauna and cold-plunge experience for small groups. Two saunas will operate on site, each accommodating up to six guests per one-hour session. This results in a maximum of 12 customers per session in total, excluding staff. Each sauna session is an hour. At least one staff member will be required for bookings, supervision, and servicing/maintenance, with slight cross over during shift changes resulting in a maximum of 2 staff during such times.

4.2.5. Operating hours: The sauna will operate seven days a week during daylight hours only, between 7.00 am and 9.00 pm depending on the season.

4.2.6. Access, Parking, and Manoeuvring: Guests will be encouraged to walk or cycle, but parking is available within the Ivon Wilson Reserve, approximately 160m north. A suitable walkway will be constructed from the parking area to the sauna.

4.2.7. Earthworks are proposed to construct the walkway but do not form part of this application and are not considered further.

4.2.8. No vegetation clearance is proposed as part of this proposal.

5. Activity status

5.1. The activity status of consents sought is discussed in the application, the AEE, and section G of the s42A report and is summarised below.

5.2. Under the District Plan the proposal requires consent for a discretionary activity under Rule GRUZ-R4 as the activitiy is located within a Council reserve but does not comply with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan.

5.3. Both the Applicant and the s42A report author assessed the application as a discretionary activity, being the most restrictive activity status. I agree.

6. Submission summary

6.1. The Submitter, Te Ao Mārama Inc., on behalf of Ōraka-Aparima Rūnaka opposed the application being granted. The status of Papatipu Rūnaka as kaitiaki and mana whenua of the natural resources within their takiwā boundaries are recognised in Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Act 1996 and the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998.[6] There was no dispute that the proposed activity would occur within the takiwā of Ōraka-Aparima Rūnaka.

[6] Para 2, Submission – Te Ao Mārama Inc.

6.2. The significance of Te Ana-Au (Lake Te Anau) to Ngāi Tahu is a matter of tribal record in Te Tangi a Tauira with the Submitter further noting *"[t]he welfare of any part of our environment determines the welfare of our people."* The historical connection of Lake Henry to Lake Te Anau creates a *"whakapapa link"* and, so, mana whenua have a *"duty of kaitiakitanga over both lakes."*[7]

6.3. The Submitter is supportive of development within their takiwā providing it does not adversely affect their *"cultural values, customs and their traditional relationship with land and water. Development adjacent to waterways must be approached with care...*[The] *Rūnaka advocate for the concentration of visitor activities in areas that are already modified and have existing infrastructure. This approach helps minimise the impact on pristine or culturally significant environments and supports better management of visitor pressures."*[8]

6.4. The Submitter opposes the application due to:

6.4.1. The Reserve Management Plan, which they state does not reflect current community values, environmental concerns, or mana whenua perspectives, is currently being reviewed. Granting the consent could undermine the effectiveness of the revised plan.

6.4.2. They note the lack of clear guidelines in the Reserve Management Plan for floating infrastructure.

6.4.3. The proposal being inconsistent with mana whenua values of tino rangatiratanga, mauri, manaakitanga and kaitiakitanga.

6.4.4. While acknowledging that the Applicant proposes to operate their business from an existing deck, in the Submitter's view, the commercial use of the deck significantly alters the nature of public access to and use of Lake Henry for recreational purposes. *"This creates an exclusive zone within a public reserve, undermining the principle of shared use and limiting opportunities for the community to connect with the lake in the ways it was originally designed to support."* Additionally, they are concerned that this could create a precedent for commercialisation of *"sensitive natural areas, eroding the public and cultural value of reserves."*[9]

6.5. The Submitter seeks that the application be declined and *"the Reserve Management Plan review is completed before making decisions that may constrain future options and obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi."*[10]

6.6. In response to the submission, the Applicant noted:

6.6.1. Their attempts to engage with the Submitter.[11]

[7] *Ibid.,* para 5, 10
[8] *Ibid.,* para 7 – 9
[9] *Ibid.,* pp 4, 5
[10] *Ibid.,* p 6
[11] para 9 – 11, 32, Brief of evidence of Nigel Reeves Floating Sauna Limited

6.6.2. The significance to mana whenua of Lake Henry as a taonga, and the issues that arise from the value of Lake Henry.[12]

6.6.3. That it was *"relevant to consider the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan (Park Management Plan) and Reserves Act 1977 (RA) as part of [my] consideration of the existing environment. They are also relevant under "other matters"."*[13] While it was acknowledged that the District Wide Reserve Management Plan (DWRMP) is being reviewed, the Park Management Plan is not being reviewed. They submitted that the DWRMP review is not relevant to the application as any changes to the management of the Ivon Wilson Park will need to be made to the Park Management plan.[14]

6.6.4. *"The Applicant's submission is as the proposal is consistent with the relevant objectives and policies of the Plan, the proposal will have no more than minor effects on the environment and it complies with the Park Management Plan, there are no adverse precedent risks associated with granting consent."*[15]

6.7. The Submitter provided a Brief of Evidence repeating parts of their submission and helpfully expanding on the key values, rights, and interest the Rūnaka seeks to protect. They spoke to their evidence at the hearing, responding to points of clarification I sought. The Submitter

6.7.1. would prefer that any commercial activity took place on Lake Te Anau where there are already existing commercial activities, whereas the sauna's commercial aspect would change the 'vibe' of Lake Henry,

6.7.2. would be happy to meet with the Applicant to discuss mitigating cultural effects, such as in the design of the floating sauna and signage,

6.7.3. request that, if the consent is granted, that it be for a shorter term than 35 years.

6.8. In their closing submission, the Applicant

6.8.1. Reinforced points made in the hearing.

6.8.2. At my request, also proposed a condition to require the consent holder (currently the Applicant) to provide the Submitter with an opportunity for mana whenua input into proposed signage for the floating sauna, including any cultural symbolism or interpretive elements, and other components of the sauna that protect, where practical, the tino rangatiratanga, kaitiakitanga, mauri and manaakitanga attributes of Lake Henry.

[12] para 35, Opening legal submissions of counsel for Floating Sauna Limited.
[13] para 12, *ibid*.
[14] para 47, *ibid*.
[15] para 56, *ibid*.

6.8.3. Provided an argument that there *"is no evidence or justification whatsoever for either declining the application or only granting a shorter term."*[16]

6.8.4. Commented on the proposed conditions and amendments.

6.9. I empathise with the Submitter's concerns and this Decision considers the matters they have raised and any mitigation thereof. Without wishing to disrespect their concerns, my discretion is generally limited to the areas in which the proposal is not compliant with the District Plan. However, I agree with the Applicant that consideration of the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan is relevant under "other matters" in s104.[17] I provide an analysis of the proposal in the following section.

7. Section 104

7.1. Section 104 (1) of the RMA requires that when considering an application for a resource consent, the consent authority must, subject to Part 2, have regard to a number of matters discussed in the s42A report and briefly below.

7.2. The s42A concludes that the permitted baseline (s104[2]) has limited relevance on this application, as the permitted baseline is exceeded by:

7.2.1. The proposed number of up to 12 paying guests across the two sites (with a permitted baseline of five or less paying guests per site),

7.2.2. The use of the proposed buildings for visitor accommodation that does not comply with a number of the Performance Standards of the General Residential Zone, and

7.2.3. I record that the application notes that the proposed activity could be *"undertaken as a permitted activity if, through the building and lease approval process, it is determined that it complies with the reserve management plans."*[18]

7.2.4. I prefer and agree with the s42A report that the permitted baseline has limited relevance.

7.3. Actual and potential environmental effects

7.3.1. The s42A Report author describes and discusses the actual and potential environmental effects in section M of their report, referring to the Applicant's application and assessment in places. For brevity, I do not repeat the discussion here, instead summarising the author's discussion and/or conclusion, quoting directly from the report in places I consider relevant.

[16] para 20, 22 – 28, Closing legal submissions of counsel for Floating Sauna Limited.
[17] para 11, Closing legal submissions of counsel for Floating Sauna Limited.
[18] Para 6.4, Application – Floating Sauna Ltd

7.3.2. *Visual and landscape effect* – the sauna location is not visible beyond the site boundaries. And the lake is largely enclosed by woodland and only visible from a few viewing decks. Therefore any potential adverse visual amenity effects on the wider environment are anticipated to be minor.

7.3.3. *Transport* – Car parking facilities on recreation reserves is beyond the scope of this consent. Supported by an assessment from Council's Transport Department, any potential adverse effects relating to the roading network are assessed as less than minor.

7.3.4. *Water quality* – no chemicals will be added to the rinse water. Both water takes from the lake of up to 2,000 litres per day and discharge to the lake are permitted under the Proposed Southland Water and Land Plan. Any adverse effects regarding water quality on the wider environment or any person(s) are anticipated to be less than minor.

7.3.5. *Scale and intensity* – the scale and intensity of the proposed sauna operation is not considered contrary to existing public recreational activity in terms of foot traffic generated and is unlikely to create any congestion. The potential adverse effects on the wider environment on any person(s) is considered to be less than minor.

7.3.6. *Wood supply and waste management* – the Applicant proposes a wood supply and waste management process. With an additional condition requiring a small rubbish collection to be available at the sauna for customers, which the sauna staff remove from the park, any adverse effects regarding wood supply and waste management on the wider environment and person(s) are considered to be less than minor.

7.3.7. *Cultural impacts* – Te Ao Mārama Inc., on behalf of Ōraka-Aparima Rūnaka formally raised cultural concerns. The s42A report notes that, *"[w]hile the physical and visual effects of the proposal may be assessed as less than minor, the cultural effects, especially those relating to spiritual values and the exercise of kaitiakitanga are assessed as minor in this context."* The cultural impacts were summarised as amenity and identity, and the mauri of Lake Henry.[19]

Officer assessment of submission issues

7.3.8. The Officer's assessment of submission issues is discussed at length in the s42A Report and summarised below.[20]

7.3.8.1. *Relationship between the Resource Consent and the Reserve Act Lease Process* – many of the matters discussed in the submission are linked to the Reserve Management Plan and the current review process. The report states:

[19] p 10, Section 42A Report
[20] pp 10 – 13, *ibid.*

The activity requires both a resource consent under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) and a lease to occupy reserve land and water space under the Reserves Act 1977. These are two separate statutory processes. The scope of this s42A report is limited to matters relevant under the RMA and the Southland District Plan. Any decision on whether to grant a lease to occupy the reserve is made under the Reserves Act and must follow the statutory consultation requirements of that Act. Granting resource consent does not authorise commercial use of the reserve, nor does it restrict Council's decision-making on the lease.

Whether a commercial venture is appropriate within a Council reserve is therefore more properly assessed through the Reserves Act lease process, which considers the purpose and long-term management of reserve land. In contrast, the RMA assessment is confined to determining whether the environmental effects of the activity are acceptable.

As the resource consent application was not publicly notified, any associated lease application under the Reserves Act will be required to be publicly notified. This will provide Ōraka-Aparima Rūnaka the opportunity to make submissions and be heard through that process. Accordingly, while I acknowledge the Rūnaka's concerns regarding the Reserve Management Plan review and the wider implications of commercial activity in reserves, these matters fall outside the scope of the RMA decision and are more appropriately addressed under the Reserves Act.

7.3.8.2. *Cultural values and effects on mauri, kaitiakitanga and manaakitanga* – the Report acknowledges the significance of Lake Henry as a taonga to the Rūnaka and that the Rūnaka *"consider the commercial nature of the proposal inconsistent with mana whenua values of kaitiakitanga and manaakitanga"*. These are acknowledged as relevant considerations under sections 6(e), 7(a) and 8 of the RMA. *"The proposal introduces a commercial activity into a natural setting and will change how the lake edge is used, which may affect how mana whenua experience and relate to the site."* The s42A report author acknowledges the relationship *"between mana whenua and the lake environment extends beyond physical effects to include spiritual and cultural elements."*

The author acknowledges the proposal introduces a built element on the surface of the lake. They also propose *"a condition of consent requiring the final external colours and materials of the buildings to be approved by the Community Facilities Department. This will ensure an appropriate colour treatment is applied and will further mitigate*

potential visual effects." Also noted is that the proposed pontoon is not fixed to the lake bed and can be removed without leaving any permanent physical effects on the lake environment.

In the context of the currently modified environment around the lake, the additional proposed structure is considered of a scale that is *"not anticipated to substantially diminish the natural character or materially alter the way the lake environment is experienced."*

While acknowledging that the proposed activity will restrict public access to Lake Henry at one access point, the report notes the two other access points remain fully available to the public, including the primary access point. With the small spatial footprint and the wider access network, the author considers the degree of access restriction to be minimal.

In this context, the author does not consider the level of cultural or physical effects to be so great as to warrant declining the resource consent.

7.3.8.3. *Amenity effects, character of the reserve* – these matters are discussed elsewhere in the s42A report and this decision and are not repeated here. The report notes that

> *"While the proposal will result in a change to how part of the lake environment is used, the overall scale of effects is considered to be acceptable with appropriate conditions. The question of whether commercial activity is suitable within the reserve from a land-use allocation or policy perspective is more appropriately addressed under the Reserve Management Plan and the future lease process."*

7.3.8.4. *Precedent concerns* – Ōraka-Aparima Rūnaka were concerned that approval of this consent could create a precedent for further commercialisation of natural areas. The report notes that, under the RMA,

> *"each application must be determined on its own merits and with reference to the District Plan framework. The District Plan does not treat precedent effects as determinative unless they relate to cumulative effects or plan integrity…Any future commercial proposal elsewhere in the reserve or in other Council reserve would require its own assessment and, in most cases, its own Reserves Act lease."*

7.3.8.5. *Overall conclusion – assessment of submission issues* – while acknowledging the important matters raised in the submission, the overall conclusion the s42A author reaches is that

"many of these issues are more appropriately considered through the Reserves Act lease process rather than the RMA. The environmental effects of the proposal, as required to be assessed under the RMA, are generally modest, reversible and capable of being appropriately mitigated. On this basis, the matters raised in the submission do not warrant declining the resource consent."

7.3.8.6. *Applicant's Brief of Evidence* - I note that the Applicant adopts similar views as the s42A author's in their Brief of Evidence, while also noting that it is for mana whenua to determine if a proposed activity is inconsistent with or has an adverse effect on mauri, manaakitanga, and kaitiakitanga.[21]

7.3.8.7. *Statutory acknowledgement* – the author notes the statutory acknowledgement over Lake Te Anau into which Lake Henry flows. As the proposal is not on or adjacent to land subject to a statutory acknowledgement, nor is it anticipated to reduce the water quality of Lake Henry, *"it is considered that the proposal will not affect the statutory acknowledgement and will not result in adversely affected persons in this regard."*

7.3.8.8. *Overall effects* – the s42A author considers that any adverse effects generated by this activity are acceptable.

7.3.9. *Overall effects* – the s42A author concludes and the Applicant agrees that, overall, any adverse effects generated on the wider environment will be no more than minor. They both agree that the proposal remains consistent with the relevant objectives and policies of the Southland District Plan.

7.3.10. *Commissioner's conclusion of overall effects*

7.3.10.1. I am not bound by any conclusions reached or recommendations made in the s42A report and the report is intended to assist me in making a decision on this application. Nor am I bound by the application or submission. However, I am required to make a thorough assessment of the application using the statutory framework of the RMA before reaching a decision.

7.3.10.2. As discussed above, with much of the points in the submissions related to the weight and relevance of the District Wide Reserve Management Plan review and the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan, I accept that consideration of the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan is relevant under "other matters" in s104. That said, considering the matters discussed above and the evidence provided, I conclude that granting the consent does not offend the Park Management Plan.

[21] Pp 11 – 14, Final Brief of Evidence of Luke McSoriley Floating Sauna Ltd RMA 2024 53230

7.3.10.3. I repeat that any lease agreement the Applicant enters into so as to undertake the activity is separate to the consent and is not considered further in this decision.

7.3.10.4. While I appreciate the concerns that Te Ao Mārama Inc. Raised regarding the commercial nature of the activity upsetting the 'vibe' of Lake Henry, I do not consider the impact of commercial nature of the activity as relevant to my assessment of effects. I agree with the s42A author that *"[w]hether a commercial venture is appropriate within a Council reserve is…more properly assessed through the Reserves Act lease process."*

7.3.10.5. With respect to the actual and potential environmental effects, evidence and submissions provided, comments made in the hearing, and my observations at my site visit, all of which are discussed above, I agree with the s42A author and the Applicant that, overall, any adverse effects generated on the wider environment will be no more than minor and that the adverse effects with respect to the floating sauna pontoon will be no more than minor.

7.4. Southland District Plan 2018

7.4.1. The s42A author identifies and discusses the relevant sections of the District Plan in section N of their report. For brevity, I do not repeat the discussion here summarising their discussion and/or conclusion.

7.4.2. *GRUZ – General Rural Zone* – the existing character of this part of the Rural Zone is recreational rather than productive rural land. The *"introduction of a small floating pontoon and sauna structure fits within the anticipated amenity context of this environment."* Overall, the proposal was assessed as consistent with the Rural Zone objectives and policies.

7.4.3. *ASW-SW – Activities on the Surface of Water* – the proposal was assessed as consistent with the Activities on the Surface of Water objectives and policies.

7.4.4. *TRAN – Transport* – the proposal was assessed as consistent with the Transport objectives and policies.

7.4.5. *TW – Tangata Whenua* – the matters that Ōraka-Aparima Rūnaka raised, as tangata whenua in the Lake Henry area and the assessment of those matters are discussed above and in the s42A Report. Overall, due to the matters raised, the proposal was assessed as partly consistent with Tangata Whenua objectives and policies. While the cultural concerns raised have been acknowledged the report notes that *"the activity is low-impact, reversible, and does not permanently affect the waterbody."* Therefore, the author considers that the proposal is not fundamentally inconsistent with Tangata Whenua objectives and policies.

7.4.6. *Overall policy assessment – Southland District Plan 2018* – the author considers that the proposal is consistent with the relevant policies and objectives of the Southland District Plan, though there is some lack of alignment with the Tangata Whenua Chapter. On balance, the s42A report author considers that *"the proposal is not contrary to the District Plan when read as a whole."*

7.4.7. I agree with the assessment of the application against the District Plan

7.5. Other statutory documents

7.5.1. For completeness, I repeat the statements in the s42A authors of report.

7.5.1.1. Section 104B of the RMA applies and I have the discretion to either grant or decline consent to this application and if the consent sought is granted, may impose conditions in accordance with Section 108 of the RMA.

7.5.1.2. Section 104 (1) of the RMA states that subject to Part 2, when considering an application for resource consent and any submissions received, the consent authority shall have regard to a number of matters, these being any actual and potential effects on the environment, any relevant provisions of a National Environmental Standard, National Policy Statement, a proposed Policy Statement, a Regional Policy Statement or proposed Regional Policy Statement, or a Plan or proposed Plan.

7.5.2. *Part 2 matters* – I note that it may be desirable to assess Part 2 if there are any inconsistencies with lower order documents, such as the District Plan. I was not made aware of any such inconsistencies. I do note above that the s42A Report considers Part 2 matters in assessing the submission received. I find that a consideration of Part 2 matters does not weigh against a grant of consent provided appropriate consent conditions are imposed.

8. Conditions

8.1. I was provided with recommended consent conditions by the s42A Report author. The Applicant's advisor's opinion was that those proposed conditions were appropriate.[22]

8.2. For the sake of brevity, I record that I accept and impose the conditions recommended by the s42A Report author other than as set out in Appendix 1 to this Decision. I have considered the Applicant's and the s42A author's proposed amendments to the proposed conditions, and I have included those amendments that I accept with my changes in Appendix 1.

[22] Sec P, Section 42A Report; para 40, Final Brief of Evidence of Luke McSoriley Floating Sauna Ltd RMA 2024 53230

9. Determination

9.1. My determination on the application is set out below and my reasons are detailed in the body of this Decision. Overall, any adverse actual and potential environmental effects generated on the wider environment, with respect to the floating sauna activities, are considered to be no more than minor. Further, relying particularly on the site visit and my observation of the site's current land use and context, I consider that the Applicant's proposal will have an overall positive effect on the environment (s104[1][ab]).

9.2. I **grant** the application lodged by Floating Sauna Limited for a land use consent to to establish and operate a floating sauna on Lake Henry, subject to the conditions recommended by the Section 42A Report author except as amended in Appendix 1.

Signed by the independent commissioner:

[redacted]

Steven Wilson
Dated: 04 Huitanguru (February) 2026

Appendix 1: Amended consent conditions

Deletions are ~~struckthrough.~~

Additions are <u>underlined.</u>

Activity in accordance with application

1. The floating sauna activity must be undertaken in accordance with the application lodged with Southland District Council (Council) on 14/11/2024, and all information submitted with the application as held on Council's resource consent file referenced RMA/2024/53230 and listed below, except as modified by the conditions of this consent.

Report title and reference	Author	Rev	Dated
Untitled AEE	Edgar Planning	N/A	14/11/2024
LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT REPORT Floating Sauna Limited 181 Manapouri Te Anau Highway Te Anau	Patch	N/A	15/04/2025
Floating Sauna, Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve, Te Anau Transport Assessment	Bartlett Consulting		13/03/2025

Plan title and reference	Author	Rev	Dated
Lake Henry Floating Sauna Base Plan	Patch	N/A	23/07/2024
Lake Henry Floating Sauna Site Plan	Patch	N/A	23/07/2024
Lake Henry Floating Sauna Concept Plan	Patch	N/A	23/07/2024
Plans & Elevations Ground Drawing No: A02-00	Light Architecture	B	31/05/2024

Other additional information	Author	Rev	Dated
Letter – Further Information Response	Nigel Reeves	N/A	No date

Advice note:

<u>Retention of Consent Documentation:</u>

An electronic or hard-copy version of this resource consent should be kept on site at all times during the activity authorised by this resource consent. The consent holder

is to ensure all workers and contractors on site are familiar with the conditions of consent.

Variations to the Proposal:

Should it become apparent that a component of the granted consent cannot be implemented as originally proposed (e.g., due to unforeseen site constraints, engineering requirements, or compliance with standards and bylaws), changes to the proposal may be necessary. In such cases, the consent holder must assess whether the changes fall within the scope of "in ~~general~~ accordance" as ~~defined~~noted in this consent. If the changes exceed this scope, a formal variation to the consent under Section 127 of the Resource Management Act 1991 or a new resource consent may be required.

2. Under section 125 of the Resource Management Act 1991, this consent lapses five years after the date it is granted unless:

    a. The consent is given effect to; or

    b. An application under section 125 of the Resource Management Act 1991 is made to the Council before the consent lapses to extend the period after which the consent lapses and the Council grants an extension.

Pre-Commencement Conditions

3. **Building Cladding Colours**

Prior to the construction of any buildings on the pontoon, the consent holder must submit the final cladding colours and materials to Council's Community Facilities Department for certification that they are appropriate and will visually integrate with the natural environment of Lake Henry. Written confirmation of this approval must be provided to the Team Leader Monitoring and Enforcement before construction commences.

Mana Whenua invitation – cultural elements

4. **Mana Whenua invitation**

The consent holder shall send a written invitation to Te Ao Mārama Inc providing them with an opportunity for mana whenua input into proposed signage for the floating sauna, including any cultural symbolism or interpretive elements, and other components of the sauna that protect, where practical, the tino rangatiratanga, kaitiakitanga, mauri and manaakitanga attributes of Lake Henry. Any mana whenua input, including any cultural symbolism or interpretive elements, shall only be included where there is mutual agreement between Te Ao Mārama Inc and the consent holder. To clarify, any minor amendments to the approved plans that arise from mana whenua input agreed between Te Ao Mārama Inc and the consent holder shall be deemed to be in accordance with the approved plans for the purposes of this consent, provided that such amendments do not result in any materially different adverse effects from those assessed. The consent holder shall provide a

written update to Council on the status of those discussions 90 days after the written invitation was sent to Te Ao Mārama Inc. The consent holder shall fund the cost of any signage, other cultural symbolism or interpretive components of the sauna if they are installed.

Operation of Floating Sauna

5. **Maximum Number of Customers**

   No more than 12 customers shall be present within the sauna facility at any one time.

6. **Operating Hours**

   The sauna facility shall operate seven days per week during daylight hours only. No session shall commence before 7:00am, and all sessions shall cease by 9:00pm, with seasonal adjustments permitted to ensure operations remain within daylight hours.

   Advice Note:

   For the purposes of this condition, daylight hours means the period between the time of sunrise and sunset as published by MetService or another authoritative source. The consent holder is responsible for ensuring that operating hours adjust seasonally to comply with daylight limitations.

7. **Use of fire**

   The only fire authorised by this consent is the wood burner used to operate the sauna. For the avoidance of doubt, the fire pit shown on the plans is not authorised and shall not be used.

8. **Rubbish management**

   The consent holder shall provide and maintain a rubbish receptacle on the floating sauna facility. All rubbish generated by the operation of the sauna shall be collected and removed from Ivon Wilson Park by sauna staff at the end of each operating day and disposed of off-site.

9. **Landscaping / Vegetation Clearance**

   No clearance of vegetation is authorised in order to deliver, construct or operate the proposed sauna activity.

10. **Complaints**

    Council's Team Leader Monitoring and Compliance (via email: compliance@southlanddc.govt.nz) shall be provided with a copy of any complaint relating to the floating sauna operation on site, including the subsequent investigation and actions taken. This shall be provided within five working days of the complaint being received.

Monitoring and Review of Conditions

11. The Council reserves the right to review the conditions of this consent, within one month of the anniversary of the granting of the consent, as provided for under Section 128 of the resource Management Act 1991.

12. Specifically, this review condition is to enable Council to ensure that the conditions of this consent do not become irrelevant, outdated, or inadequate and to enable Council to address any unanticipated adverse environmental effects which may arise from the exercise of this consent.

    Those aspects which the Council shall address with respect to this review condition are:

    - The adequacy of, or necessity for, monitoring conditions
    - Noise
    - The number of customers permitted within the sauna facility at any one time
    - Hours of operation

EVIDENCE OF MAREE FRASER-KEEN

Senior Resource Management Planner – Consents

Southland District Council

Application: RMA/2024/53230 – Floating Sauna Limited

Hearing Date: 21 January 2026

1. INTRODUCTION AND ROLE

1. My name is Maree May Fraser-Keen. I am a Senior Resource Management Planner – Consents employed by Southland District Council.
2. I am the reporting officer for this application and the author of the Section 42A Report dated 9 December 2025, which I adopt for the purposes of this evidence.
3. I hold postgraduate qualifications in Resource Planning and Environmental Science, a Master of Science in Marine Science, and a Bachelor of Science majoring in Zoology. I am an Associate Member of the New Zealand Planning Institute.
4. My role is to provide an independent assessment of the application to assist the Commissioner, having regard to all submissions and evidence, and applying the statutory framework of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA).

2. SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

5. This evidence should be read in conjunction with my Section 42A Report.
6. In assessing the proposal, I have taken into account a range of relevant considerations. The activity is small in scale and confined to a limited area. It does not involve vegetation clearance, discharges to water, or any permanent modification of the lake bed. The floating pontoon is removable. This means the activity is reversible at the end of the consent or lease term. Operating hours are restricted to daylight hours, which limits both the intensity and duration of activity. The proposal is also located within a recreation reserve that is already highly modified and still accommodates public access and recreational use of Lake Henry.

3. STATUTORY AND PLANNING CONTEXT

7. The application must be assessed under sections 104 of the RMA, subject to Part 2.
8. In doing so, the consent authority must have regard to the actual and potential effects on the environment, the relevant objectives and policies of the Southland District Plan, and relevant iwi planning documents, including Te Tangi a Tauira – Ngāi Tahu ki Murihiku Iwi Management Plan 2008. The consent authority may also take into account any other matter it considers relevant and reasonably necessary to determine the application.
9. In undertaking my assessment, I have also had particular regard to section 6(e) of the Act, which relates to the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with ancestral lands and waters,

section 7(a), which requires particular regard to kaitiakitanga, and section 8, which requires the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi to be taken into account..

4. SCOPE OF THE APPLICATION AND ROLE OF THE RESERVE MANAGEMENT PLAN

10. A key issue raised in the iwi evidence relates to the status of the Ivon Wilson Park Reserve Management Plan, including concerns that it is outdated and does not adequately reflect mana whenua values.

11. The proposal requires resource consent under the Resource Management Act because it involves an activity located on Council reserve land and does not comply with an approved Reserve Management Plan, which in turn triggers the requirement for resource consent under the District Plan rules.

12. The purpose of this resource consent process is therefore to assess whether the actual and potential environmental effects of the proposed activity are acceptable under the RMA, rather than to determine the appropriateness or content of the Reserve Management Plan.

13. The operative Reserve Management Plan has been relied on only for the purposes of establishing a permitted baseline. In that context, the permitted baseline includes matters anticipated by the management plan, such as the formation of the access track, provision of carparking and signage, and the attraction of increased numbers of people to use the park, all of which have therefore been treated as permitted and disregarded for the purposes of the effects assessment.

14. In this case, the fact that the proposal does not comply with the existing Reserve Management Plan is precisely why resource consent is required. It is through this consent process that the environmental effects of the activity are tested and evaluated.

15. Notwithstanding the concerns raised about the age of the Reserve Management Plan, iwi have been provided with a direct and formal opportunity to express their views on the proposal through the notification of the resource consent, the submission process, and the provision of evidence. As a result, I do not consider that proceeding with the resource consent prior to the completion of an updated Reserve Management Plan has resulted in a failure to reflect mana whenua cultural values or voices in this application.

16. It is also important to clearly distinguish the separate and complementary roles of the Resource Management Act 1991 and the Reserves Act 1977. The resource consent process under the RMA assesses whether the actual and potential environmental effects of a proposed activity are acceptable.

17. The RMA process does not determine whether it is appropriate, as a matter of reserve management or public policy, to allow a commercial activity on public reserve land. Matters such as whether commercial use is appropriate on a recreation reserve, whether it aligns with the purpose and classification of the reserve, and the duration and terms of occupation are matters for determination under the Reserves Act.

18. The granting of resource consent does not authorise occupation or exclusive use of reserve land. Any occupation of Ivon Wilson Park will require a lease or licence under the Reserves Act, which is subject to a defined term, consideration of renewal, and is generally subject to public notification, providing a further opportunity for public and mana whenua input.

19. As a result, the proposal is subject to multiple decision points, and the granting of resource consent does not "lock in" long-term commercial use of the reserve.

5. CONSIDERATION OF MAURI EFFECTS ON LAKE HENRY

20. A central concern raised by Te Ao Mārama Inc relates to the potential effects of the proposal on the mauri of Lake Henry.

21. I acknowledge that mauri is a cultural concept defined and understood by mana whenua, and it is not for the consent authority, nor for myself as reporting planner, to determine whether mauri is affected from a cultural perspective.

22. The role of the consent authority under the Resource Management Act is to recognise and provide for Māori relationships with ancestral waters in accordance with section 6(e), to have particular regard to kaitiakitanga under section 7(a), and to weigh cultural evidence alongside all other relevant considerations when determining whether the effects of the proposal are acceptable under the Act.

23. The submitter evidence clearly articulates that Lake Henry is regarded as a taonga waterbody, with whakapapa connections to Lake Te Anau, and that the introduction of a commercial activity is perceived as diminishing the mauri and tranquillity of the lake.

24. I acknowledge that this concern is genuinely held and reflects the values set out in Te Tangi a Tauira. I also acknowledge the submitter evidence that mauri represents the spiritual essence and life force present in all things, and that Lake Henry's mauri is closely connected to its glacial origins, its quiet and reflective character, its surrounding ecosystems, and its whakapapa relationship with Lake Te Anau. I accept that tikanga and kaitiakitanga obligations seek to protect those values, and that the commercialisation of the waterbody is perceived by mana whenua as diminishing mauri and constraining their ability to exercise kaitiakitanga over time. However, in assessing the proposal under the RMA, I have also had regard to the fact that Lake Henry is located within a public recreation reserve, where swimming, fishing, noise, and other recreational activities already occur as of right. While I accept that intangible effects on mauri cannot be fully mitigated through conditions, the proposal must be assessed in light of the existing character of the reserve, the limited scale and reversible nature of the activity, and the statutory framework which requires cultural effects to be recognised and weighed alongside all other relevant considerations, rather than treated as determinative in isolation..

25. The submitter evidence also raises concerns relating to manaakitanga, including the view that the proposal places commercial interests above environmental, cultural, and community well-being within a public reserve. I acknowledge that manaakitanga, in this context, includes enabling access for all and fostering an environment where cultural values are upheld and the responsibilities of mana whenua are honoured.

26. However, in assessing the proposal under the RMA, I have also had regard to the fact that Lake Henry is located within a public recreation reserve, where swimming, fishing, noise, and other recreational activities already occur as of right. The proposal does not restrict public access to the lake, does not exclude existing recreational use, and does not prevent the wider community from continuing to enjoy the reserve. While the activity includes a commercial component, it has been assessed on the basis of its scale, location, and operation, and whether it undermines the ability of the public to continue to use and enjoy the reserve.

27. In assessing the proposal, I have considered whether the physical, operational, and experiential effects of the activity are of a nature and scale that would result in unacceptable effects under the RMA when considered in light of those mauri concerns.

28. In doing so, I have taken into account that the activity is small in scale and confined to a limited area, does not involve vegetation clearance, discharges to water, or permanent modification of the lake bed, and is reversible at the end of the consent or lease term. Operating hours are limited to

daylight hours, and the proposal is located within a recreation reserve that is already highly modified and continues to accommodate public access and use of Lake Henry, including fishing and swimming.

29. I acknowledge that mauri includes intangible values that cannot be fully mitigated by conditions. However, the RMA does not require an activity to be declined solely because it is perceived by mana whenua to affect mauri, where those effects are limited in scale, reversible, occur within a modified receiving environment, and the activity otherwise meets the sustainable management purpose of the Act.

30. On balance, I consider that the effects on mauri have been recognised, understood, and weighed, but do not reach a threshold that would justify refusal of consent when assessed against the full statutory framework.

6. APPLICANT EVIDENCE

31. The applicant has provided evidence from a planning consultant and the company director, which broadly aligns with the conclusions reached in my Section 42A Report, particularly in relation to the activity status, the assessment of landscape and transport effects as no more than minor, and the modified nature of the receiving environment. That evidence has been considered as contextual information and does not override or diminish the cultural evidence provided by mana whenua.

7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

32. In reaching my conclusions, I have considered the application and the supporting technical information, the evidence of Te Ao Mārama Inc, the provisions of Te Tangi a Tauira, the applicant's evidence, and the statutory framework of the Resource Management Act.

33. I remain of the opinion that the actual and potential effects of the proposal are acceptable in RMA terms, that cultural effects, including effects on mauri, have been appropriately recognised and weighed, that mana whenua have not been marginalised through the resource consent process itself, and that the proposal is consistent with the relevant objectives and policies of the Southland District Plan.

34. For these reasons, I continue to recommend that the application be granted, subject to the recommended conditions.

[redacted]

From: Liam Fox [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 25 March 2026 10:26 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Floating Sauna Lake Henry

This message is from an external sender

Hi Team,

I am in favour of the floating sauna.

It represents a low-impact, nature-based tourism and wellness activity.

I have firsthand experienced the same floating saunas in Canberra and Derby (I am originally from Tasmania) and found them to be very popular and a low-cost option too.

There is a growing demand for sustainable, experienced based tourism and I believe this floating sauna would be brilliant for the area.

Just confirming my full support.

Thank you,

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Anna T [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 25 March 2026 11:26 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission on Intention to grant a Reserves Act LTO Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Park
Attachments: Reserves Act LTO submission A Thomas.pdf

This message is from an external sender

Please find attached my submission opposing the Licence to Occupy Lake Henry, Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau.

Regards, Anna

Submission opposing proposed floating sauna (Reserves Act consultation- Licence to Occupy) – Lake Henry / Ivon Wilson Park

To: Southland District Council
Re: Proposed floating sauna on Lake Henry / Ivon Wilson Park

To Whom it may concern,

I am writing to oppose the granting of a Licence to Occupy (LTO) under the Reserves Act 1977 for the proposed floating sauna on Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Park. I understand the applicant has received resource consent for the land use component under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), the Commissioner's decision and associated reporting make it clear that the appropriateness of occupying reserve land and lake space for a commercial venture must be assessed through this Reserves Act process. Granting resource consent does not authorise commercial use of the reserve, nor does it constrain Council's decision-making on the lease/LTO.

I have read the applicant's comments made publicly on social media, and while I understand their idea and think a sauna facility is a great venture, my concern is that the location proposed on Lake Henry is a very different location when compared to their Tasmanian location (which they use as an example). Also, the lack of detail in the application and the cost to the taxpayer associated with choosing a public park as their location is inappropriate. This venture could be located on private land. There is no reason for it to be located in a reserve. As far as I can see, the only reason it is in this location is it will be less cost for the applicant to initiate and operate, but ongoing costs to the taxpayers of Te Anau.

Key reasons for opposing the LTO

1. **Proposal does not meet the conditions of the Fiordland Community Board letter**
   "We would like the sauna to be out of line of sight of the main viewing platform on Lake Henry."
   The proposed structure is highly visible in the proposed location.
   "We anticipate a suitable pathway, that does not impede other park users, would be constructed by the sauna operator so that the park grounds do not turn into a muddy track and that this path is maintained by the operator."
   This path is proposed in principle.
   "We would also ask the sauna operator to make a one off contribution toward the upgrade of the toilet facilities as their customers will likely increase the use of them for the sauna operator to also hold suitable public liability insurance should the sauna cause any damage to the park or surrounds."
   One off contribution to the toilet upgrade is not listed in the LTO. A contribution to signage upgrade is proposed.

2. **Conflicts with the reserve's primary purpose: open space, natural values, and public enjoyment**

Management Objectives from Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan 2008

i. To promote and facilitate multiple use of the Park based on identifiable recreation activities compatible with the character and sustainability of the resource.

ii. To enhance and maintain the scenic values and attractions of Ivon Wilson Park.

iii. To as far as possible maintain Lake Henry and surrounding bog in its natural state.

iv. To foster public appreciation for the Park, facilitate public access to, and recreational use of, the area.

This proposal is contrary to the first three objectives above. A commercial activity is not 'compatible with the character of the resource. It does not 'enhance and maintain the scenic values and attractions' nor does it 'maintain Lake Henry and surrounding bog in it's natural state'. This proposal intends to modify all of those aspects of the park that are the features that characterise Ivon Wilson Park.

The management plan emphasises the retention of open space and outdoor recreation for "the physical welfare and enjoyment of the public" and "the protection of the natural environment and beauty of the countryside." It also notes that reserves are created principally for open space, with only some buildings (e.g., changing rooms, toilets, clubrooms) being necessary for the full utilisation of the reserve. A paid commercial floating sauna is not comparable to these kinds of necessary facilities and introduces a new commercial structure into a setting intended to remain largely open and natural.

3. **Restricts public access to a public asset**

The proposal would effectively restrict public access to parts of Lake Henry and the existing pontoon/area around it, including for casual recreation and for uses such as photography. Even if not formally "exclusive," the presence of paying guests and a commercial operation can create a sense of occupation/ownership that discourages others from using the same space. The floating building will restrict access simply by it's presence in front of the pontoon.

4. **Visual and amenity impacts (including noise)**

The site is not out of view from the main viewing platform; it is in full view. Noise carries across water, so a commercial activity in this location risks degrading the quiet enjoyment many park users seek. The building's location on the water means it will not blend in with the surroundings, contrary to the intent to keep structures minimal and sympathetic. The application material also appears unclear/inconsistent about whether signage is proposed. It states signage is not proposed, yet the land use consent states there will be consultation with Te Ao Marama around signage. Also, there is likely to be safety signage required to meet the building code, including lit/reflective fire escape signs. These are

not discussed or shown on the building drawings, and items mentioned such as a fire extinguisher and safety ring are brightly coloured and their location is also not shown.

5. Fires/smoke conflict with reserve policies
   The Management Plan prohibits fires, yet the proposal includes two wood burners. The ongoing presence and amount of smoke in a recreation reserve setting has not been addressed. It is stated that fire extinguishers be kept onsite in case of an uncontrolled fire. These should be carefully considered to ensure they would not be harmful to the environment if needed to be used. Powder and foam extinguishers are generally extremely toxic to the environment, especially an open water body.

6. Pathway/earthworks and park character
   Much of Ivon Wilson Park is open grass without formed paths, which is a key part of the park's character and visitor experience. Creating a dedicated pathway to service the sauna risks funnelling users directly to the commercial activity, changing how people naturally move through and enjoy the reserve.

7. Lack of detail for debris/vegetation disturbance
   The application states no vegetation will be affected; however, there are tree branches and debris across the lakebed in the area. If these are moved to install the structure and/or to facilitate swimming, that would alter lakebed habitat and affect the lake ecosystem. The trees surrounding the access track will continue to grow. Who and how will manage this growth if it becomes a barrier. The process for dealing with this material initially and ongoing needs to be clearly stated and assessed.

8. Water quality and intensity of use
   A commercial sauna operation could drive a high turnover of users and increased swimming in a small lake. Potential cumulative effects on water quality should be addressed. See also Fire conflict above.

9. Costs and infrastructure burden on Council and ratepayers
   The proposal's contributions (e.g., a modest lease fee and limited contributions) do not appear to account for increased costs to maintain and clean public facilities, and to convey, treat, and dispose of additional wastewater associated with increased public toilet use, roading and carpark use etc. The costs and responsibilities should not be shifted to ratepayers, and should be equal to those expected of a commercial activity with paying guests. It is expected that at a minimum the contributions would be at a level of commercial property rates in Te Anau.

10. Safety and operational details are unclear
    While safety measures are referenced (e.g., supervision by qualified staff, emergency

equipment), other operational details remain unclear (for example, where the staff member will be located and what additional safety signage/equipment will be required on site). These elements have amenity and visual implications and should be transparent as part of the LTO assessment.

11. Construction
How will the buildings be constructed or moved onto site? The LTO states no vehicles will be onsite or access the site.

Requested outcome

For the reasons above, I request that Council decline the Licence to Occupy. At a minimum, Council should not grant an LTO unless and until the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan is reviewed/changed through the proper process and the proposal can be shown to be consistent with the reserve's primary purpose and the public's rights of access and enjoyment.

If Council proposes to approve the LTO despite the above, I suggest the following minimum conditions:

1. Relocate and/or redesign the facility so it is out of the line of sight of the main viewing platform (noting the currently proposed site is in full view), and not be utilising an existing public structure.

2. Any access route must avoid impeding other park users, must not result in an informal muddy track, and must be constructed and maintained at the operator's cost (including reinstatement if discontinued). Some minimal signage indicating it's destination would be appropriate.

3. Require a meaningful contribution toward upgrading and maintaining toilet facilities, reflecting expected increased use, and an agreed approach to ongoing servicing costs (cleaning, wastewater conveyance/treatment/disposal).

4. Require comprehensive public liability insurance and indemnities for any damage to the reserve and lake environment.

5. Require a robust assessment and enforceable controls to avoid smoke and fire risk (including monitoring and complaint response) and controls for hazard/emergency management.

6. Require a clear, consented method for dealing with lakebed debris/branches and any ecological disturbance, including confirmation of what will be moved/removed and where it will go.

7. Require baseline and ongoing water quality monitoring with clear triggers for suspension/cessation if adverse effects occur.

8. Require a complete signage and safety plan (including locations and appearance), consistent with what will be installed in practice to be approved.

9. Require a construction management plan to be required to explain how and what transports the buildings to site, and how all damage will be remedied post construction.

Thank you for considering my submission.

I would not like to be heard if hearings are held as part of this consultation process.

Regards, Anna Thomas

Te Anau

[redacted]

25/03/2026

[redacted]

From: Justin [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 25 March 2026 11:36 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission - Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

Re: Intention to grant a licence to occupy over part of Ivon Wilson recreation reserve for establishment of Sauna enterprise.

I am not opposed to the concept of a sauna enterprise on public land, however **I wish to submit that I am against this proposal in its current form.**

My reasons for this are the following:

- **Displacement of current and traditional park users** - the proposed commercial activity at this specific location will displace park users and remove existing use rights of the following users:
    - Kindergarten users (specifically Nature Discovery) - Kindergarten has used Ivon Wilson for many years for Nature Discovery and many families (including myself) have visited and used this park in this context. Visiting the platforms on Lake Henry are a traditional part of the visit, and always a highlight for the children to visit the platforms and play around the lake. Many families (mine included) have memories of these times and continue to visit the lake with their children to revisit these favorite spots. The loss of use, and change of appearance by establishing a permanent commercial activity here will negatively impact these traditonal users of the platforms.
    - Recreational Photography - this platform is specifically an iconic spot for viewing and taking photos of the Aurora. This is well known as a favourite spot for locals and there is a growing interest from tourist users also as the power of social media magnifies the iconic status of this spot. Icopnic photography locations are a low cost, high gain benefit for tourism and promotion of the area as the power of social media can elevate these iconic spots in to global superstar status. To underestimate the power and value of such a subtle yet valuable tourism asset to the point where it's value is completely dismissed and the opportunity it presents is lost to the construction of a commercial enterprise is short sighted and plain nonsensical.
    - Park users - I reularly use the park for it's running tracks and I always observe park users making their way to the platform as a focal point to enjoy the lake and to give a destination for their walk. To lose this to a commercial avtivity robs these users of their traditional right to quiet enjoyment of the facility.
- Commercial Considerations - as this is a commercial activity, rather than a not for profit, commercial terms should be considered when considering such a proposal. I feel there are several anomalies within the proposal well outside normal commercial practice that seriously devalue the offer from a public point of view:
    - Rental - The rental amount is so small it could be considered a "peppercorn rental" that does not truly reflect the benefit the leasee is getting in that they are obtaining a location to conduct a commercial activity from for very little payment. This seems well outside of normal cost that would be expected with any other lcoation or land use in the Te Anau basin. This to me seems to be completely out of balance with the cost to

the public in losing the use of this venue and provides a disproportionate amount of benefit to the Leasee for the negligible cost being paid.

- Term of Agreement - The time frame for right to occupy, with the option to renewis is massively long time frame that I believe is also out of kilter with what would be consdered a normal commercial lease. To lock in such a time frame I believe is only to the benefit of the Leasee, again where they are getting a massive amount of benefit and security for very little cost. I understand why the Leasee would want to lock in such a time frame, as for the tiny cost involved they are securing a deal that is massively in benefit to them, but I fail to see how this is of benefit to the general public. I object to such a time frame as I believe it is outside the best interests of the public and disproportionately benefits the applicant by providing commercial value well outside the compensation they are offering.
- The rental income is being portrayed as great benefit to the park - I fail to see how such a small amount of income would provide much benefit to the park. Without analysing costs too deeply, my first impression is that the small amount of money would not go far towards the cost of running such a park and would be best be described as only a drop in the ocean. This tiny amount of money would not really make a difference to maintenance of the park and certainly would not make any real difference to upgrading of facilities. Again, I believe when considering the benefits to the applicant vs negative effect to the public this tiny amount of money is negligible to say the least.

Thank you for consideration of my submission.

Regards Justin Lewis
Te Anau Resident/Company Director (Southland)
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: David Fortune [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 3:47 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: License to occupy part of Ivan Wilson Recreation Reserve
Attachments: Ivon Wilson Park.docx

This message is from an external sender

Attached is my submission strongly against this proposal. I can see little in the proposal that fits with the current reserve status.
The proposal is "good idea" but totally the "wrong place"
I am interested in being heard, if necessary.

David Fortune
[redacted]

Can you please acknowledge receipt of my submission
Thanks

I wish to strongly oppose the granting of a licence to occupy part of Iven Wilson recreation reserve for a series of floating sauna.

There are several aspects of the proposal that do not fit in with the current reserve status

1

The reserve should not be part owned by any individual or company.

2

The park is a lovely reserve set up so people can “stroll, picnic and relax”. This proposal would negatively impact on these aims

3

The council is to “maintain Lake Henry and the surrounding bog in its natural state”. There seems to be little natural about this proposal, and would be an eyesore.

4

The council is to keep the number of structures to a minimum. This proposal is obviously against policy where a group of extra structures are proposed

5

The structures, if proceeded as proposed, would negatively impact on the ambiance of the area. The proposal would have 80 sq m of “stuff” rather than the current idyllic view of Lake Henry

6

I suspect that this proposal would impact negatively on the water quality. Can the heated water be completely kept separate for Lake Henry? What will be the impact on the fish?

7

My grandson has been fishing from the proposed site for this sauna. That will obviously be not possible if this proposal was allowed to go ahead. Why should the present status be changed so someone can make some money?

8

The sauna idea may be a very good one. The problem is the location. The sauna must not be allowed in this lovely peaceful lake reserve. Let the sauna owner find another place for it so that the residents and visitors can continue to enjoy Lake Henry and Ivon Wilson Park as is obviously intended in the policy

David Fortune

Received into Contact Property email inbox Wednesday 25 March at 12:19pm

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing as a long-time resident of Te Anau, now in my 82nd year, to express my deep concern regarding the proposed floating sauna at Lake Henry in Ivon Wilson Park.

I have been walking through Ivon Wilson Park since 1970. Over the decades, it has remained one of the few truly peaceful places in our town — somewhere gentle, unspoilt, and restorative. It is where I go to reflect, to breathe, and to enjoy the quiet beauty of nature. That sense of calm is becoming increasingly rare, and once lost, it cannot easily be regained.

The introduction of a commercial activity, no matter how well-intentioned, feels entirely at odds with the spirit of this park. Ivon Wilson Park has never been about tourism or enterprise — it has always been about community, simplicity, and stillness. It is a place for locals of all ages, particularly older residents like myself, to walk safely, quietly, and without disruption.

I am concerned that this proposal would set a precedent for further commercialisation of public spaces. Once one activity is approved, it becomes increasingly difficult to say no to others. Over time, the very character of the park risks being eroded.

There are also practical concerns. Increased foot traffic, noise, parking pressure, and general activity — particularly during what should be the park's quiet winter months — will inevitably change the experience for those who use it daily. Not everything needs to be activated or monetised to have value.

I understand the desire to support tourism and create new experiences. However, I strongly believe that such ventures should be located in areas designed for commercial or recreational activity — not within one of Te Anau's most peaceful and cherished public parks.

Places like Ivon Wilson Park are important not because of what they generate financially, but because of what they provide to the wellbeing of a community. For many of us, especially in later years, that quiet connection to nature is invaluable.

I respectfully ask that you consider preserving the park as it has always been — a sanctuary for locals, a place of peace, and a reminder that not every space needs to be developed.

Yours sincerely,
Judith Risk

[redacted]

P.S. I do not want to stand up and speak on my submission.

[redacted]

From: Paul Brimecombe [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 25 March 2026 2:18 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Intention to grant a licence to occupy over part of Ivon Wilson recreation reserve submission

This message is from an external sender

Submission regarding

Intention to grant a licence to occupy over part of Ivon Wilson recreation reserve

To SDC

I strongly oppose this intention by the SDC to grant this licence.

Ivon Wilson Park is a public area. The park and lake are well used by the community for a variety of recreational activities, and valued for its peace and natural beauty. It is totally inappropriate to allow a commercial entity to take advantage of this resource for their own profit. It is a public area and should not be used by a private company.

By allowing commercial activity in this public space is the thin end of the wedge and other commercial activities could well follow.

The parking area is limited, and often almost full. The park is very well used and popular. This commercial activity would no doubt put increased pressure on this small parking area which might in time deter or prevent current recreational use of the park.

This presumably high end somewhat exclusive style business in the park would no doubt over time develop a assumption of propitiatory existence in the park and they may take measures to actively dissuade locals from recreational use.

The structures proposed would certainly impact on the outstanding natural beauty of the park.

I very strongly appose this and believe this to be totally inappropriate for the above reasons and strongly believe that this proposal should be rejected by the SDC.

Please acknowledge receipt of this submission.

Paul Brimecombe

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Debra Reeves [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 25 March 2026 2:39 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission for Floating Sauna Licence Ivon Wilson Park
Attachments: Floating sauna alright_ Ivon Wilson Park pioneer.pdf

This message is from an external sender

To Whom It May Concern,

As a Director of Floating Sauna Limited, I am writing to express my support for the Council to approve the licence for a Floating Sauna to operate at Lake Henry.

I am aware of opposition to the plan. I am confident the Council will be aware of studies showing how negative people are much more motivated to contribute to a consultation process than people who feel neutral or positive about a new idea. I hope the negative bias phenomenon will be taken into consideration.

I wish to draw the Council's attention to the attached Southland App article by journalist Sue Fea dated 4 March 2026. The Ivon Wilson Park was created as a space for people to enjoy mother nature in many different ways. Today's Management Plan for the Park reflects this, encouraging multiple uses from dog walking, mountain biking, swimming, frisbee golf as well as community events and private ceremonies.

I feel many of the opposition to the Floating Sauna is due to misinformation and misunderstanding.

The Floating Sauna is a leader in a new type of experience-based tourism. These are people who want to be immersed in nature and not just be a spectator looking at pretty scenery from the comfort of a car or restaurant. The Floating Sauna will attract independent travellers who want to stop for longer to enjoy all that Te Anau has to offer.

The Floating Sauna is a curated experience that helps people to decompress, destress, and be still in nature. The Floating Sauna does not attract loud, obnoxious people. The Floating Sauna attracts people sensitive to the natural environment who will appreciate the serenity of Ivon Wilson Reserve. These people walk gently on the earth and have a social conscience.

The Floating Sauna is a passive recreational activity that complements the existing use of the area. The Floating Sauna offers an added benefit of creating new jobs and expanding tourist numbers through Te Anau's quiet winter period. Our other floating saunas prove our Floating Sauna experience will attract visitors to stay longer and spend more in the area.

Conditions of the licence protect the amenity of people using the main jetty. We have already agreed to close for weddings. We have already offered our Floating Sauna pontoon for use by aurora photographers. We have already agreed to annual rental, contribution to the upgrading of signage, pathway and cleaning public toilets to ensure that ratepayers are not worse off.

I recommend the Council approves the draft Licence and allows us to deliver an exciting, sustainable new small business that creates new wellness tourism for Te Anau. I do not wish to speak at the meeting.

Debra Reeves

Floating sauna alright: Ivon Wilson Park pioneer

Sue Fea © the Southland App
04 March 2026, 9:31 AM



Ivon Wilson (far right with map), along with volunteers - dubbed the 'Men of the Trees', with spades in hand on the site of Te Anau's now treasured Ivon Wilson Park in 1961. The group includes Alex Campbell (back row in tartan shirt), Ivan O'Brien (middle row second from left), Dave Milligan (front row in blue jersey) and Colin Tauri with his son Clint (far left). Photo: Clint Tauri

Danish Southlander and 'Men of the Trees' pioneer Kaj Hogh (90) well recalls his trips to Te Anau with his farming boss as part of the voluntary group to help Southland dentist Ivon Wilson develop what is now the treasured Ivon Wilson Park around Lake Henry.



Kaj Hogh was part of the 'Men of the Trees' volunteer group that helped establish Ivon Wilson Park. Photo: Supplied

Submissions are currently being called on an application by an Australian floating sauna operator to operate a floating sauna on the picturesque and tranquil lake in the park – a proposal that's drawn both public criticism and concerns about "misinformation".

Some locals have questioned whether this commercial use is in keeping with the original intent of the park as created by Ivon and his helpers from the late 1950s.

But Kaj, who arrived in New Zealand as a young Danish immigrant under the post-World War II 'Ten Pound Poms' Assisted Migration Scheme, reckons Ivon and the boys from back then would think the floating sauna idea was alright: "I'd say so," he says.



'Men of the Trees' volunteers planting around Lake Henry, in what was to become known as Ivon Wilson Park. Photo: Supplied/Iain Campbell

"Ivon just wanted to create a park and have a pond for the kids to catch fish in," Kaj, who still helps on his 40-acre Longbush family lifestyle block, says.

A crew of Southland men, known as 'Men of the Trees', and a few extras helping Ivon included Kaj, whose Woodlands farmer boss Alex Campbell brought him along, and Automobile Association Motor Camp operator Colin Tauri.

The camp was adjacent to the park.

Wilson – president of the Southland Automobile Association from 1945 until 1951, began developing the park in 1958 and Kaj says they'd all come up to Te Anau from around Southland for regular working bees.

The 35ha site was covered in scrub – "it was a bit rough", and Kaj says it took them about a year to tidy the area up and get the trees that Ivon had sourced from all over planted.

"We'd go back up and weed around the native trees after a year or so.

"We used mattocks and slashers... The Men of the Trees was a big group around our area (in Southland)," Kaj says. "They were a great group of guys. Most of them are gone now."

The site was entirely cleared by hand, and he remembers Ivon sourcing and planting all the native trees and species, 5000 all up.



The 'Men of the Trees'. Ivon Wilson (second from right). Photo: Supplied/Iain Campbell

He's not totally sure but believes the park land was probably made available by the likes of government department Lands and Survey as about that time the department was allocating land as farm ballot blocks between The Key and Te Anau.

"When we first started going up there (to Te Anau) it was all tussocks out there – a pub that I think doubled as a shop and half a dozen cribs," Kaj says.

"The airstrip was inland a bit from the Lake Te Anau foreshore and there was manuka 2m to 3m tall between the lakefront and airstrip."

Kaj, who arrived as a new immigrant, aged 24, from Denmark on the programme to encourage more migrant workers, paid 10 pound for the privilege and was allowed to stay two years.

He travelled south by ferry from Wellington to Lyttelton then down to Woodlands on the train.

After buying a car he discovered Te Anau and fell in love with the bush and beauty.

The Department of Labour had secured him the Woodlands farm worker job.

"I liked it that much that I decided to stay," Kaj says. He met Kiwi girl June, who still reckons Kaj is "pretty good looking" and it was "love at first sight". They married almost 60 years ago.



Southland District Council's Ivon Wilson Park, on the edge of Te Anau, is popular with families and school groups, and as a venue for weddings, picnics, frisbee golf and photos. Photo: Southland App

Submissions on the floating sauna proposal have been rolling in to the Southland District Council, and the local Fiordland Community Board is encouraging people to have their say.

Submissions close on 26th March.

CLICK HERE for more information.

Sue Fea is a senior journalist with more than 40-years experience covering police, social and general news in the southern regions.

[redacted]

From: Shirley Mouat [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 25 March 2026 3:31 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Floating sauna Lake Henry submission
Attachments: Floating Sauna Lake Henry application.doc

This message is from an external sender

Hi Team

Please find attached my submission.

Regards
Shirley Mouat

Shirley Mouat
[redacted]

Email: [redacted]

25th March, 2026

Southland District Council
PO Box 903
Invercargill 9840

Attention: Contact Property Services Team

Floating Sauna Lake Henry Te Anau Application

I, Shirley Mouat wish to **oppose** the application to grant a licence to occupy part of Ivon Wilson Park Recreation Reserve being a floating sauna on Lake Henry Te Anau.

Ivon Wilson created the Lake Henry area within what is now Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve, transforming a wilderness area into a scenic park for future generations starting around 1958. While the lake itself is a natural ancient remnant of glacial retreat, Wilson developed the surrounding area and the lake was later used as a trout hatchery before becoming designated a safe accessible tranquil fishery for children, this being his wish.

A Park or Reserve means any land which is vested in or under the control of Council and which is set aside for public enjoyment as a reserve, park, garden or green space, whether or not that land has been vested as a reserve under the Reserves Act 1977.

- Will there be pollution from smoke
- Will this be a fire risk.
- Will there be nude people jumping into Lake Henry
- Will this take over one of the existing wharves

The lake and surrounding park provide a scenic quiet refuge, often used for walking with views of the Fiordland Mountains, a poplar spot for picnics, fishing, birdwatching and photography.

I would appreciate your full consideration of the points raised above and therefore urge Council to not grant this licence to occupy.

I feel that should a licence to occupy Ivon Wilson Park be granted the natural, ecological and historical values of this area could be destroyed forever.

This activity would be fine in another location but not Lake Henry.

I wish to be heard on my submission, preferably about 10.00am.

Yours sincerely,
Shirley Mouat
[redacted]

Submission on Sauna at Ivon Wilson Park Te Anau

I am against the granting of a license to establish a Sauna at Ivon Wilson Park.

Reasons

When the Park was established I am sure the idea of having a commercial business operating from there was not part of the plan.

Currently Te Anau is very busy. The Park is a lovely place for the small kindergarten children and adults to get some peace & quite in a lovely setting.

Having a commercial business there and all the increased traffic and people would remove the tranquillity I enjoy so much.

Regards Gary Hutchison

email [redacted]

I do not wish to speak at the meeting.

Postage Included

Submission on:

Sauna at Ivon Wilson Park

Delivered to the Te Anau Office - Wednesday 25 March 2026

Page 346

[redacted]

From: Nathan McDermott [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 25 March 2026 4:42 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission - Ivon Wilson park
Attachments: Submission on Lake Henry .docx

This message is from an external sender

Hi ,

Please find attached submission for Ivon Wilson Park.
This opposes the current proposal.

Kind regards
Nathan

Submission on Proposed Licence to Occupy
Floating Sauna Ltd – Ivon Wilson Park / Lake Henry

Submitter:

Nathan McDermott

Position: **Oppose**

Please find a submission on the proposed Licence to Occupy for the floating sauna at Lake Henry in Ivon Wilson Park.

I oppose the proposal in its current form.

The concerns relate to the privatisation and commercial use of a public structure, loss of public access and amenity, inconsistency with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan.

Ivon Wilson Park is an important public recreation reserve valued by the community for its peaceful character, open access to the lake, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature connection. The proposal would introduce a private commercial activity into a prominent part of the lake edge while relying heavily on existing public infrastructure.

inconsistency with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan as detailed below and also the plan review.

Management plan review

The Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan was adopted in 2008 and states that it should be reviewed at ten-year intervals. A full review should therefore have occurred around 2018.

However, the plan has not been reviewed since its adoption.

The Council is currently undertaking a review of the district-wide Reserve Management Plan

(2003), which will likely inform the future management of individual reserves, including Ivon Wilson Park.

Granting a long-term commercial Licence to Occupy of 15 + 15 years before the relevant management planning framework has been updated risks pre-empting the outcome of that process and limiting the ability of the community to shape the future management of the park.

It seems therefore inappropriate to grant a long-term commercial licence over part of the park while this wider reserve management review process is underway.

Community projects within the park are currently being paused while Council determines the future direction of the park through the management planning process.

It seems inconsistent that community planting projects which align with the management plan must wait for the outcome of the management planning process, while a commercial development and long-term occupation of the reserve which is at odds with the Management Plan is being progressed.

All inconsistencies on Aasessment of the proposal against Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan 2008

Vision

4a. Vision - "To build on Ivon Wilson's dream of creating a parkscape of trees that attracts people and wildlife."

Intent of the vision - The vision emphasises a park characterised by natural landscape, trees, wildlife habitat, and public enjoyment of a natural environment. The park is intended to attract people because of its natural character rather than built structures or commercial activities.

Assessment of proposal - The floating sauna introduces a commercial structure directly onto Lake Henry and attached to an existing public jetty. Rather than reinforcing the park's natural "parkscape of trees", it introduces a prominent built structure and associated commercial activity into one of the park's most visible locations.

Vision - "With Lake Henry as it's focal point, to further develop the park in a manner that makes it locally and regionally recognised for its exceptional interest and enjoyment to all visitors."

Intent of the vision - Lake Henry is intended to remain the central feature of the park and development should enhance public enjoyment of the lake for all visitors.

Assessment of proposal - The proposal would place a private commercial facility directly on the lake and attached to a public jetty. While the lake remains physically present, the use of this key access point becomes dominated by a private activity. Public enjoyment of the lake from the jetty would be significantly reduced, particularly access to the water and views.

4b. Management Objectives –

(i) “To promote and facilitate multiple use of the park based on identifiable recreation activities compatible with the character and sustainability of the resource.”

What the objective requires - The park should support a range of recreational activities that are compatible with the character of the park and sustainable over time.

Assessment of proposal - The proposal introduces a private commercial sauna facility directly attached and abutting an existing public jetty. This effectively prioritises a single commercial activity over other recreational uses of the jetty and surrounding lake edge. Instead of facilitating multiple compatible recreational uses, the proposal risks displacing existing public recreation such as swimming, viewing the lake, children's nature activities and informal recreation from this location.

(ii) “To enhance and maintain the scenic values and attractions of Ivon Wilson Park.”

What the objective requires - The scenic character of the park and lake should be protected and enhanced. Development should not detract from the park's landscape values.

Assessment of proposal - The floating sauna structure will be clearly visible from multiple vantage points around Lake Henry, particularly from the northern jetty where it will sit immediately adjacent to and abutting the existing platform. It will be clearly visible from the southern jetty which is frequently used. The structure will dominate the view from these locations and alter the open character of the lake edge. The conclusion from the Landscape Architect and Council Planners that landscape effects will be" very low" appears inconsistent with the scale and prominence of the structure.

(iii) “To as far as possible maintain Lake Henry and surrounding bog in its natural state.”

What the objective requires - The lake and surrounding natural environment should be protected from development or activities that compromise its natural character.

Assessment of proposal - The proposal introduces a floating pontoon structure with two wood-fired saunas, a changing room, fencing and regular commercial activity directly on Lake Henry. This represents a significant built structure and intensification of activity on the lake. It is difficult to reconcile this with the objective of maintaining the lake and surrounding bog in "as natural a state as possible".

(iv) “To foster public appreciation for the park, facilitate public access to, and recreational use of the area.”

What the objective requires - The park should remain accessible and enjoyable for the public, and development should encourage rather than restrict public use.

Assessment of proposal - The floating sauna pontoon is proposed to be connected directly to the existing northern jetty with a gangway and enclosed by fencing. It will be abutting the northern jetty in a way that prevents any access to or views of the lake from that Jetty. While people may technically still be able to walk onto the jetty, access to the water from this location will be blocked and views from the jetty significantly altered. The jetty effectively becomes the entry point to a private

commercial facility rather than a public recreation structure. This substantially reduces the public utility and enjoyment of that location.

Administration

Policy - (i) “To administer, manage and control the reserve in accordance with the Reserves Act 1977, the District Plan, and the Reserves and Open Spaces – Policy and Guidelines.”

Policy Intent - The reserve must be managed consistently with statutory requirements including the Reserves Act and management policies.

Assessment - Under the Reserves Act, licences must be consistent with the reserve management plan. As demonstrated in this assessment, the proposal conflicts with several objectives and policies of the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan.

(iii) “To continue to administer the reserve at a level consistent with the classification of District Reserve under the Reserves and Open Spaces Policy and Guidelines.”

Policy Intent - The reserve should be managed according to the purpose of a district recreation reserve, primarily for public recreation and enjoyment. It has values that benefit the whole district, containing significant ecological, amenity or scenic values.

Assessment - A commercial sauna facility attached to and blocking a public jetty prioritises private commercial activity over general public recreation and changes the character of this part of the reserve.

Management Plan Review and Amendment

Policy - "To review this management plan as necessary with complete reviews made at 10 year intervals."

Policy Intent - The policy recognises that reserve management plans need to be kept current so that park management reflects community

expectations and changing circumstances. Regular review ensures that major decisions about the park are based on up-to-date policy direction.

Assessment - The Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan was adopted in 2008, and the policy states that complete reviews should occur at 10-year intervals. A full review should therefore have occurred around 2018, but the plan has not been reviewed since adoption.

The Council is currently undertaking a review of the district-wide Reserve Management Plan (2003), which will likely inform the future management of reserves including Ivon Wilson Park. Granting a long-term commercial Licence to Occupy of 15 + 15 years before the relevant management plans have been updated risks pre-empting the outcome of that process and limiting the ability of the community to shape the future management of the park.

Water Quality

Policy - *"*To manage the park in such a manner as not to impact negatively on Lake Henry water quality."

Policy Intent - Activities should not negatively affect the water quality of Lake Henry.

Assessment - The proposal introduces regular commercial swimming/cold plunge activity and wood-fired heating directly on the lake. The application provides limited detailed assessment of potential water quality impacts. Given the scale of activity proposed, potential effects on water quality remain uncertain. The applicant intends to take water from Lake Henry for cleaning the sauna, and discharging this directly back to the lake. While the water take looks like a permitted activity (up to 2000L/day), the discharge will have contaminants in it (that is the purpose of "cleaning"), therefore it would need a discharge consent from Environment Southland under Rule 5 of the Water and Land Plan, "Discharge of contaminants to surface water bodies" - as a discretionary activity. A discharge of the wash water, regardless of whether detergent is used or not, could adversely impact water in Lake Henry.

Fires

*Policy "(*i) To prohibit the lighting of fires in the park other than in barbeques that may be provided by the council."

Policy intent - Fires are generally prohibited in the park except in designated council facilities.

Assessment - The proposal includes two wood fires inside the saunas, and reference to a fireplace on the pontoon beside the changing room. I note that in the draft LTO it restricts a firepit, and it looks like the applicant may be withdrawing the proposal for the outside firepit on the pontoon. The wood fires in the sauna are not council-provided barbeques and therefore are inconsistent with this policy. I note the wording in this policy is very strong, using the word "prohibit" it is very clear that no other fires are permitted under the IWPMP. For this reason, it's hard to see how the Council could consider issuing a LTO to the applicant.

ii) To take every reasonable precaution to prevent the occurrence of fire in the management area."

Policy Intent – Fire risk should be minimised

Assessment - Introducing wood-fired saunas and potentially a fireplace increases fire risk within the park environment and is inconsistent with the precautionary approach outlined in the policy.

Recreational Use/ Facilities

*Policy "(*i) To maintain and improve the quality of facilities to encourage increased use of the park."

Policy Intent – Facilities should support and enhance public use of the park

Assessment - The floating sauna does not function as a public facility. It is a private commercial activity with restricted access, and its placement reduces the usefulness of the existing public jetty.

*Policy (*ii) To allow development that is appropriate for and generally acceptable for a reserve of its nature – additional projects will be assessed on a case by case basis."

Policy Intent – Development must be appropriate to the character of the reserve

Assessment - A commercial sauna facility with potentially up to 168 users per day introduces a level of commercial activity that appears inconsistent with the passive recreation character of Lake Henry.

Policy – (iii) To keep the number of structures on the reserve to a minimum."

Policy Intent – Built development should be limited to protect the parks character.

Assessment – The proposal introduces multiple structures including two saunas, a changing room and pontoon infrastructure on the lake. The explanation states that Ivon Wilson Park offers visitors peace and tranquillity, and its important that any developments recognise and complement these. It's possible that the level of activity at the floating sauna would disrupt the peace and tranquillity on Lake Henry.

Leases and Temporary Use

Policy "(ii) To grant leases when they are considered to be in the public interest and in accordance with the reserve's purpose, objectives and policy."

Policy intent - Leases should clearly benefit the public and align with the management plan.

Explanation from the plan: "As a general rule the rights of the public take priority over the requirements of a prospective lessee."

Assessment - The proposal allows a private commercial operator to occupy part of the lake and utilise a public jetty for access for up to 30

years. The loss of public amenity and access appears disproportionate to the benefit to the public. The explanation states that the rights of the public should take priority over that of a prospective leasee. The floating sauna proposal appears to reverse this principle by prioritising the needs of a commercial lessee over the public's ability to use and enjoy the northern jetty and lake access point.

*Policy -(*iv) To require all leases to act in accordance with this management plan."

Policy Intent – Any lease must comply with the management plan.

Assessment - As identified above, the proposal conflicts with multiple objectives and policies in the management plan, so it is not possible for the lease for the sauna to act in accordance with the management plan.

Buildings and Structures

*Policy (*ii) " When upgrading existing or constructing new structures and buildings to use materials and colours that are in harmony with the environment."

Policy intent - Structures and buildings should use materials and colours that blend with the surrounding natural environment and minimise visual impact.

Assessment - The changing room is proposed to be constructed of Dampalon, a semi-opaque polycarbonate material, which will appear white. This material and colour are unlikely to blend with the surrounding natural environment of the lake and park. In addition, the floating sauna pontoon will be enclosed by a solid hardwood fence, which will block views from the northern viewing platform and introduce a visually dominant built element on the lake edge. These features do not appear to be in harmony with the surrounding environment.

*Policy (*iii) To restrict the number of buildings, utilities and structures to a level which facilitates the safe and appropriate use of the reserve."

Policy Intent -Structures should only be provided where necessary to enable safe and appropriate public use of the reserve.

Assessment - The proposal introduces multiple new structures on Lake Henry, including two saunas, a changing room, fencing and pontoon infrastructure. The explanation to the policy states that buildings and structures are permitted when they facilitate the public's enjoyment of the reserve and activities. In this case the floating sauna is a private commercial facility with restricted access, enclosed by fencing, and therefore does not facilitate general public use or enjoyment of the reserve.

In addition to introducing several new structures onto Lake Henry, the proposal also alters the function of an existing public structure — the northern jetty — by effectively converting it into the access point for a private commercial facility.

Development

*Policy -(*i) To undertake such development as is required to achieve the objectives, and implement the policies, contained in this management plan."

Policy Intent - Development should help achieve the objectives of the plan.

Assessment - The proposal conflicts with multiple objectives and policies of the management plan, including those relating to maintaining Lake Henry in its natural state, facilitating public access and recreational use, protecting scenic values, restricting fires, and keeping structures within the reserve to a minimum.

Policy - (ii) Developments may range from landscaping to sports/recreation facilities, buildings, lighting and carparking.

Each development project will be assessed on its effect on the environment, existing activities, fauna, flora or the unique feature of the reserve.

Policy intent - The plan recognises that development may occur within the park, but each proposal must be assessed for its environmental effects and its impact on existing uses and the unique features of the reserve.

Assessment - The floating sauna proposal would introduce a prominent built structure directly onto Lake Henry, the central feature of the park. The proposal would also alter the use of the northern jetty, which is currently used by the public for viewing the lake and accessing the water. The structure may also affect existing recreational use of the jetty and lake edge. Given these effects on the lake environment, existing recreational activities, and the unique feature of Lake Henry itself, the proposal does not appear to satisfy the policy requirement that development be carefully assessed and compatible with these values.

Development Proposals – Lake Henry

Explanation - (1) Lake Henry and surrounding bog vegetation as central point.

This area has important native qualities that need to be maintained. Any future development in this area would need to be sensitive to the natural environment. Tracks and jetty like structures to facilitate access and fishing would be a typical type of development."

Policy Intent - Development near Lake Henry should be minimal and focused on facilitating public access and fishing.

Assessment - The floating sauna is not a structure facilitating public access or fishing. Instead it is a private commercial facility occupying part of the lake and restricting use of the existing jetty, and as such it prevents public access to the lake and fishing in the lake from that jetty.

Also to note are the following points;

Public Amenities

The proposal as it stands includes a contribution of $1,000 per year toward cleaning public toilets. As the potential for up to 160 sauna users per day, this contribution is utterly completely inadequate.

If the operator is not providing their own toilet facilities, then they should be responsible for the full cost of servicing the public toilets generated by their business.

A realistic servicing regime would likely require cleaning twice daily during peak periods.

Based on typical cleaning costs this could easily amount to approximately $30,000 per year. A $1,000 annual contribution is therefore not reasonable at all.

Lease term

The proposed licence term of 15 years with a further 15 year renewal is excessive.

This could allow occupation of part of the reserve for up to 30 years.

In comparison, the Fiordland Community Garden in Memorial Park, a well-loved community initiative run by a registered charity and providing clear public benefit, receives only a five-year Licence to Occupy, even upon it’s recent renewal recently the council would not consider a longer term.

It is difficult to understand why a community initiative providing a public service receives only a short-term licence while a private commercial activity is proposed to receive a licence of up to 30 years.

Financial return

The proposed licence fee appears to be approximately $2,391 per year plus GST, along with the $1,000 contribution toward toilet cleaning.

For a commercial operation occupying part of a public reserve and relying on public infrastructure, this appears extremely low.

If commercial activities are permitted on public reserve land, the financial return to the public should be meaningful and proportionate to the private benefit being derived.

Its also noted that this is only a “tourism” venture while there are tourists. This activity will not bring people to Te Anau. They arrive for other reasons and may have a sauna while here. So this should not be a gain in that respect.

[redacted]

From: Grant Taylor [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 25 March 2026 6:33 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

I'm strongly against putting a floating sauna in Ivon Wilson Park.

This park is one of the few places in Te Anau that's genuinely quiet and peaceful. It's not a high-activity spot — it's somewhere families go to relax, let the kids play, fish, and just enjoy a bit of calm. That's what makes it special.

Lake Henry is a big part of that. The reflections on the lake are unreal, especially when it's still. It's a place people go to slow down. Adding a floating sauna, with more movement, noise, and activity on the water, will take away from that pretty quickly.

It's also a kids' space. Families use it knowing it's safe and appropriate. Having people jumping in and out of the lake just doesn't fit that environment. The park shouldn't be commercialised, it's just not the right place for it.

It's one of those places that locals genuinely care about, and it's stayed reasonably the same in a good way, for a long time.

There are plenty of places where something like a floating sauna could work.
Ivon Wilson Park isn't one of them.

Let's leave it as it is — quiet, simple, and good for families.

[ ]

[redacted]

From: Brendan Colley [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 25 March 2026 6:44 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: In Support of the Floating Sauna Lake Henry Project

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,

I want to express strong support of the floating sauna, and look forward to going to Te Anau to experience it.

I've experienced the floating sauna in Derby, Tasmania (where I live), and in May when I travel to Canberra for my sister-in-law's wedding, my wife and I will be visiting the new floating sauna there.

Our experience of the sauna is one of a nature-based and wellness activity. We recommend the experience to our friends, and believe in the creator's ethos and philosophy.

Best regards,

Brendan Colley

[redacted]

From: Jonty Taylor [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 25 March 2026 6:49 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Floating Sauna

This message is from an external sender

Hello there

I'm 22 and grew up in Te Anau, and Ivon Wilson Park has always just been one of those places you go to chill out and spend time with mates.

I've spent years there fishing at Lake Henry, walking around with the dog, and playing frisbee golf with friends. It's always been simple, quiet, and just a good spot to get away from everything. That's kind of the whole point of it.

The lake especially is unreal when it's still — the reflections are what make it. You don't need anything added to it. Putting a floating sauna in there just feels unnecessary and honestly takes away from what makes the place good in the first place.

It's also a spot where heaps of kids and families go. That's how I grew up using it. The idea of people jumping in and out of the lake from a sauna, potentially half naked, is just pretty gross to think about in that setting. It doesn't fit the vibe of the park at all.

It's not meant to be a tourist attraction or something commercial — it's a local space that's stayed the same for years, and that's why people like it.

There are way better places in Te Anau for something like a sauna.
This isn't one of them.

Don't change a place that's already good as it is.I oppose the proposal.

Jonty Taylor

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 25 March 2026 6:58 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

I write in strong opposition to the proposed floating sauna at Ivon Wilson Park.

This park is not just another recreational space — it is one of Te Anau's most peaceful, understated, and special places. It is defined by its quietness, its openness, and its sense of calm. The reserve is widely recognised as a *"peaceful setting"* with a children's fishing lake and walking tracks designed for gentle, family-focused enjoyment . The sound of children exploring nature and all that it has to offer can often be heard from the kindergarten. The finding of rocks and little figures creates atmosphere and fun. That character must be protected.

It is a place of tranquillity and reflection, and in the heart of the park lies Lake Henry — a small, spring-fed lake that holds a unique stillness. Visitors consistently describe the *"wonderful reflections"* across its surface, capturing trees, sky, and mountains in a way that feels almost untouched .
These reflections are not incidental — they are the essence of the park. They are what draw photographers, walkers, families, and locals who simply want to pause. The lake's calm surface and quiet surroundings create something rare: a place where people can slow down. Introducing a floating sauna risks fundamentally altering this experience. Increased activity, noise, and movement on the water will inevitably disturb the stillness that makes Lake Henry so special.

Ivon Wilson Park is not designed as a commercial recreation space — it is a community space, centred around families and children. A child-focused, family-safe environment Lake Henry itself is specifically managed as a children's fishery, reinforcing the park's purpose as a safe and welcoming place for young people. Families come here for simple, wholesome experiences: children fishing, picnics on the grass, quiet walks, time together without disruption.
A floating sauna introduces a completely different use of the space — one that is not aligned with this purpose. In particular, the prospect of people entering and exiting the lake in varying stages of undress raises legitimate concerns. This is not about judging cultural practices — it is about ensuring that a designated children's environment remains appropriate and comfortable for all families.

There is something intangible about Ivon Wilson Park — a sense of calm, of connection, of quiet enjoyment. It is not loud, not commercialised, and not overcrowded. That is precisely why it is valued. We must preserve the spirit of the place. For many of us, this park is deeply personal. I was married in this park. I have walked my dogs here for over 20 years. I have many a fun game of golf frisbee. Those experiences are not unique — they reflect how this space quietly becomes part of people's lives. It holds memories, not just scenery to my whole family in their different life stages.

Introducing a structure like a floating sauna risks shifting the identity of the park: from peaceful to active, from reflective to intrusive, from community-focused to commercially influenced. Once that shift happens, it cannot easily be undone.

Ivon Wilson Park is already perfect in what it offers: a tranquil, family-friendly, low-impact environment where people can connect with nature and each other. There are many places where a floating sauna could be appropriate. This is not one of them.
This park should be respected for what it is — and preserved as a quiet sanctuary for children, families, and the wider community.
I strongly urge that the proposal be declined.

This is not a bad idea commercially for Te Anau it is a bad place to build it. Why not build a large 50 metre pier between the yacht club and bird park that splits in two at the end. Have a floating sauna on one side where people can plunge into a beautiful lake and on the opposite side have a large space with loungers where people can lie back and observe the night sky. If Great South gets approval for dark sky accreditation this would become a special place for the community and visitors alike and create another attraction for our town. Incorporate this into the beautifying of our lakefront spaces.

Leave Ivon Wilson park as it is.

Regards
Illeana Taylor



[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 25 March 2026 6:45 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission - Floating Sauna
Attachments: Submission against IWP Sauna.docx

This message is from an external sender

Please find attached my submission against the proposed floating sauna in Ivon Wilson Park

Thank you
Barbara Lee

[redacted]

From: Barbara Lee [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2026 5:39 PM
To: [redacted]
Subject: sub

Barbara Lee

[redacted]

23 March 2026

To the Senior Property Advisor

I wish to add my voice to the concern over the proposed floating sauna in Ivon Wilson Park.

Intro:
I am a local resident who uses the park at least three times a week both for walking my dog and for enjoying the bird-life and general ambience.
In addition, I frequently photograph the Aurora from the (north) platform which is in the same location as the proposed floating sauna.

I am extremely disappointed that a commercial enterprise, such as that proposed, should be permitted to establish a business in this location.

Specifics:

1. Like many, I am sure, I was not aware that "**The Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan of 2008**" had never been updated, despite there being reference to 10 year reviews required thereof. (pge 13)
2. Granted, there is provision for the potential granting of licences for commercial gain (of which I was previously unaware), but I would have hoped this would have been brought to the public's attention at an earlier date and that we would have been given a say as to whether this was acceptable.

3. In my view, the proposal contravenes the "**Management Objectives" ,** (pge 16) - specifically -
    a. (i), [*it is not consistent with the character of the resource*],
    b. (ii) [*it will not enhance the scenic values of the park*],
    c. (iii) *[it is not maintaining Lake Henry in it's natural state*]
    d. and it is a moot point as to whether (iv) applies [*whether it foster's public appreciation of the park?*
    The current public's use would NOT be enhanced, though I concede it may attract other park users.]

4. Although there are many assurances re preserving water quality in the Proposal, reality dictates that water quality IS likely to be affected
(**Management policy** says – *not to impact negatively on water quality* – Pge 16)
I would imagine some impact on local fauna also, though I am not qualified to comment on that.

5. On pge 18 - **Management Policy – Recreational use** point (iii) - *"To keep number of structures on the reserve to a minimum*".
Currently the only structures are the information board, the toilets (and the old shed) - plus platforms and seating, I believe that there should be no tolerance for commercial extras.

    Quote " IWP, WITH IT'S PARKLAND CHARACTER, OFFERS VISITORS PEACE AND TRANQUILLITY. IT IS IMPORTANT TO ENSURE THAT ANY UPGRADES AND DEVELOPMENTS RECOGNISE AND COMPLEMENT THESE CHARACTERISTICS"

    The Proposed activity would have a very negative effect on visitors' peace and tranquillity, It will also ruin the mirror -like beauty of the water and the view of the mirrored trees

AND – visible smoke will be most unattractive

6. On pge 4 – under '**Leases and temporary use'** explanation - its states, *that the rights of the public take precedence over the requirements of a prospective lessee'.* The question has to be asked - *Which Public??*
   I would argue, it should be the Rights of the Public currently using it and enjoying its tranquillity.
7. It is unrealistic to expect that the majority of clients of the Sauna would walk or bike to the park. Even now, at popular times, the **car park** is often full. The proposed business would add to parking pressure. And I would anticipate that whoever manages the sauna would park in the car park all day also.
8. **The proposal sets a precedent**: once one commercial enterprise is permitted, there would be no reason the refuse others. How long before there is a coffee cart in residence?!

Summary:
I am a local rate payer and frequent user of the Park and my enjoyment, peace and tranquillity will be seriously jeopardised.
Plus my opportunity to enjoy the Aurora in Te Anau's best Dark Site viewing spot will be destroyed. (The applicant has said he would give free access to photographers (to his platform) out of working hours. However, a floating platform is no good for long exposure photography – and in any case the area available will be too narrow for several people to set up tripods)

I Recommend that Council refuses the Application

Regards,

Barbara Lee

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Peta[redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 25 March 2026 8:08 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Floating Sauna

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,

I wish to formally oppose the Southland District Council's proposal to grant a Licence to Occupy part of Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve to Floating Sauna Limited for the operation of a commercial floating sauna business on Lake Henry.

I have reviewed the proposed Licence to Occupy agreement and remain concerned that it grants long-term commercial occupation rights over public recreation reserve waters in a manner that is inconsistent with the reserve's purpose.

Ivon Wilson Park is a valued public recreation reserve classified under the Reserves Act 1977. It provides a peaceful, natural setting for families, children, walkers, fishers, picnickers, and those seeking quiet enjoyment of the lake and surrounding landscape. Lake Henry, being a smaller and more intimate water body within the park, is particularly suited to low-impact, non-commercial recreational use rather than a long-term commercial operation.

My main reasons for opposing the proposal are:

1. Incompatibility with the purpose of a Recreation Reserve
The primary purpose of a recreation reserve is to provide for the use, enjoyment, and preservation of open space for the public. Introducing a commercial business that occupies lake space for 15–30 years risks prioritising private profit over public access and the reserve's core values.

2. Visual and amenity impact
A floating structure (approximately 79m^2 with two boatshed-like buildings) would permanently alter the natural, tranquil character of this area. Many visitors and locals value the unobstructed views and peaceful setting, which could be compromised by a commercial installation.

3. Potential effects on lake users; as a photographer, I am concerned with the views being obstructed. This is a very popular area for Aurora photography. As a parent I am also concerned about the restrictions which will be placed on the use of the jetty. This is a very popular area of the park and will affect its users greatly.

4. Precedent and long-term exclusivity
Granting a 15-year licence with a further 15-year right of renewal effectively gives long-term exclusive occupation of public reserve land to a commercial operator. This sets a concerning precedent for other commercial proposals on recreation reserves.

5. Lack of demonstrated community need or benefit

Te Anau already has alternative sauna experiences (such as land-based or lakeside options) that do not require occupying public reserve water space. The proposal does not appear to offer sufficient offsetting benefits to the wider community to justify the loss of public amenity.

I do not believe the proposal is consistent with the spirit and intent of the Reserves Act 1977 or with the community's expectations for how Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve should be managed and protected for current and future generations.

I request that the Council decline to grant the proposed licence.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission. I trust the Council will give full and careful consideration to the views of the community on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Peta Adie

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Ele Cook [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 25 March 2026 8:51 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission Ivon Wilson Park Te Anau

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,
I am writing this with much concern over what I hear is going to be erected on Lake Henry in Ivon Wilson Park Te Anau.
I understand it is to be a floating sauna. A great idea but the wrong place for it to be.
I have been walking up and around Ivon Wilson Park for a good 45 years plus with what dogs I have owned over the years.
To have a commercial business in a very special place that Ivon Wilson created in his time for the use of the public and the community to enjoy at their leisure is not what he invisioned. For the peace and quiet, tranquility and the absolute beauty of the park and with the bird life this is what Ivon Wilson wanted for everyone to enjoy.
To have a commercial business running from this precious piece of real estate is criminal to say the least, I personally am totally against this happening as I still want to be able to enjoy the park as it is today.
I urge you to reconsider this application for the sake of the public and the community to enjoy its splendour without any commercial aspect.
I trust you will take all submissions into account and listen to what the public and community do not want.
I am and have been a Te Anau resident for 52 years and until recently an employer.

Yours Sincerely
Eleanor Cook
[redacted]

Submission on Proposed Licence to Occupy
Floating Sauna Ltd – Ivon Wilson Park / Lake Henry

Submitter:

Kaitlyn King

Position: **Oppose**

The privatisation and commercial use of a public structure, the loss of public access and amenity, inconsistency with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan, The parking and displacement effects on local users, the extremely excessive proposed lease term, the timing of the proposal while the park management plan is under review, and the insufficient financial return to the public for the use of a public reserve.

Ivon Wilson Park is an important public recreation reserve valued by the community, it has a peaceful character, open access to the lake, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature connection. The proposal would introduce a private commercial activity into a prominent part of the lake edge while relying heavily on the existing public infrastructure.

• The proposal proceeding while the park management plan is under review should not be accepted.

• There should be no privatisation and commercial use of a public jetty and lake access point

• The loss of public access to the water and views from the jetty

• Inconsistency with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan

• Parking pressure and displacement of local park users because of this activity

• The scale of activity, potentially up to 1150 users per week in summer

• Totally inadequate contribution toward servicing the public toilets which will be primarily and heavily used by the activity

• The excessive proposed licence term of 15 years plus a further 15 year renewal

Management plan review

The Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan was adopted in 2008 and states that it should be reviewed at ten-year intervals. A full review should therefore have occurred around 2018.

However, the plan has not been reviewed since its adoption.

The Council is currently undertaking a review of the district-wide Reserve Management Plan

(2003), which will likely inform the future management of individual reserves, including Ivon Wilson Park.

Granting a long-term commercial Licence to Occupy of 15 + 15 years before the relevant management planning framework has been updated risks pre-empting the outcome of that process and limiting the ability of the community to shape the future management of the park.

It seems therefore inappropriate to grant a long-term commercial licence over part of the park while this wider reserve management review process is underway.

Received via email on Wednesday 25 March 2026

Submission on Proposed Licence to Occupy
Floating Sauna Ltd – Ivon Wilson Park / Lake Henry

Submitter:

Monique Clark

Position: **Oppose - I request this proposal be declined as it stands.**

Ivon Wilson Park is an important public recreation reserve valued by the community for its peaceful character, open access to the lake, and opportunities for passive recreation and nature connection. The proposal would introduce a private commercial activity into a prominent part of the lake edge while relying heavily on existing public infrastructure.

A primary concern is that the proposal effectively privatises an existing public structure. The floating sauna pontoon is proposed to connect directly to the existing public jetty by a gangway rather than constructing its own access infrastructure. While it may be suggested that the public will still be able to access the jetty, the reality is quite different.

A large commercial structure directly adjoining the public jetty, with solid wooden fencing and controlled access, absolutely changes the character and use of the structure.

While people may technically still be able to walk onto the jetty, access to the water from that location and the enjoyment of the lake will be significantly reduced. Views across the lake from the jetty will also be obstructed. People will not be able to access the water from this jetty for swimming, fishing, or simply enjoying the views, as a large floating pontoon with solid fencing and three structures will be in the way.

In practical terms, this proposal results in the privatisation of a public structure and a key lake access point for a private commercial activity.

The northern jetty is frequently used by the community, particularly by children and families.

Many groups such as Fiordland Kindergarten through their Nature Discovery programme and Southern Stars regularly use the lake edge and jetty as part of environmental education activities. Many other local families and children also use the jetty for exploring the lake and interacting with nature.

The Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan includes the objective:

"To foster public appreciation for the Park, facilitate public access to, and recreational use of the area."

This proposal undermines that objective.

This jetty was built for the use and enjoyment of the public, not for it to be taken over by a commercial operation. If the operator was proposing to build their own jetty and walkway in another remote part of the lake, that wasn't highly visible from the existing platforms, then that would be a different story, but that is not the proposal that is being considered here.

The structure will also be clearly visible from the public jetty on the western side of the lake and from walking paths around the lake.

The claim that landscape effects will be very low appears to significantly underestimate the visual prominence of a large floating structure on a relatively small lake. The various landscape assessments and council reports acknowledge that the changing room will be highly visible due to the materials used which are not recessive.

The assessment also suggests that the northern jetty is poorly used. This does not reflect the actually reality of how the jetty is used by locals, families and children.

The proposal allows for two saunas with up to six users each per session.

With operating hours between 7am and 9pm this could result in up to 14 sessions per day.

This equates to a potential maximum of approximately 168 users per day during the summer, approx. 1150 per week.

This represents a significant level of commercial activity for a small lake within a passive recreation reserve.

As this represents the summer period only it's a even larger as an all year round activity

The transport assessment does suggest that approximately ten parking spaces may be required. However if users were to book individually for shared sessions and arrive separately in vehicles, parking demand could/would be significantly higher. There may also be overlap between sessions, meaning customers from one session remain parked while the next group arrives.

If twelve people arrive separately for one session and another twelve arrive for the following session, it is entirely possible that the available parking could be filled.

Is this acceptable?

I would happen to suggest this is not acceptable to the Te Anau Community and users of Ivon Wilson Park, who may be displaced by the parking requirements for this proposal, with very little to any gain to the public.

Parking impacts therefore need to be seriously considered to ensure that existing park users are not displaced at all.

The proposal as it stands includes a contribution of $1,000 per year toward cleaning public toilets. As the potential for the amount of users per day, this contribution is utterly cand ompletely inadequate.

If the operator is not providing their own toilet facilities, then they should be responsible for the full cost of servicing the public toilets generated by their business.

A realistic servicing regime would likely require cleaning twice daily during peak periods.

Based on typical cleaning costs this could easily amount to approximately $30,000 per year. A $1,000 annual contribution is therefore not reasonable at all.

The proposal includes wood-fired saunas and also references a fireplace on the dock beside the changing room.

Introducing both wood-fired saunas and a fire pit in this location raises concerns about smoke, smell, and consistency with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan.

Wood fires in this prominent lake-edge location are completely inconsistent with the Ivon Wilson Park management plan and inappropriate for a passive recreation reserve.

The Ivon Wilson Park management plan very clearly states, on page 17:

“to prohibit the lighting of fires in the Park other than in barbeques that may be provided by the Council”

This is very strong and unequivocal wording, with no room for diversions from this policy. So its hard to see how the Council could consider the floating sauna proposal is consistent with the Ivon Wilson Park Management plan when the basic premise of the sauna is to operate two wood fires to heat the saunas. I notice that an outside fire pit is also proposed by the applicant.

The information on discharges to the lake provided by the applicant and in council reports appear inconsistent. It appears that the applicant intends to take water from lake Henry to wash the sauna and facilities and discharge this to the lake.

Further information from the application is required to determine what impacts a discharge to surface water would have.

The proposed licence term of 15 years with a further 15 year renewal is excessive.

This could allow occupation of part of the reserve for up to 30 years.

In comparison, the Fiordland Community Garden in Memorial Park, a well-loved community initiative run by a registered charity and providing clear public benefit, receives only a five-year Licence to Occupy, even upon it's recent renewal recently the council would not consider a longer term.

It is difficult to understand why a community initiative providing a public service receives only a short-term licence while a private commercial activity is proposed to receive a licence of up to 30 years.

Management plan review

The Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan was adopted in 2008 and states that it should be reviewed at ten-year intervals. A full review should therefore have occurred around 2018.

However, the plan has not been reviewed since its adoption.

The Council is currently undertaking a review of the district-wide Reserve Management Plan

(2003), which will likely inform the future management of individual reserves, including Ivon Wilson Park.

Granting a long-term commercial Licence to Occupy of 15 + 15 years before the relevant management planning framework has been updated risks pre-empting the outcome of that process and limiting the ability of the community to shape the future management of the park.

It seems therefore inappropriate to grant a long-term commercial licence over part of the park while this wider reserve management review process is underway.

Community projects within the park are currently being paused while Council determines the future direction of the park through the management planning process.

It seems inconsistent that community planting projects which align with the management plan must wait for the outcome of the management planning process, while a commercial development and long-term occupation of the reserve which is at odds with the Management Plan is being progressed.

The Southland District Council has stated that the proposal does not comply with the management plan, and for this reason the applicant applied for a land use consent.

The applicant's own assessment against the management plan, on page 78 of the full application to SDC, outlines a number of policies that aren't adhered to.

When considered collectively, these conflicts raise a significant question as to whether the proposed Licence to Occupy can reasonably be considered to be "in conformity with and contemplated by" the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan, as required under the Reserves Act.

Given the apparent inconsistencies with the management plan, and the importance of the reserve to the local community, it is difficult to see how the Council could reasonably form the view that the proposed licence meets the requirements of the Reserves Act.

Received via email on Wednesday 25 March 2026

[redacted]

From: Anna Korkmaz [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 25 March 2026 9:41 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Floating Sauna Lake Henry

This message is from an external sender

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to offer my support for the proposed sauna at Lake Henry. As someone who has experienced, first-hand, the Floating Sauna at Lake Derby, I can only recommend such a considered venture for both tourism and sustainability.

On a recent family trip to Derby, we actually couldn't get a booking for the sauna, as every spot was booked out. However, I decided to venture around the lake on bicycle. As I did so, the whole atmosphere of wholesome enjoyment that was heard from the sauna and surrounds, made me so happy. People were calm, relaxed, happy, and enjoying their time on the lake with family and friends. It provided such an incredible element to the mountain biking and camping communities of Derby. I have also visited Derby in the middle of winter, when the town would normally be completely rid of tourists and the economy would be very slow. The sauna is something that people venture to, any season, and it is an essential element to keep the Derby community afloat.

From an environmental perspective, the impact is very low, and many factors have been considered. It is a simple, yet profound experience, which brings people together and puts a location on the map.

I would be saddened to hear that this opportunity does not go ahead, because of the limited perspectives of minority groups.

Kind regards,
Anna Korkmaz (Tasmania)

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 25 March 2026 10:03 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Licence to Occupy for a floating sauna on Lake Henry (Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau)

This message is from an external sender

Attention: Senior Property Advisor, SDC.

Regarding the proposal to grant a Licence to Occupy for a floating sauna on Lake Henry (Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau) I wish to register my opposition for numerous reasons that include but are not limited to:

- The licence would effectively enable exclusive capture of reserve land that is, and has always been, intended to be for public recreation.
- The council assessment is inaccurate in finding that the operation of a commercial sauna on a continuous basis throughout all daylight hours would have minor effects on the values the reserve holds for the public.
- The conditions of the proposed licence are insufficient.
- The details relating to the siting and operation of the structures provided by the applicant are insufficient and, in some cases inaccurate.
- There has been a severe failure in the Council's and Community Board consultation with the public. Had there been appropriate consultation the recommendation from Council staff should have been different.

I wish to be heard in relation to this submission.

Thank you
Bill Jarvie
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Casey [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 25 March 2026 10:07 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission - Floating Sauna
Attachments: Submission.docx

This message is from an external sender

Nga mihi,
Casey Grubb

[redacted]

Kia Ora

I am writing to formally ***oppose*** the proposed license to Occupy over Lake Henry for the operation of a floating sauna business.

The proposal is contrary to the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan in a number of areas.

- It is restricting public access to a public asset.
- Adding a structure into the park, when structures should be kept to a minimum, and a structure that does not blend in with its surroundings as the changing room is white.
- Fires are prohibited, but the proposal contains two wood fires burners.
- It is not maintaining Lake Henry and its surrounding bog in its natural state.
- Having 6 people an hour, 8 hours a day, 7 days a week even at most plunging into Lake Henry with all their body chemicals, moisturisers, perfumes and nail polish will in time have a negative effect on water quality (not to mention the creatures that live in the lake)

I believe it is not consistent with the purpose or management of a recreation reserve and should not be approved here.

Sincerely
Casey Grubb

Submitter 161

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 25 March 2026 10:14 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Floating Sauna Ltd Licence to Occupy submission
Attachments: Floating Sauna submission.docx

This message is from an external sender

Hi there,

Please see the attached file for my submission regarding the proposed *Licence to Occupy to Floating Sauna Limited for an area comprising approximately 79m² situated on Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Park.*

Many thanks,

[redacted]

25 March 2026

[redacted]

To: Senior Property Advisor

Southland District Council
PO Box 903
15 Forth Street
Invercargill 9840

SUBMISSION ON THE PROPOSED FLOATING SAUNA ON LAKE HENRY, IVON WILSON PARK

To the Senior Property Advisor

I believe the Floating Sauna Limited application to grant a licence to occupy over part of Ivon Wilson recreation reserve should not be approved.

Below are some of my concerns regarding this application:

1. The lack of public consultancy is disappointing, this is a public/community recreational space, yet the community has not been asked to share their thoughts on this proposal until now.

2. The floating sauna business should find an alternative location, as their floating pontoon will have a big impact on the visual look of Lake Henry. An 80m^2 building on the lake is a big eye sore, it will definitely negatively impact on the natural beauty of the lake.

   The Ivon Management Plan states, under its *Section 4. Objectives, Vision, Management Objectives (iii)* 'To as far as possible maintain Lake Henry and surrounding bog in its natural state'. Also, it states in *Section 5. Management Policies, Recreational Use/ Facilities* (iii) 'To keep the number of structures on the reserve to a minimum.'

   I do not believe that a floating pontoon at 80m^2 is in line with either of these policies, it will definitely interrupt the lakes natural state and that is a large structure, considering there are no others this big in the park.

3. I do not agree with a commercial business, who is not locally based, using and profiting from the community area of Ivon Wilson Park. The small amount of money they have been asked to pay towards signage, toilet renewal, upkeep and a path for their guests to follow from the carpark to the sauna, is minimal, if not a joke.

They are a commercial business, they should pay commercial fees, and giving something back to the park or community on top of their fees could be a great idea to get locals onside, especially as it is the rate payers who currently pay the majority of the parks upkeep fees.

4. The proposed licence is to operate a floating sauna business on Lake Henry for a term of 15 years plus a right of renewal for further term of 15 years seems extremely unfair. Considering our local community garden gets 5yrs at a time. Why does this proposed business idea get longer than our successful community garden, especially when the garden actually contributes to our community and their wellbeing.

5. Although the business states it will allow public access to the original public viewing deck, their floating pontoon is directly in front of it and does not allow general public to view from or use that deck as it has been enjoyed for many years – this is a real disappointment. I know that is a favourite viewing deck for many folks, to enjoy their picnics, fishing, music, yoga, aurora viewing and for general peace and tranquility.

6. I do think carparking will be a problem if they do use 11 of the carparking spots. This is a popular park, many community users visit throughout the week, and there are days where it is already busy without any commercial activity there.

I believe the location of this proposed floating sauna should be reconsidered, to an area which is not a public recreational space. Ivon Wilson Park is loved and used by many of the Fiordland community, and having a business alter the scenic, recreational, ecological and educational values of the park for their gain, doesn't sit right.

Please note, I do not wish to be heard in relation to this submission. Also, I would like my personal details to be removed from any published summary of submissions.



[redacted]

From: Kate Brown [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 25 March 2026 10:30 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Floating Sauna Lake Henry project in NZ

This message is from an external sender

I am a business owner in Derby and can attest that the floating sauna has had a positive influence on tourism and the community.

The floating sauna is a low-impact, nature-based tourism and wellness activity which has only had positive impacts on our regional town.

The principles of this business align with the planning scheme and the Ivon Wilson Management Plan 2008 and the floating sauna is consistent with the character of Fiordland.

There is a growing demand in the tourism industry for sustainable experiences and the floating sauna is one of the most sustainable experiences in Tasmania and has provided economic diversification in our regional community.

Our community is privileged to have this business as part of our fabric, as would any other community, particularly a remote one.

Regards,
Kate Brown

[redacted]

From: Ryan Murray [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 25 March 2026 11:10 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Floating sauna submission

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,

We are writing to express our support for the proposed floating sauna at Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau.

As local business owners in Te Anau, we see firsthand the importance of continuing to evolve our visitor offering in a way that complements the natural environment while supporting sustainable tourism. The floating sauna proposal represents a low-impact, well-considered addition that aligns with these goals.

Te Anau is a world-class destination, however there is a noticeable gap in unique, year-round experiences—particularly during the quieter winter months. This type of wellness-based activity is increasingly sought after by both international and domestic visitors and would add meaningful diversity to what is currently available.

Importantly, the proposal appears to be thoughtfully designed to sit lightly within the environment. The fact that it is a removable, floating structure provides reassurance that it is not a permanent alteration to the landscape and can be reviewed over time. In our view, this is a responsible approach to introducing new commercial activity within a public reserve.

We also believe this initiative would contribute positively to the local economy. Experiences like this encourage visitors to stay longer, spend more locally, and visit outside of peak periods—benefiting accommodation providers, hospitality businesses, and the wider community.

While we understand there are concerns around commercial use of public spaces, we feel this proposal strikes a reasonable balance between maintaining the integrity of the reserve and allowing for carefully managed, low-scale enterprise that enhances the overall visitor experience.

Overall, we support the granting of the licence to occupy and believe this project would be a positive addition to Te Anau.

Kind regards,
Ryan and Jo Murray

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Kel O [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 9:08 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Ivon Wilson Park Sauna submission

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my support for the operation of the Floating Sauna on Lake Henry in Ivan Wilson Park.

I believe this business will provide a valuable service to locals and visitors to Fiordland and will contribute positively to the atmosphere of the park. It enhances the experience for visitors by offering a recreational activity, encouraging people to stay longer and make greater use of this shared public space. It also supports the local economy through employment and local sourcing.

It is clear that there is a level of community concern, stemming from a lack of accessible information about the business, its operations, and the decision-making process behind its presence in the park and on the water. This uncertainty has led to frustration and speculation.

I believe this concern can be constructively addressed through communication and transparency. Providing clear information about matters such as operating hours, environmental considerations, lease or licensing arrangements, and how community feedback is being incorporated would go a long way toward building trust and reducing apprehension.

With better communication, I am confident that much of the current concern would be alleviated, allowing the community to more fully appreciate the benefits the business brings.

In summary, I support the operation of the Floating Sauna in Ivon Wilson Park and I encourage Council to prioritise open and proactive communication with the community to ensure confidence in this and similar initiatives.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Kind regards
Kelly

[redacted]

From: Paul Fountain [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 9:19 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve.
Attachments: submission.docx

This message is from an external sender

Good Morning

Please find my submission for Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve.

Regards

Abby Fountain

Submission on License to Occupy: Floating Sauna, Lake Henry

To: The Property Manager, Southland District Council

Regarding: Application for License to Occupy – Ivon Wilson Park (Lake Henry)

Submitter Name: Abby Fountain

Address: [redacted]

I am writing to formally oppose the application for a License to Occupy a portion of Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Park for the purpose of operating a commercial floating sauna. As a previous longstanding resident of Te Anau, and a regular user of the park, I believe this development is fundamentally incompatible with the park's status as a passive recreation reserve.

Grounds for Opposition

1. **Incompatibility with "Passive Recreation" Status** Ivon Wilson Park is a cherished passive reserve. Its value lies in its quiet, undeveloped nature, providing a sanctuary for walking, biking, and fishing.
    a. Introducing a commercial enterprise, complete with a 78.54m^2 floating structure, shifts the park's character from a public commons to a commercialised zone.
    b. The Reserves Act 1977 requires that the public's right of freedom of entry and access be maintained. Granting a 15-year (plus 15-year renewal) exclusive right to a portion of the lake surface effectively privatizes public space for 30 years.

2. **Impact on Existing Users (Children and Families)** Lake Henry is a designated children's fishery.
    a. The presence of a commercial sauna and changing room on the water creates a physical and visual obstruction for young anglers.
    b. There is a significant safety and clash of use concern regarding children fishing in close proximity to a commercial sauna operation where adults will be congregating and moving in and out of the water.

3. **Environmental and Aesthetic Concerns** While the application states there will be no discharges, a floating structure of this size inevitably impacts the ecology of a small lake like Lake Henry.
    a. **Visual Amenity:** The park is valued for its natural vistas. A 10.2m x 7.7m artificial pontoon with structures will permanently mar the view of the lake.
    b. **Infrastructure Creep:** Item 15 mentions "associated infrastructure" like pathways and bike parks. This suggests the footprint of the business will bleed out into the land-based portion of the reserve, further eroding the open space.

4. **Low Public Benefit vs. High Private Gain** The proposed license fee of $2,391.30 per annum is exceptionally low for the exclusive use of a premier public asset.
    a. The contributions to signage and toilet cleaning do not compensate for the loss of tranquillity and the precedent set by allowing commercial development in a passive reserve.
    b. The 30-year potential term (Item 7) is an excessive duration to lock away public lake surface for a private business.

Conclusion

Ivon Wilson Park should remain a place where the community can escape commercial activity. There are many other locations in Te Anau suitable for commercial tourism; Lake Henry, a place for children, dogs, and quiet reflection, is not one of them.

I request that the Council decline this License to Occupy in its entirety.

Signed: Abby Fountain

[redacted]

Date: 26/03/2026

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 9:48 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Licence to Occupy for a floating sauna on Lake Henry (Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau)

This message is from an external sender

I wish to register my strong opposition to the proposed floating sauna on L Henry, Ivon Wilson Park.

This proposal is wrong for many reasons.

Maybe a good idea, but very definitely in the wrong place!

Thank you
Linda Pawsey

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: d& N Lott [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 11:23 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission for floating Sauna Te Anau

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my support for the proposed floating sauna at Ivon Wilson Park in Te Anau.

As someone with a farming background who has lived in Te Anau for a number of years, I have a strong appreciation for the land, the environment, and the importance of looking after what we have for future generations. At the same time, I understand that small rural communities need to keep moving forward in sensible, measured ways.

From what I can see, this proposal is a low-impact addition that has been thoughtfully considered. It is not a large-scale development, and the fact that it is a floating and removable structure gives reassurance that it won't permanently alter the landscape or take away from the natural character of the park.

In farming, we are always balancing use of the land with care for it, and this feels like a similar approach. It makes use of an existing space in a way that could add value without overdoing it.

I also see the benefit in having more to offer visitors, especially outside of the busy season. Te Anau relies on tourism, and having simple, well-managed experiences like this helps support the wider community while still keeping the town true to itself.

I understand there will always be differing views when something new is introduced, but to me this feels like a reasonable and respectful addition that has been carefully thought through.

Overall, I support the proposal and hope it is given the opportunity to proceed.

Kind regards,
Nanette Lott

Sent from my iPhone

SOUTHLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL
26 MAR 2026
SCANNED
DOC NO

18/03/2026

[redacted]

Kia ora koutou,

I am writing to express my opposition to a floating sauna on Lake Henry for the following reasons.

Management Objectives

A floating sauna at this location does not support the Management Objectives as stated in the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan.

The park's greatest attractions, for me, are the unbroken views across the lake from the viewing platforms. Over the past thirty years I have gazed at those views in all seasons and in all kinds of weather. I have been calmed by the beauty of this small lake in the dawn mist, at sun set and by moonlight. I have stood there to be soothed in times of loss. I had assumed the value of these views was understood and was being maintained expressly for the benefit of locals and visitors, but I realise now that this is not the case. I ask you to recognise the scenic value of Lake Henry and the benefit to mental health that this beautiful place provides. I do not believe a floating sauna supports the management objective **'To enhance and maintain the scenic value and attractions of Ivon Wilson Park'**.

I also do not believe the floating sauna will meet the Management Objective

'To as far as possible maintain Lake Henry and surrounding bog in its natural state',

A decision to not site a floating sauna on Lake Henry would be a way to as *far as possible maintain Lake Henry and surrounding bog in its natural state.*

Recreational use/facilities.

Local users were not asked if they felt that a floating sauna would **'enhance and maintain the scenic values and attractiveness of Ivon Wilson Park'.** The sauna on steamers beach is great. It isn't permanent, for one thing, and it suits the vibe of the place and even when it is there, it is easy to avoid if you want an uncluttered lake view. A floating sauna on Lake Henry would change the view for 15 to thirty years. Not adding a structure to Lake Henry would support the stated plan **'To keep the number of structures on the service to a minimum'.**

The council must not realise how much the park and the improvements that have been made over the years are appreciated. If it did, the need for earlier consultation would have been understood. We really love our park and we absolutely want to encourage recreational use, but its beauty needs to be protected.

Nāku noa nā Catherine Brimecombe

[redacted]

From: Bronwyn Eason [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 11:56 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: floating sauna
Attachments: To Southland District Council.docx

This message is from an external sender

my enclosed submission

from Bronwyn Eason .

To Southland District Council,

I wish to make a submission against the granting of a licence to operate the floating sauna enterprise in Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau.

I am all for wellness and am not against Sauna's but to have a floating sauna on the edge of Lake Henry is not the right mix. IWP is a tranquil , serene area enjoyed by many people from all walks of life, wanting to get away from anything commercial. Having a sauna enterprise, able to be seen from all around lake Henry would be a breach of this.

As a marriage celebrant, I have conducted many weddings on the large jetty in peace and tranquillity, with no other buildings to be seen. If the sauna goes ahead this would not be the case as it would be in full view of the wedding party and guests. Although Nigel did say at the meeting that if given 10 days notice his company would stop any bookings for the duration of any weddings.. Sounds simple , but sometimes we are not given 10 days notice to perform a wedding, and what about out of town weddings who did not know about the ruling. Who's job will it be to ask Nigel about his bookings? Nobody wants to have to contend with yelling noisy, customers as they jump into the lake to cool down.

Southland district council, wake up, consider the environmental issues, the impact it would have on park users escaping to IWP for a peaceful experience. This jetty is used by many park goers for many things , please keep it this way , do not limit the jetty to one company for a private enterprise.

I love having a sauna but this is in the wrong place, and I object strongly to it going ahead. A sauna on the shore of Lake Te Anau, in a sheltered place, and the big lake to swim in would be , by far, a better proposition. Please reconsider.

Thank you,

Bronwyn Eason.

Marriage celebrant .

[redacted]

From: P T [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 12:35 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: floating sauna

This message is from an external sender

Strongly oppose this....itll be the thin edge of the wedge. They already have 2 saunas in Australia, do they really need to come and put a commercial business in a public s[ace.

Peter Thompson

[redacted]

From: Stacey Short [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 12:59 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Support for proposed Floating Sauna, Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau

This message is from an external sender

I would like to express my support for the proposed floating sauna at Ivon Wilson Park in Te Anau.

Although I no longer live in the town, I spent many years there and still have close family living locally, so I remain connected and take a genuine interest in what happens in the area. Te Anau has always been special for its quiet, natural setting, and I believe any new additions should respect that character.

From what I understand, this proposal is relatively small in scale and has been designed with care. The fact that it is a floating, removable structure gives me confidence that it won't have a lasting impact on the landscape and can be reconsidered in the future if needed.

I think it's important for towns like Te Anau to continue to adapt over time. Not in a way that overwhelms what's already there, but through thoughtful additions that give both locals and visitors something new to enjoy. This feels like the sort of idea that adds interest without taking anything away.

Having seen how the town has changed over the years, I believe this is a measured and reasonable step. It appears to sit comfortably alongside the existing use of the park rather than detract from it.

While I understand that not everyone will agree, I feel this proposal has been approached in a sensible way and is worth supporting.

Kind regards,
A former Te Anau resident

Get Outlook for Android

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 1:17 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Ivan Wilson Floating Sauna Application

This message is from an external sender

I write in support of the proposed floating sauna to be based at Ivan Wilson Park. It represents a low-impact, nature-based tourism and wellness activity that I think would be an asset to our community. It is consistent with the tourism character of Fiordland with growing demand for sustainable, experience-based tourism. This attraction will give visitors to our town another activity to choose from and also of interest to locals.

We need to embrace opportunities such as these, not turn them away.

Best regards
Erin Robertson
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Nick Robertson [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 1:44 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Ivan Wilson Floating Sauna Application

This message is from an external sender

Hi there

I write in support of the proposed floating sauna to be based at Ivan Wilson Park. It represents a low-impact, nature-based tourism and wellness activity that I think would be an asset to our community. It is consistent with the tourism character of Fiordland with growing demand for sustainable, experience-based tourism. This attraction will give visitors to our town another activity to choose from and also of interest to locals.

We need to embrace opportunities such as these, not turn them away.

Kind Regards
Nick Robertson
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: kat cooper [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 2:05 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: The new Floating Sauna proposal.

This message is from an external sender

To Whom it May Concern

I am in favour of the Floating Sauna project going ahead.

I think it would be a very positive addition to what is on offer in Te Anau in regard to an activity. Whether it be for locals for positive health and well being or for the many trampers, and multi sport participants like mountain bikers who would love a treat to ease their aching bodies.
I have been to the Floating sauna in Derby, Tasmanian and it is beautifully designed to sit lightly within nature. The hot sauna experience whilst looking at the majestic views of the lake and surrounding nature is very calming. Then jumping into the lake when you get too hot is so fun. I felt amazing for a couple of days afterwards.
I have a lot of European friends and they all highly recommend going to saunas for the health benefits. Europeans will go to a sauna 3-4 times a week rather than a gym as much better at reducing stress and getting rid of toxins out of your body.

I do hope this initiative goes ahead.

Regards
Katrina Cooper

[redacted]

From: Rosco Gaudin [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 2:37 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Sauna proposal

This message is from an external sender

Dear Sir or Madam,
I am writing my submission against the proposed floating sauna in Ivon Wilson Park.
I do wish to be heard in subsequent submission meetings.
Yours Sincerely
Rosco Gaudin
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Jen Carruthers [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 2:39 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Floating Sauna Limited

This message is from an external sender

To Whom it May Concern

I am emailing to oppose the proposition to grant a license to occupy to Floating Sauna Limited. I believe that Ivon Wilson Park is a place for recreation without the need for business. I have spent many winter nights viewing the Aurora from the platform that would be used by the proposed sauna. It would be a shame to have the view obstructed. I also worry that a stream of sauna clients heading to the location may be a risk to the disc golf course, as they would need to walk directly down the course. Recreational users of the park are generally considerate of one another however I fear paying users may not be the same.
Ivon Wilson Park is a special place for many locals and a haven from tourism surrounding the main lakefront

Overall I think my main disappointment with the this proposal is the lack of prior community engagement. The business plan and idea is fantastic however the location is not. With prior community engagement a more suitable location could have been agreed upon.

Thanks

[redacted]

From: Carol Brown [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 2:56 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Proposed Sauna

This message is from an external sender

Hi,
I would like to submit my approval for the proposed Sauna in Ivon Wilson Park. The proposal has definitely met all the conditions I would have considered I'm disappointed that so many proposals over the years have been shot down in flames by the vocal majority. My husband and I are ratepayers at [redacted]
Regards
Carol and Errol Brown

[redacted]

From: Rebecca and Shannon Straker- Cunningham [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 3:13 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: floating sauna

This message is from an external sender

To whoever it may concern,

I do not support the proposed floating sauna on lake henry in ivon wilson park.

This is a area that is widely used by the te anau community and should not become a tourist venue.

Thank you
Rebecca and shannon cunningham

Shannon Cunningham and Rebecca Straker-Cunningham

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 3:24 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Floating sauna at Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau.

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my support for the proposed floating sauna on Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Park.

Ivon Wilson Park is a much-loved community space, valued for its natural beauty, accessibility, and range of low-impact recreational activities. The park's 35 hectares of open space, walking tracks, and the calm, sheltered waters of Lake Henry make it an ideal setting for thoughtful, nature-based recreation.

Enhancing Recreation While Respecting Character

The proposed floating sauna represents a modest, low-impact addition that aligns with the park's existing use as a place for relaxation, recreation, and wellbeing. Activities such as walking, picnicking, disc golf, and children's fishing already demonstrate that the park accommodates a variety of uses without compromising its peaceful character.

A well-managed sauna experience would complement—not detract from—these uses by:

- Encouraging outdoor wellness and connection with nature
- Providing a unique but quiet recreational option
- Remaining consistent with the park's informal, non-intensive use

Minimal Environmental Impact

As a floating structure, the sauna would not require significant modification to the lakebed or surrounding land. Lake Henry is relatively small and already used for low-impact recreation, including fishing and passive water activities.

Provided appropriate environmental safeguards are in place (e.g. no discharge into the lake, careful mooring, and ecological management), the proposal can operate with minimal impact on water quality, habitat, and amenity values.

Supporting Local Economy and Visitor Experience

Te Anau is an international gateway to Fiordland, and visitors increasingly seek distinctive, nature-based experiences. A floating sauna would:

- Add a unique attraction that aligns with eco-tourism trends

- Encourage longer stays and off-peak visitation
- Support local employment and small business activity

Importantly, this type of experience fits well within Te Anau's identity as a destination focused on nature, wellness, and outdoor recreation.

Alignment with the Park's Purpose

Ivon Wilson Park was developed as a recreational reserve intended for public enjoyment. Introducing a carefully managed, small-scale commercial activity that enhances public enjoyment is consistent with this purpose, particularly where it remains accessible and does not exclude existing users.

Conclusion

In my view, the proposed floating sauna is an appropriate and positive addition to Lake Henry. With proper management and environmental safeguards, it will enhance recreational opportunities, support the local economy, and remain in keeping with the values and character of Ivon Wilson Park.

I therefore support the application.

Kind regards,
Julie.

[redacted]

From: Jacob Robertson [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 3:26 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Ivan Wilson Floating Sauna Application

This message is from an external sender

I write in support of the proposed floating sauna to be based at Ivan Wilson Park. It represents a low-impact, nature-based tourism and wellness activity that I think would be an asset to our community. It is consistent with the tourism character of Fiordland with growing demand for sustainable, experience-based tourism. This attraction will give visitors to our town another activity to choose from and also of interest to locals.

We need to embrace opportunities such as these, not turn them away.

Best regards
Jacob Robertson
[redacted]

To Southland District Council

To whom it may concern.

Submission regarding application for consent for a floating Sauna in Ivan Wilson Park

I am opposed to this

Ivan Wilson Park is like a peaseful haven in an increasingly busy tourist town. Myself and many others walk the tracks and walk our dogs there.

Useing a public park for a commercial enterprise is not on in my opinion

The applicant could get their own land if they think it would be a viable buisness.

I do not think the proposal in the park would benefit the health and wellbeing of our community.

Les Scown.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Delivered to the Te Anau Library Thursday 26 March 2026

Page 410

[redacted]

From: Mason Hart [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 4:47 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Opposition to Licence to Occupy under the Reserves Act 1977 for the Floating sauna at Lake Henry, Ivan Wilson Park.

This message is from an external sender

Kia Ora,

I am writing on behalf of concerned members of the community to formally oppose the licence to occupy for a floating sauna on Lake Henry in Ivon Wilson Park.

Ivon Wilson Park was intentionally designed to provide a peaceful natural environment for wildlife and the public, with a focus on birdlife. Introducing a commercial operation fundamentally contradicts the park's original purpose and threatens the integrity of this treasured public space.

Key Reasons for Opposition

1. Commercialisation of a Ivon Wilson Park

A floating sauna represents the first permanent commercial structure within the park, setting a precedent for further commercial development by approving this application it risks gradually transforming the park from a public sanctuary into a commercial venue, undermining the original vision of Ivan Wilson.

2. Disturbance to Wildlife and Public Amenity

Operating the sauna seven days a week during daylight hours will disrupt the natural behaviour of birds and other wildlife, and diminish the peaceful experience for other park users. Even when the sauna is closed, it will be a visible permanent structure, unlike any other element in the park, permanently altering the visual character of the reserve.

3. Environmental and Access Concerns

Construction of pathways and increased visitor traffic could lead to erosion, muddy tracks, and damage to native vegetation.
While contributions to toilet facilities and public liability insurance are suggested, these do not mitigate the broader environmental and social impacts.

4. Irreversibility and Precedent

Once commercial operations are permitted, it will be difficult to reverse the decision, potentially opening the door to further commercial ventures that move the park further away from its original intent.

Ivon Wilson Park exists to provide peace, natural beauty, and wildlife habitat for the community and visitors. Allowing a floating sauna would compromise these core values. On behalf of concerned

residents, I urge the Southland District Council to refuse consent for this proposal and protect the park for its intended purpose.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Yours faithfully,

Mason Hart

[redacted]

From: Edith W [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 3:56 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission regarding Licence to Occupy to Floating Sauna Limited

This message is from an external sender

To the Senior Property Advisor,

I am writing to oppose the submission for the Southland District Council to grant a Licence to Occupy to Floating Sauna Limited on Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau.

As a long term resident of Te Anau, I walk around the park every evening and I believe a commercial venture in the park would take away from the recreational nature of it.

A commercial venture would also negatively impact the space where a local Kindergarten and another Outdoor Playgroup partake in nature based activities.

I am not opposed to new ventures in the community as I understand there is a need, but I am strongly opposed to the position of the sauna within the natural environment of Ivon Wilson park. It is slightly disheartening that this is the first that the Te Anau Community have heard about this, when there is clearly a lot of opposition.

Thank you for considering my feedback. I do not wish to be heard in relation to this submission.

Edith Waterhouse

[redacted]

From: M [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 4:29 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission on the Lake Henry floating sauna application

This message is from an external sender

Kia ora,
My name is Maddie van de Wetering [redacted].

I wish to make a submission opposing the floating sauna proposal for Lake Henry please.

I have read the Proposal to Occupy and also the Lake Henry Management Plan and other documents surrounding this proposal.

Several aspects of the proposal seem contrary to the Lake Henry Management Plan:

Management objective iii: "As far as possible maintain Lake Henry and surrounding bog in its natural state"

Management policies;Fires policy (pg 17):

1. To prohibit the lighting of fires in the Park other than in barbeques that may be provided by the council.
2. To take every reasonable precaution to prevent the occurrence of fire in the management area.

It also states "Fire is the singularly most disruptive threat to the Park especially in the area immediately adjoining the lake as it drastically modifies the habitat and plant community. Once alight the peat surrounding the lake could smoulder underground for a long period before flaring up again"

Management policy: Recreational use/facilities
iii) To keep the number of structures on the reserve to a minimum.

I also note that Oraka-Aparima Runaka opposes this proposal (noted in SDC Landuse consent recommendations) citing considerable cultural, environmental amd planning concerns.
I share these concerns and believe that allowing a commercial entity to operate in the park will be detrimental to the peace and current character of the park which is valued by locals.
In a busy tourist town there are few local spots that are off the beaten track where you can relax and enjoy where you live without tour groups/buses and lots of people passing though. Ivon Wilson is currently an exception to this, an oasis of quiet valued for the peace and sense of safe exploration it gives.
It is valued by the schools and preschools and by sports and recreation clubs, by dogwalkers and frizbee golfers. I think leasing part of the park to a commercial entity will not benefit the park, or the locals, even if it does provide an enjoyable/entertaining hour once in a while when we can afford it and find a space to book in.
I think that the benefit will be very one sided and all in favour of the licence holder.

The risk will be disproportionately held by the park and the locals. Risk of unintentional damage, risk of change of character to the current wairua of the park, risk of opening the floodgates to other applications for people to make money from the commons.
Risk of losing a quiet place in a busy world. These places are precious and their worth is beyond what can be bought.

Many thanks for your time,
Maddie

Sent from Outlook for Android

[redacted]

From: Laura & Derek Dudley [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 4:29 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission re Floating Sauna Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

Dear SDC,

RE: Submission Opposing Commercial Sauna Operation at Ivon Wilson Park

To whom it may concern,
I am writing to formally oppose the proposal to allow a commercial sauna operation within Ivon Wilson Park.

While I appreciate the value of community wellbeing initiatives, I have significant concerns about the appropriateness and fairness of permitting a private commercial enterprise to operate within this park under the current framework.

1. Exploitation of an Outdated Park Management Plan
The proposal appears to rely on provisions within an outdated park or reserve management plan that did not anticipate the scale or nature of modern commercial operations. Using legacy provisions to justify new commercial activity risks setting a precedent that undermines the intent of protecting public spaces for broad community use. Any decision of this nature should be guided by an updated plan that reflects current community expectations, environmental considerations, and equitable land use principles.

2. Lack of Fair Commercial Contribution
It is concerning that a private business may be allowed to operate on public land without contributing at a level equivalent to other commercial operators in the district. Businesses operating in commercial zones are required to pay full commercial rates, rents, and associated costs. Allowing a business to operate in a public park without similar financial obligations creates an uneven playing field and effectively subsidises a private venture using public assets.

3. Increased Pressure on Public Infrastructure
A commercial sauna operation will inevitably increase foot traffic, vehicle use, parking demand, waste, and pressure on facilities such as toilets and accessways. These impacts will not be isolated to the business itself but will affect the wider park environment and its users. The cost of maintaining and upgrading infrastructure to accommodate this increased use will ultimately fall on ratepayers, rather than being fully borne by the commercial operator generating the demand.

4. Erosion of Public Space Purpose
Public parks are intended to provide open, accessible, and largely non-commercial spaces for recreation and enjoyment by the entire community. Introducing private commercial operations risks gradually shifting these spaces away from their primary purpose, reducing accessibility and altering the character of the park.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, I strongly oppose the approval of this commercial sauna operation at Ivon Wilson Park under the current conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this matter.

Yours sincerely,
Laura Dudley

[redacted]

From: Bridget Meffan [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 4:34 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Ivon Wilson Park Floating Sauna

This message is from an external sender

Hi,

I am writing to oppose the sauna proposed for Ivon Wilson park. As a parent, my kids have spend many hours on that wharf, we have had beautiful family photos on it too.

As a teacher we take our classes there and use that wharf and the surrounding spaces to support our EOTC programme, cross country is run there and so are some regional running events.

Our park is meant to be celebrated and used for this, not to line someones pocket and take away our amazing community resource.

When my children were younger and at kindy, they spent many hours exploring in and around the proposed wharf.

The proposal totally takes that wharf away from the public.

Ivon Wilson Park is a beautiful park which is enjoyed weekly by my family. We run around it, walk the dog and bike. By placing a commercial venue smack bang in the middle really takes away from the nature reserve that it is.

I very much oppose this proposal.

--
Ngā mihi
Bridget Meffan
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Ruby Fry [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 4:38 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Sauna Operation at Ivon Wilson

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,
I oppose the proposal to allow a commercial sauna operation within Ivon Wilson Park.

While I appreciate the value of community wellbeing initiatives, I have significant concerns about the appropriateness and fairness of permitting a private commercial enterprise to operate within this park under the current framework.

1. Exploitation of an Outdated Park Management Plan
The proposal appears to rely on provisions within an outdated park or reserve management plan that did not anticipate the scale or nature of modern commercial operations. Using legacy provisions to justify new commercial activity risks setting a precedent that undermines the intent of protecting public spaces for broad community use. Any decision of this nature should be guided by an updated plan that reflects current community expectations, environmental considerations, and equitable land use principles.

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4. Erosion of Public Space Purpose
Public parks are intended to provide open, accessible, and largely non-commercial spaces for recreation and enjoyment by the entire community. Introducing private commercial operations risks gradually shifting these spaces away from their primary purpose, reducing accessibility and altering the character of the park.

Conclusion
For the reasons outlined above, I strongly oppose the approval of this commercial sauna operation at Ivon Wilson Park under the current conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this matter.

Ruby Fry

[redacted]

From: Jess Henwood [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 4:43 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission Opposing Commercial Sauna Operation at Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,
I am writing to formally oppose the proposal to allow a commercial sauna operation within Ivon Wilson Park.

While I appreciate the value of community wellbeing initiatives, I have significant concerns about the appropriateness and fairness of permitting a private commercial enterprise to operate within this park under the current framework.

1. Exploitation of an Outdated Park Management Plan
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Conclusion
For the reasons outlined above, I strongly oppose the approval of this commercial sauna operation at Ivon Wilson Park under the current conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this matter.

Kind regards
Jess Henwood

Yahoo Mail: Search, organise, conquer

[redacted]

From: Diana Keith [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 5:03 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission Opposing Commercial Sauna Operation at Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to formally oppose the proposal to allow a commercial sauna operation within Ivon Wilson Park.

While I appreciate the value of community wellbeing initiatives, I have significant concerns about the appropriateness and fairness of permitting a private commercial enterprise to operate within this park under the current framework.

1. Exploitation of an Outdated Park Management Plan
The proposal appears to rely on provisions within an outdated park or reserve management plan that did not anticipate the scale or nature of modern commercial operations. Using legacy provisions to justify new commercial activity risks setting a precedent that undermines the intent of protecting public spaces for broad community use. Any decision of this nature should be guided by an updated plan that reflects current community expectations, environmental considerations, and equitable land use principles.

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Public parks are intended to provide open, accessible, and largely non-commercial spaces for recreation and enjoyment by the entire community. Introducing private commercial operations risks gradually shifting these spaces away from their primary purpose, reducing accessibility and altering the character of the park.

Conclusion
For the reasons outlined above, I strongly oppose the approval of this commercial sauna operation at Ivon Wilson Park under the current conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this matter.

Diana Keith
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Jill Muirhead [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 5:15 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission for Floating Sauna L Henry
Attachments: Submission SDC Floating Sauna.docx

This message is from an external sender

To Whom it May Concern

Please find attached my Submission in favour of the Floating Sauna on Lake Henry.

Kind regards
Jill Muirhead

Submission to the Southland District Council re Floating Sauna at Lake Henry, Te Anau

What a wonderful opportunity to welcome a successful business investor to Te Anau.

Floating Sauna Ltd is committed to building and operating an exciting new attraction to your region where cyclists, trampers, locals and tourists can relax and reinvigorate their joints in a superb location, handy to the Holiday Park and the township of Te Anau.

The floating sauna will be a vibrant tourist attraction from which the town will financially benefit: accommodation, hospitality, restaurants, cafés and all of the shops.

The vision Southland District Council is demonstrating in promoting this economic initiative will benefit all sections of the community including employment opportunities.

One just needs to look at the success of Floating Sauna Lake Derby in Tasmania where the small settlement is growing and prospering since the business was built by this entrepreneur.

I have experienced the exhilaration of the sauna and plunge at Lake Derby and fully recommend the Council proceed with this business opportunity. I can’t wait to repeat the health benefits at the new sauna and plunge at Lake Henry in Te Anau.

I write in favour of the Council granting a Licence to occupy to Floating Sauna Ltd.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Jill Muirhead

[redacted]

From: Sinead Mulhern [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 5:23 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: submission in opposition to commercial sauna at Ivon Wilson Park Te Anau

This message is from an external sender

I formally oppose this proposal to operate a commercial sauna in Ivon Wilson. Particularly in relation to the scale and long term nature of the operation - it is completely out of character with the values of this treasured recreational place and one that will change those recreational values by creating a precedent for commercial activity here.
Ivon Wilson was created as a place of quiet and recreation for people to enjoy, not for commercial opportunists to gain from at the public's expense.
Commercial activity is totally inappropriate for this place and is not supported by sufficient infrastructure. Further development will be required and will also not be appropriate (toileting, carparking, access paths etc)
This will be infrastructure the rate payer will pay for and maintain to add insult to injury.
Unacceptable.
The plan covering activity in this area is outdated and did not anticipate this type or scale of activity.
Once again, ES has issued a completely inappropriate un-notified resource consent and has put SDC in the position of having to manage it through their process. Disgraceful.
Please take our community's wishes into account and keep this place safe from commercial enterprise that will change it irrevocably and impact on our enjoyment of it.
In a time where commercial enterprise is increasingly taking over public spaces and making money from them without giving back, we need to protect our special places even more.
Do not allow this activity to happen in this place.
Sinead Mulhern
Te Anau resident

[redacted]

From: Chris and Linda [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 5:28 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: RE: Submission Opposing Commercial Sauna Operation at Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,
I am writing to formally oppose the proposal to allow a commercial sauna operation within Ivon Wilson Park.

While I appreciate the value of community wellbeing initiatives, I have concerns about the appropriateness and fairness of permitting a private commercial enterprise to operate within this park under the current framework.

1. Exploitation of an Outdated Park Management Plan
The proposal appears to rely on provisions within an outdated park or reserve management plan that did not anticipate the scale or nature of modern commercial operations. Using legacy provisions to justify new commercial activity risks setting a precedent that undermines the intent of protecting public spaces for broad community use. Any decision of this nature should be guided by an updated plan that reflects current community expectations, environmental considerations, and equitable land use principles.

2. Lack of Fair Commercial Contribution
It is concerning that a private business may be allowed to operate on public land without contributing at a level equivalent to other commercial operators in the district. Businesses operating in commercial zones are required to pay full commercial rates, rents, and associated costs. Allowing a business to operate in a public park without similar financial obligations creates an uneven playing field and effectively subsidises a private venture using public assets.

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A commercial sauna operation will inevitably increase foot traffic, vehicle use, parking demand, waste, and pressure on facilities such as toilets and accessways. These impacts will not be isolated to the business itself but will affect the wider park environment and its users. The cost of maintaining and upgrading infrastructure to accommodate this increased use will ultimately fall on ratepayers, rather than being fully borne by the commercial operator generating the demand.

4. Erosion of Public Space Purpose
Public parks are intended to provide open, accessible, and largely non-commercial spaces for recreation and enjoyment by the entire community. Introducing private commercial operations risks gradually shifting these spaces away from their primary purpose, reducing accessibility and altering the character of the park.

Conclusion
For the reasons outlined above, I oppose the approval of this commercial sauna operation at Ivon Wilson Park under the current conditions. I believe there are better places or sites for both the community, visitors to the area and the operator that would benefit all involved.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this matter.

Regards
Chris Birmingham

[redacted]

From: Belinda Walker [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 5:40 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission Opposing Commercial Sauna Operation at Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,
I am writing to formally oppose the proposal to allow a commercial sauna operation within Ivon Wilson Park.

While I appreciate the value of community wellbeing initiatives, I have significant concerns about the appropriateness and fairness of permitting a private commercial enterprise to operate within this park under the current framework.

1. Exploitation of an Outdated Park Management Plan
The proposal appears to rely on provisions within an outdated park or reserve management plan that did not anticipate the scale or nature of modern commercial operations. Using legacy provisions to justify new commercial activity risks setting a precedent that undermines the intent of protecting public spaces for broad community use. Any decision of this nature should be guided by an updated plan that reflects current community expectations, environmental considerations, and equitable land use principles.

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4. Erosion of Public Space Purpose
Public parks are intended to provide open, accessible, and largely non-commercial spaces for recreation and enjoyment by the entire community. Introducing private commercial operations risks gradually shifting these spaces away from their primary purpose, reducing accessibility and altering the character of the park.

Conclusion
For the reasons outlined above, I strongly oppose the approval of this commercial sauna operation at Ivon Wilson Park under the current conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this matter.

Kind regards
Belinda Walker
Te Anau

Sent from my iPhone (please excuse the spelling)

[redacted]

From: Markus Jocher [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 5:43 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission Opposing Commercial Sauna Operation at Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,
I am writing to formally oppose the proposal to allow a commercial sauna operation within Ivon Wilson Park.

While I appreciate the value of community wellbeing initiatives, I have significant concerns about the appropriateness and fairness of permitting a private commercial enterprise to operate within this park under the current framework.

1. Exploitation of an Outdated Park Management Plan
The proposal appears to rely on provisions within an outdated park or reserve management plan that did not anticipate the scale or nature of modern commercial operations. Using legacy provisions to justify new commercial activity risks setting a precedent that undermines the intent of protecting public spaces for broad community use. Any decision of this nature should be guided by an updated plan that reflects current community expectations, environmental considerations, and equitable land use principles.

2. Lack of Fair Commercial Contribution
It is concerning that a private business may be allowed to operate on public land without contributing at a level equivalent to other commercial operators in the district. Businesses operating in commercial zones are required to pay full commercial rates, rents, and associated costs. Allowing a business to operate in a public park without similar financial obligations creates an uneven playing field and effectively subsidises a private venture using public assets.

3. Increased Pressure on Public Infrastructure
A commercial sauna operation will inevitably increase foot traffic, vehicle use, parking demand, waste, and pressure on facilities such as toilets and accessways. These impacts will not be isolated to the business itself but will affect the wider park environment and its users. The cost of maintaining and upgrading infrastructure to accommodate this increased use will ultimately fall on ratepayers, rather than being fully borne by the commercial operator generating the demand.

4. Erosion of Public Space Purpose
Public parks are intended to provide open, accessible, and largely non-commercial spaces for recreation and enjoyment by the entire community. Introducing private commercial operations risks gradually shifting these spaces away from their primary purpose, reducing accessibility and altering the character of the park.

Conclusion
For the reasons outlined above, I strongly oppose the approval of this commercial sauna operation at Ivon Wilson Park under the current conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this matter.

[redacted]

From: Graeme Thompson [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 5:55 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission - Floating Sauna Ltd

This message is from an external sender

To Whom it may Concern,
I write in support of the application by Floating Sauna Ltd to establish a floating sauna on Lake Henry in Ivor Wilson Park near Te Anau.
I'm my opinion this would prove to be a valuable asset for the local tourism industry as it has proved to be in its Australian locations.
The business would prove valuable employment and attract tourism dollars to the local economy.
It is a fully sustainable operation in line with high environmental standards and there is therefore highly acceptable as an added attraction to Te Anau.
Yours faithfully
Graeme Thompson OBE
Wanaka
[redacted]

Sent from my iPhone

[redacted]

From: Parns Dalley [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 6:04 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Public Submission – Objection to Commercial Sauna at Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern

I wish to formally oppose the proposal to establish a commercial sauna operation within Ivon Wilson Park.

This proposal relies on an outdated reserve management framework that did not anticipate modern commercial activities within public park land. Approving a private business under these provisions risks setting an inappropriate precedent and does not reflect current community expectations for the protection and use of public spaces.

Allowing a commercial enterprise to operate on public land without equivalent financial obligations to other local businesses raises concerns about fairness and the effective subsidisation of private profit through public assets.

The operation would also increase pressure on park infrastructure, including parking, pathways, toilets, and waste management. These impacts would be borne by other park users and ratepayers, rather than solely by the business creating the demand.

Ivon Wilson Park is widely used by families, children, disc golfers, swimmers and dog walkers, and is valued for its open space, quiet enjoyment, and scenic lake views. Introducing commercial infrastructure and increased activity risks reducing public access, compromising safety and tranquillity, and adversely affecting photography and unobstructed views across the lake.

Public parks should remain accessible, inclusive, and largely non-commercial. For these reasons, I strongly oppose the approval of this proposal.

Yours faithfully

Pania Dalley
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Alistair Smith [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 6:32 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Fwd: Submission SDC Floating Sauna doc

This message is from an external sender

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Alistair Smith** [redacted]
Date: Thu, 26 Mar 2026 at 17:03
Subject: Submission SDC Floating Sauna doc

To Whom It May Concern,
This sounds like a stunning new attraction to add to the list of exciting things to see,and do in Te Anau.

I am sure it will be planned with great skill as I have read that it has been done before successfully in Tasmania.

The locals will love having a new option to enjoy,and of course the tourists will be really keen to indulge in another
adventure and health tonic.

I can imagine locals buying tickets or vouchers for their for loved ones to enjoy this amazing new tourist attraction for a very special birthday, anniversary or Christmas gift.

Alistair Smith
Jeanette Thompson, Cromwell

[redacted]

From: Logan Watt [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 6:37 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission Opposing Commercial Sauna Operation at Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,
I am writing to formally oppose the proposal to allow a commercial sauna operation within Ivon Wilson Park.

While I appreciate the value of community wellbeing initiatives, I have significant concerns about the appropriateness and fairness of permitting a private commercial enterprise to operate within this park under the current framework.

1. Exploitation of an Outdated Park Management Plan
The proposal appears to rely on provisions within an outdated park or reserve management plan that did not anticipate the scale or nature of modern commercial operations. Using legacy provisions to justify new commercial activity risks setting a precedent that undermines the intent of protecting public spaces for broad community use. Any decision of this nature should be guided by an updated plan that reflects current community expectations, environmental considerations, and equitable land use principles.

2. Lack of Fair Commercial Contribution
It is concerning that a private business may be allowed to operate on public land without contributing at a level equivalent to other commercial operators in the district. Businesses operating in commercial zones are required to pay full commercial rates, rents, and associated costs. Allowing a business to operate in a public park without similar financial obligations creates an uneven playing field and effectively subsidises a private venture using public assets.

3. Increased Pressure on Public Infrastructure
A commercial sauna operation will inevitably increase foot traffic, vehicle use, parking demand, waste, and pressure on facilities such as toilets and accessways. These impacts will not be isolated to the business itself but will affect the wider park environment and its users. The cost of maintaining and upgrading infrastructure to accommodate this increased use will ultimately fall on ratepayers, rather than being fully borne by the commercial operator generating the demand.

4. Erosion of Public Space Purpose
Public parks are intended to provide open, accessible, and largely non-commercial spaces for recreation and enjoyment by the entire community. Introducing private commercial operations risks gradually shifting these spaces away from their primary purpose, reducing accessibility and altering the character of the park.

Conclusion
For the reasons outlined above, I strongly oppose the approval of this commercial sauna operation at Ivon Wilson Park under the current conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this matter.

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 6:38 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Southland District Council proposes to grant a Licence to Occupy to Floating Sauna Limited Submission by Ross Jackson Ula Limited

This message is from an external sender

I would like to make a submission in support of the Lake Henry floating sauna proposal.

We have retail stores in four small towns in the South Island of New Zealand, Hanmer Springs, Akaroa, Kaikoura and Alexandra.
Over the years, we've talked to Councillors and Mayors about the strengths and weaknesses of each of these towns.

Time and again it came to our notice that having businesses that can cater for locals and tourists during wet and unseasonal weather is a massive bonus, and should be prioritised in our towns.
Quality experience-based businesses benefit the overall appeal of the destination, leading to increased year round employment and opportunity.

Another note is businesses feel that this type of wellness experience brings the type of higher-spend visitors who spend 1 or 2 nights in the town instead of passing through.

We would be happy to support a floating sauna from Floating Sauna Ltd in any of our locations, and hope to visit Te Anau soon for this experience.

Sorry due to other obligations I am not available to be heard.

Ross Jackson
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Dulkara Martig [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 6:56 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission - Opposing Lake Henry Sauna

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,

RE: Submission Opposing Commercial Sauna Operation at Ivon Wilson Park

I am writing to formally oppose the proposal to allow a commercial sauna to operate within Ivon Wilson Park.

While I appreciate the value of community wellbeing initiatives, I have significant concerns about the appropriateness and fairness of permitting a private commercial enterprise to operate within this park under the current framework.

1. Exploitation of an Outdated Park Management Plan

The proposal appears to rely on provisions within an outdated park or reserve management plan that did not anticipate the scale or nature of modern commercial operations. Using legacy provisions to justify new commercial activity risks setting a precedent that undermines the intent of protecting public spaces for broad community use. Any decision of this nature should be guided by an updated plan that reflects current community expectations, environmental considerations, and equitable land use principles.

2. Lack of Fair Commercial Contribution

It is concerning that a private business may be allowed to operate on public land without contributing at a level equivalent to other commercial operators in the district. Businesses operating in commercial zones are required to pay full commercial rates, rents, and associated costs. Allowing a business to operate in a public park without similar financial obligations creates an uneven playing field and effectively subsidises a private venture using public assets.

3. Increased Pressure on Public Infrastructure

A commercial sauna operation will inevitably increase foot traffic, vehicle use, parking demand, waste, and pressure on facilities such as toilets and accessways. These impacts will not be isolated to the business itself but will affect the wider park environment and its users. The cost of maintaining and upgrading infrastructure to accommodate this increased use will ultimately fall on ratepayers, rather than being fully borne by the commercial operator generating the demand.

4. Erosion of Public Space Purpose

Public parks are intended to provide open, accessible, and largely non-commercial spaces for recreation and enjoyment by the entire community. Introducing private commercial operations risks gradually shifting these spaces away from their primary purpose, reducing accessibility and altering the character of the park.

For the reasons outlined above, I strongly oppose the approval of this commercial sauna operation at Ivon Wilson Park under the current conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this matter.

Thanks,

Dulkara Martig

[redacted]

From: Vaughn Filmer [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 7:24 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: RE: Submission Opposing Commercial Sauna Operation at Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,

I'm writing to oppose the proposal to allow a commercial sauna to operate in Ivon Wilson Park.

I understand the appeal of wellbeing-focused activities, but I don't think a private business operating in this park is appropriate under the current setup.

Outdated Park Management Plan

This proposal seems to rely on an old park or reserve management plan that likely never anticipated this kind of commercial activity.

Using outdated rules to justify new commercial use sets a poor precedent and risks moving away from the original purpose of protecting public space. If something like this is going to be considered, it should be under a plan that reflects current expectations and how people use and value parks today.

Unfair Advantage Over Other Businesses

It doesn't seem fair that a private business could operate on public land without paying similar costs to other businesses in the district.

Businesses in commercial areas have to cover full rates, rent, and other expenses. Allowing a business to operate in a public park without those same costs gives it an unfair advantage and effectively subsidies it using public land.

Pressure on Infrastructure

A sauna business will bring more people, more cars, and more demand for parking, toilets, and other facilities.

Those impacts won't just affect the business — they'll affect everyone using the park. Any upgrades or extra maintenance needed will likely fall back on ratepayers, not just the business creating the demand.

Changing the Purpose of the Park

Parks are meant to be open, accessible spaces for everyone, not places for private commercial activity.

Allowing businesses like this risks slowly changing the nature of the park and reducing the space available for general public use.

Conclusion

For these reasons, I don't support approving this commercial sauna in Ivon Wilson Park under the current conditions.

Thanks for the chance to provide feedback.

Vaughn Filmer

[redacted]

From: Phillip Grubb [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 7:57 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission Opposing Commercial Sauna Operation at Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

RE: Submission Opposing Commercial Sauna Operation at Ivon Wilson Park

To whom it may concern,
I am writing to formally oppose the proposal to allow a commercial sauna operation within Ivon Wilson Park.

While I appreciate the value of community wellbeing initiatives, I have significant concerns about the appropriateness and fairness of permitting a private commercial enterprise to operate within this park under the current framework.

1. Exploitation of an Outdated Park Management Plan
The proposal appears to rely on provisions within an outdated park or reserve management plan that did not anticipate the scale or nature of modern commercial operations. Using legacy provisions to justify new commercial activity risks setting a precedent that undermines the intent of protecting public spaces for broad community use. Any decision of this nature should be guided by an updated plan that reflects current community expectations, environmental considerations, and equitable land use principles.

2. Lack of Fair Commercial Contribution
It is concerning that a private business may be allowed to operate on public land without contributing at a level equivalent to other commercial operators in the district. Businesses operating in commercial zones are required to pay full commercial rates, rents, and associated costs. Allowing a business to operate in a public park without similar financial obligations creates an uneven playing field and effectively subsidises a private venture using public assets.

3. Increased Pressure on Public Infrastructure
A commercial sauna operation will inevitably increase foot traffic, vehicle use, parking demand, waste, and pressure on facilities such as toilets and accessways. These impacts will not be isolated to the business itself but will affect the wider park environment and its users. The cost of maintaining and upgrading infrastructure to accommodate this increased use will ultimately fall on ratepayers, rather than being fully borne by the commercial operator generating the demand.

4. Erosion of Public Space Purpose
Public parks are intended to provide open, accessible, and largely non-commercial spaces for recreation and enjoyment by the entire community. Introducing private commercial operations risks gradually shifting these spaces away from their primary purpose, reducing accessibility and altering the character of the park.

Conclusion
For the reasons outlined above, I strongly oppose the approval of this commercial sauna operation at Ivon Wilson Park under the current conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this matter.

Phillip
Sent from my iPhone

[redacted]

From: Sim Grigg [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 8:04 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission on licence to occupy for Floating Sauna Proposal – Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

Submission on licence to occupy for Floating Sauna Proposal – Ivon Wilson Park

I wish to submit my opposition to the proposed floating wood-fired saunas at Ivon Wilson Park.

As Te anau residents my family and I regularly use Ivon Wilson Park, and it holds significant value for us as a safe, open space to spend time outdoors with our toddler and dogs. The park's natural setting, open views, and relaxed environment are a key part of why we choose to use it, and why it is so valued by the wider community.

The proposal is inconsistent with the intent and spirit of the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan, which emphasises the protection of the park's natural character, open space values, and passive recreational use. Introducing a commercial or semi-commercial structure on the lake undermines these principles and sets an undesirable precedent for further development within the park. Approval of this proposal risks incremental commercialisation of the park over time, fundamentally altering its character.

It is also concerning that the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan is well overdue for review. In this context, it is inappropriate for the Council to approve a significant, long-term licence to occupy. Any such decisions should be deferred until the management plan has been reviewed and updated to reflect current community expectations.

The visual impact is also a significant concern. The lake is a key feature of the park, valued for its unobstructed views and natural setting. A floating structure will detract from these views, reducing the sense of openness and tranquillity that the park currently provides.

The proposal also raises concerns around public access and equity of use. Allocating space on the lake for a private, paid activity reduces equitable access to a public amenity that should remain freely available to all users.

In addition, the use of wood-fired heating introduces potential adverse amenity effects. During still winter conditions, smoke is likely to linger at low levels across the lake and surrounding park areas, negatively affecting the enjoyment of the park for other users—particularly families with young children and those expecting a clean, natural environment.

The proposed 15-year lease term is also excessive. It represents a long-term commitment of public space to a private activity, limiting future flexibility and the ability to respond to changing community expectations or park management priorities.

While this type of activity may be appropriate in a more commercial or developed setting, Ivon Wilson Park is not an appropriate location given its role as a quiet, natural, family-oriented space.

Overall, the proposal risks compromising the character, amenity, and purpose of one of Te Anau's most valued public spaces.

I urge the Council to decline the application and not approve the proposed licence to occupy.

Regards

Sim Grigg
Te Anau

[redacted]

From: Sue Gardiner [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 8:13 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: SUBMISSION Opposing Commercial Sauna Operation at Ivan Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern at the Southland District Council

Tena koutou
I am writing to formally oppose the proposal to allow a commercial sauna operation within Ivon Wilson Park.

As a current resident and decades of being a privileged holidayer in Te Anau, I have real and significant concerns about the appropriateness and fairness of permitting a private commercial enterprise to operate within this fabulous long standing park. This park is a Taonga for the local residential community along with visitors.

I do also very much appreciate the value of community wellbeing initiatives and creative enterprises that enhance the community value, however this is not one I can endorse for the following reasons.

1. There is obvious exploitation of an Outdated Park Management Plan
The proposal appears to rely on provisions within an outdated park or reserve management plan that did not anticipate the scale or nature of modern commercial operations. Using legacy provisions to justify new commercial activity risks setting a precedent that undermines the intent of protecting public spaces for broad community use. Any decision of this nature should be guided by an updated plan that reflects current community expectations, environmental considerations, and equitable land use principles.

2. Lack of Fair Commercial Contribution
It is concerning that a private business may be allowed to operate on public land without contributing at a level equivalent to other commercial operators in the district. Businesses operating in commercial zones are required to pay full commercial rates, rents, and associated costs. Allowing a business to operate in a public park without similar financial obligations creates an uneven playing field and effectively subsidises a private venture using public assets.

3. Increased Pressure on Public Infrastructure
A commercial sauna operation will inevitably increase foot traffic, vehicle use, parking demand, waste, and pressure on facilities such as toilets and accessways. These impacts will not be isolated to the business itself but will affect the wider park environment and its users. The cost of maintaining and upgrading infrastructure to accommodate this increased use will ultimately fall on ratepayers, rather than being fully borne by the commercial operator generating the demand.

4. Erosion of Public Space Purpose
Public parks are intended to provide open, accessible, and largely non-commercial spaces for recreation and enjoyment by the entire community. Introducing private commercial operations risks gradually shifting these spaces away from their primary purpose, reducing accessibility and altering the character of the park.

In conclusion I want to emphasise that this park is a taonga for the local community. Even over this past 2 months I have seen elderly wandering hand in hand and sitting at the lake edge on the dock platforms; keen photographers with tripods set up to capture sunsets on an idyllic mirror lake; children fishing with parents; dog walkers; families playing Frisbee golf all free of commercial gain and fabulous community activities. I strongly oppose the approval of this commercial sauna operation at Ivon Wilson Park under the current conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this matter.
Ngā mihi

Sue Howe Gardiner

[redacted]

From: Jodie Rainsford [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 8:22 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Intention to grant licence to occupy

This message is from an external sender

Submission to Southland District Council

Re: License to Occupy – Proposed Sauna at Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to formally oppose the granting of a License to Occupy for the installation and operation of a sauna at Ivon Wilson Park in Te Anau.

Ivon Wilson Park is a much-loved public space, valued for its natural beauty, tranquility, and accessibility to both locals and visitors. It provides a peaceful environment for walking, picnicking, swimming, and connecting with the landscape. The introduction of a commercial or semi-commercial structure such as a sauna risks undermining the very qualities that make this reserve special.

My concerns are as follows:

1. Loss of Public Space and Character

The park is an open, shared environment. Allocating space to a private or exclusive use—even partially—sets a concerning precedent and diminishes the sense of public ownership. The presence of a sauna structure and associated activity may detract from the natural, unspoiled character of the area.

2. Visual and Environmental Impact

Even a well-designed sauna introduces built infrastructure into a sensitive natural setting. This may disrupt sightlines, detract from the landscape, and impact the ecological balance of the lakeside environment.

3. Increased Congestion and Pressure on Amenities

A sauna is likely to attract additional visitors specifically for that purpose, increasing traffic, parking demand, and pressure on existing facilities. This could negatively affect the experience of those using the park for its current, low-impact recreational purposes.

4. Commercialisation of a Public Reserve

Allowing private enterprise to operate within a public reserve raises concerns about the gradual commercialisation of shared community spaces. Ivon Wilson Park should remain a place that is freely accessible and not incrementally privatised.

5. Suitability of Location

While wellness offerings like saunas can be valuable, Ivon Wilson Park is not an appropriate location. Such facilities would be better suited to areas already designated for commercial or higher-intensity recreational use.

In conclusion, I strongly urge the Council to decline this application and to prioritise the protection of Ivon Wilson Park as a natural, open, and community-focused space.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Jodie Rainsford

I do not wish to be heard in regards to this submission

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 8:11 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Intention to grant licence to occupy

This message is from an external sender

Dear Sir or Madam ,

I would like to express my support of the Southland District Council proposal to grant a Licence to Occupy to Floating Sauna Limited at Lake Henry , in the Ivon Wilson Recreation Park , Te Anau

I can easily see this as a very suitable addition to the area & the recreational use of the lake , in keeping with the theme already established there
With the many local cycling tracks , as well as the long association the Te Anau area has with walkers and trampers the floating sauna seems a very comfortable fit in these surroundings .

I have a small business in Alexandra , Central Otago and have seen in small towns, that this sort of small business adds to the town's ambience and is a draw card for domestic as well as international visitors.
And I've seen first hand the need for providing activities suitable for wet weather days , especially needed in the winter and shoulder seasons

It's exactly these kind of year round attractions that small NZ towns need , to ensure the sustainability of the town & its residents, attracting visitors who also spend on accommodation, hospitality and retail

I believe the quality and attractive design by Floating Sauna Limited would prove to fit well and be sympathetic to their surroundings
And it would be a draw card for me to visit Te Anau more often than I already do , & to recommend it more to others

Thank you for considering my submission in support of the proposal
I am unfortunately not available to be heard

Kind regards,
Rhythm Wishart
[redacted]
Alexandra

[redacted]

From: John Howe [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 8:38 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: RE: Submission Opposing Commercial Sauna Operation at Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,
I am writing to formally oppose the proposal to allow a commercial sauna operation within Ivon Wilson Park.

I have holidayed in Te Anau for over 20 years, and have lived here for 22 years. Ivon Wilson Park is a place I frequent to walk the dog and enjoy the tranquil scenery. I am not opposed to a sauna in Te Anau, I am opposed to it being located in Ivon Wilson Park and permitting a private commercial business to operate within the park.

1. Exploitation of an Outdated Park Management Plan
The proposal is not in line with the Ivon Wilson Park Plan, and whilst the park plan is outdated, it cannot be ignored or exploited to allow commercial operations in a Park that was made for the people, not for commercial and private benefit. It is vital that there is not a precedent set by allowing new commercial activity that undermines the goal of protecting public spaces for broad community use. Decisions of this nature should be shaped by an updated plan that reflects current community expectations, environmental considerations, and equitable land use principles.

2. Lack of Fair Commercial Contribution
It is very concerning that a private business would be allowed to operate on public land without paying a comparable amount to other commercial operators in the area. Businesses operating in commercial zones have to pay full commercial rates, rents, and associated costs. Allowing a business to operate in a public park without similar financial obligations creates an uneven playing field and effectively subsidises a private venture using public assets.

3. Increased Pressure on Public Infrastructure
A commercial sauna operation will inevitably increase foot traffic, vehicle use, parking demand, waste, and pressure on facilities such as toilets and accessways. These impacts will not be isolated to the business itself but will affect the wider park environment and its users. The cost of maintaining and upgrading infrastructure to accommodate this increased use will ultimately fall on ratepayers, rather than being fully borne by the commercial operator generating the demand.

4. Erosion of Public Space Purpose
Public parks are intended to provide open, accessible, and largely non-commercial spaces for recreation and enjoyment by the entire community. Introducing private commercial operations risks gradually shifting these spaces away from their primary purpose, reducing accessibility and altering the character of the park.

Conclusion
For the reasons outlined above, I strongly oppose the approval of this commercial sauna operation at Ivon Wilson Park.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this matter.

Yours sincerely,
John Howe

[redacted]

From: Anna [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 8:40 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission opposing commercial sauna operation at Icon Wilson Park in Te Anau

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,
I am writing to formally oppose the proposal to allow a commercial sauna operation within Ivon Wilson Park.

While I appreciate the value of community wellbeing initiatives, I have significant concerns about the appropriateness and fairness of permitting a private commercial enterprise to operate within this park under the current framework.

1. Exploitation of an Outdated Park Management Plan
The proposal appears to rely on provisions within an outdated park or reserve management plan that did not anticipate the scale or nature of modern commercial operations. Using legacy provisions to justify new commercial activity risks setting a precedent that undermines the intent of protecting public spaces for broad community use. Any decision of this nature should be guided by an updated plan that reflects current community expectations, environmental considerations, and equitable land use principles.

2. Lack of Fair Commercial Contribution
It is concerning that a private business may be allowed to operate on public land without contributing at a level equivalent to other commercial operators in the district. Businesses operating in commercial zones are required to pay full commercial rates, rents, and associated costs. Allowing a business to operate in a public park without similar financial obligations creates an uneven playing field and effectively subsidises a private venture using public assets.

3. Increased Pressure on Public Infrastructure
A commercial sauna operation will inevitably increase foot traffic, vehicle use, parking demand, waste, and pressure on facilities such as toilets and accessways. These impacts will not be isolated to the business itself but will affect the wider park environment and its users. The cost of maintaining and upgrading infrastructure to accommodate this increased use will ultimately fall on ratepayers, rather than being fully borne by the commercial operator generating the demand.

4. Erosion of Public Space Purpose
Public parks are intended to provide open, accessible, and largely non-commercial spaces for recreation and enjoyment by the entire community. Introducing private commercial operations risks gradually shifting these spaces away from their primary purpose, reducing accessibility and altering the character of the park.

Conclusion
For the reasons outlined above, I strongly oppose the approval of this commercial sauna operation at Ivon Wilson Park under the current conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this matter.

Anna Marten
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Madeleine Peacock [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 8:45 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission on Ivon Wilson Park proposal
Attachments: Ivon Wilson Park Submission M Peacock.pdf

This message is from an external sender

Kia ora,

Please find attached my written submission regarding the intention to grant a license to occupy for the floating sauna in Ivon Wilson Park.

I wish to speak to my submission should the opportunity arise.

Kind regards
Madeleine

26 March 2026

Submission Opposing Licence to Occupy – Floating Sauna, Lake Henry (Ivon Wilson Park, Te Anau)

Introduction

My name is Madeleine Peacock. I grew up in Te Anau and have spent most of my life here. Ivon Wilson Park is important to me as an easily accessible public recreational space that is widely used and enjoyed without commercial influence. I consider spaces like this to be important to community wellbeing and identity, and worthy of protection.

The Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan outlines the values and protections that should be afforded to the Park.

Position

I oppose the granting of the proposed Licence to Occupy for a commercial floating sauna on Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Park.

This submission is based on the inconsistency of the proposal with:

- The Reserves Act 1977

- The Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan ("the Management Plan")

- The intended purpose and character of a recreation reserve

This is not an objection to the activity itself, but to its appropriateness in this specific location. While I acknowledge the applicant's intent to contribute to the local visitor offering, I consider there would be more appropriate alternative locations for this type of commercial activity where there is not conflict with statutory and other planning frameworks.

I acknowledge that the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan was adopted in 2008 and intended to be reviewed after ten years, which has not occurred. However, the fact that a review has not been undertaken does not diminish the status of the current Management Plan. Until it is formally reviewed or replaced, it remains the operative framework for managing the reserve and should not be set aside for the purposes of this application.

If Council considers the Plan to be outdated or no longer fit for purpose, the appropriate response is to undertake a review of the Plan, with proper public consultation, rather than to depart from it through a site-specific decision.

1. Inconsistency with the Purpose of a Recreation Reserve

Under section 17 of the Reserves Act 1977, recreation reserves are to be managed for public recreation and enjoyment while maintaining open space and the natural environment.

While the proposal does not fully exclude public access, it establishes a defined area of the reserve that is occupied and primarily used for a commercial activity. This creates a space that is functionally prioritised for paying users, rather than shared public use.

This represents a shift from incidental recreational use to sustained commercial use occupying part of the reserve, and is not consistent with the purpose of a recreation reserve.

2. Inconsistency with Management Objective (iii)

The Management Plan states:

"To as far as possible maintain Lake Henry and surrounding bog in its natural state."

The proposal introduces a fixed commercial activity and concentrated use within the lake environment. This represents an intensification of use and a modification of the lake's function, which is inconsistent with maintaining it in a natural state.

3. Conflict with Scenic and Recreational Values

The Management Plan identifies the Park's values as including its open parkland character, natural feel, and informal recreational use.

The proposed sauna introduces a structured, site-specific commercial activity and a clear visual focal point on the lake. It does not simply add to existing recreational use - it introduces a different type of use, shifting the reserve from free and informal, open-access recreation to a site that includes a defined commercial activity.

4. Response to claimed community wellbeing benefits

The application places weight on the claimed health and wellbeing benefits of the proposal. While such benefits may exist, they are not unique to this activity or location and do not justify the use of public reserve land for a commercial operation.

The proposal is fundamentally a private, fee-paying business. Any wellbeing benefits are incidental to that commercial activity, rather than a public recreational provision.

The relevant test under the Reserves Act 1977 and the Management Plan is whether the activity is appropriate for the reserve and consistent with its purpose and values. Potential wellbeing benefits do not override those requirements.

If such benefits are considered desirable, they can be achieved in alternative locations that do not require the occupation of a public reserve or conflict with its management framework.

5. Non-Compliance with Water Quality Policy

The Management Plan requires that the Park be managed in a way that does not negatively impact water quality.

While the application relies on the absence of direct discharge to conclude that water quality will not be affected, this is a narrow interpretation of the policy. The Management Plan requires that activities do not negatively impact water quality, which includes consideration of other indirect and cumulative effects from the activity.

The proposal is designed as a sauna including cold plunge experience, with a ladder providing direct access to the lake from the pontoon. This introduces cumulative inputs such as sweat, body products, and other contaminants, which are not addressed in the application, and which will adversely affect water quality and is inconsistent with the intent of the Management Plan. The establishment of a fixed, concentrated use area on the lake, combined with repeated user entry into the water, will increase the intensity of human interaction in a single location.

If the activity is approved there should be a stipulation that users cannot enter the lake.

6. Non-Compliance with Fishery Management Policy

The Management Plan identifies Lake Henry as a recreational fishery, particularly for junior anglers. The relevant policy focuses on maintaining fish stocks and supporting this use.

Concentrated and ongoing activity in a defined area of the lake is inconsistent with maintaining fish habitat quality and the recreational fishing experience, especially for children and families.

Regardless of the reported low-level of concern from Fish & Game, the policy intent remains. The introduction of a fixed commercial activity within the lake changes the character of use and

introduces a competing activity that is not aligned with the established recreational purpose of the lake.

7. Impact on Ecological Values

The lake is surrounded by a sensitive bog system with indigenous vegetation.

Increased and concentrated use associated with the proposal is likely to place additional pressure on these environments. This is inconsistent with the Management Plan's direction to protect ecological values and minimise disturbance.

8. Conflict with Recreational Use / Facilities Policy

The Management Plan requires that development be appropriate to the reserve and that structures be kept to a minimum.

The proposal requires multiple structures (pontoon, saunas, changing facility) which are not incidental to recreation but constitute the primary activity. This exceeds what would be considered minimal or supportive infrastructure.

While the physical footprint of the proposal is relatively small, the effects are not limited to that footprint. The activity creates a focal point of use and alters how that part of the lake, and therefore the park, is experienced and used.

9. Conflict with Leases and Temporary Use Policy

The proposal establishes a long-term commercial occupation (15 years with a further 15-year renewal), rather than a temporary or intermittent use.

While structured as a Licence to Occupy, the duration and nature of the activity are more consistent with a long-term commercial occupation. This raises questions as to whether the proposal aligns with the intent of the Management Plan's provisions for temporary use and licences, or should be considered as an application to lease.

10. Conflict with Buildings and Structures Policy

The proposed structures are permanent in function and introduce a commercial presence on the lake.

This is inconsistent with maintaining a low level of built form and ensuring structures are appropriate and in keeping with the natural character of the reserve.

11. Precedent Effects

While each application is considered on its merits, approval of this proposal would establish a precedent for commercial occupation within the reserve.

This creates a risk of incremental change over time, leading to a gradual erosion of the natural and recreational values the Management Plan seeks to protect.

12. Response to Applicant's Assessment of Policy

The application concludes that the proposal is consistent with the Reserves Act and the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan. I do not agree with that conclusion.

The assessment provided relies on a narrow interpretation of selected policies, while not fully addressing the broader intent of the Management Plan as a whole. In particular:

- The application relies on general statements about enhancing recreational opportunities, but does not adequately address the requirement to maintain Lake Henry and its surrounding environment in a natural state.
- The conclusion that the proposal will not affect water quality is based solely on the absence of direct discharge, and does not consider the effects of increased and concentrated use.
- The assertion that the proposal is consistent with fishery values does not address the change in character and competing use introduced by a fixed commercial activity.
- The proposal acknowledges inconsistency with the fire policy, but proceeds on the basis that risk can be managed. This highlights a broader approach of treating policies as matters to be worked around, rather than as defining what is appropriate within the reserve.
- Taken as a whole, the Management Plan establishes a clear direction to protect natural character, minimise built form, and support informal recreation. The proposal does not align with that direction.

Conclusion

The proposal is inconsistent with:

- The purpose of a recreation reserve under the Reserves Act 1977

- Management Objective (iii) within the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan

- Multiple key policies within the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan

It introduces a long-term, site-specific commercial activity that alters the function, character and use of part of the reserve.

Decision Sought

That the application for a License to Occupy for a commercial floating sauna on Lake Henry be declined.

I wish to be heard in support of this application.

Kind regards



Madeleine Peacock

[redacted]

From: Sarah Stirrup [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 8:23 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission regarding Licence to Occupy for Floating Sauna Ltd, Ivon Wilson Park
Attachments: IWP submission.pdf

This message is from an external sender

Submission to oppose proposal attached.

Objection to the Proposed Commercial Sauna Operation at Ivon Wilson Park

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to oppose the proposal to grant a Licence to Occupy to Floating Sauna Ltd in Ivon Wilson Park.

I don't believe it is appropriate or necessary to have any commercial business in the park, which is primarily used by locals and visitors/tourists alike, to relax and spend time enjoying the beautiful foliage and stunning reflections on the lake, away from the many commercial operations we are so often exposed to in tourist locations and our towns/cities.

I am also unsure how a private business can be allowed use of one of the deck/jetties that have been provided for use by the general public who will no longer want to sit there, as it appears the view will be totally blocked or at least obscured by a (floating) building. No doubt the platform was paid for out of our rates for our use, so why is one basically being 'given' to a private company? If it really HAS to go ahead (which it doesn't), why aren't they required to provide/build their own boardwalk and platform, ideally at the south end of the lake where it would be less intrusive and out of the way of other people's enjoyment of the park.

I understand that there is a plan to upgrade the public toilets, but there is already a surprising amount of human excrement around the park (I know this as unfortunately my dogs are very good at finding it) despite there already being toilets near the car park. I am confident that this problem will only get worse with more people spending time at the sauna and who will not want to run back to the car park/toilets when they need to.

Although it isn't really my problem, I also don't see that there will be enough business for a venture of this sort, especially in this location, but we will be left with a building in full view, blocking one of the viewing spots of the lake at all times, even when it is not being used, which I imagine will be for months over the winter. Would it not be possible for them to use a mobile sauna and park it on the grass, so it can be removed when they are closed, or during the off-season?

In addition, as soon as the bottom of the lake is stirred up by people jumping in (which I am guessing is the idea) it will become very muddy and unpleasant. It seems doubtful that this is going to be an enjoyable experience which would seem to defy the point of having it in Lake Henry with its feed of natural spring water. A much better place would be down at the marina on Lake Te Anau where there is already plenty of infrastructure, car parking and public toilets.

The proposal to grant a licence for an initial term of 15 years seems excessive in the extreme. I realise that a business requires some sort of guarantee to make it worthwhile investing, but this means that once it's in it is in and we will be stuck with it.

Ivon Wilson Park is a beautiful, natural environment for outdoor recreation and dog walking. Despite not being exclusively native plants, it is still a very attractive, unspoiled and relaxing park that is easily accessible to all, especially those people who are not able to get out into our stunning National Parks. I am aware that many people enjoy wandering down in the evenings to enjoy quiet contemplation overlooking the lake and it is a perfect spot for photographing sunrises, sunsets and during auroras.

So, in summary, I **strongly oppose** the granting of a licence for this commercial sauna operation; the whole concept just seems crazy for so many reasons and on many levels.

Yours faithfully,

Sarah Stirrup

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Isla Howe [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 8:59 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission opposing commercial sauna in Ivan Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,

As a couple who have enjoyed Ivan Wilson Park for many many decades, as have our family, I oppose the Park being used for private commercial purposes.
We have taken many photos of beautiful autumnal scenery reflected in the lake, the peacefulness it offers is hugely special to us and many others.
The community has many commercial activities which we support, but NOT in the purely recreational ecological environment of Ivan Wilson Park.

So it is difficult to believe our own District Council that represents the wider people of Southland and in this instance specifically the Te Anau community, would even consider giving a license to a commercial group interested only in making money using our communitys fully established public environmental space.

To put it bluntly we are horrified and totally against such a proposal happening.

Yours faithfully

Isla Howe

[redacted]

From: Jayde Jocher [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 9:00 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: RE: Submission Opposing Commercial Sauna Operation at Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to formally oppose the proposal to allow a commercial sauna operation within Ivon Wilson Park.

While I appreciate the value of community wellbeing initiatives, I have significant concerns about the appropriateness and fairness of permitting a private commercial enterprise to operate within this park under the current framework.

1. Exploitation of an Outdated Park Management Plan
The proposal appears to rely on provisions within an outdated park or reserve management plan that did not anticipate the scale or nature of modern commercial operations. Using legacy provisions to justify new commercial activity risks setting a precedent that undermines the intent of protecting public spaces for broad community use. Any decision of this nature should be guided by an updated plan that reflects current community expectations, environmental considerations, and equitable land use principles.

2. Lack of Fair Commercial Contribution
It is concerning that a private business may be allowed to operate on public land without contributing at a level equivalent to other commercial operators in the district. Businesses operating in commercial zones are required to pay full commercial rates, rents, and associated costs. Allowing a business to operate in a public park without similar financial obligations creates an uneven playing field and effectively subsidises a private venture using public assets.

3. Increased Pressure on Public Infrastructure
A commercial sauna operation will inevitably increase foot traffic, vehicle use, parking demand, waste, and pressure on facilities such as toilets and accessways. These impacts will not be isolated to the business itself but will affect the wider park environment and its users. The cost of maintaining and upgrading infrastructure to accommodate this increased use will ultimately fall on ratepayers, rather than being fully borne by the commercial operator generating the demand.

4. Erosion of Public Space Purpose
Public parks are intended to provide open, accessible, and largely non-commercial spaces for recreation and enjoyment by the entire community. Introducing private commercial operations risks gradually shifting these spaces away from their primary purpose, reducing accessibility and altering the character of the park.

Conclusion
For the reasons outlined above, I strongly oppose the approval of this commercial sauna operation at Ivon Wilson Park under the current conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this matter.

Regards
Jayde Jocher

[redacted]

From: Alessandra Menegatti [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 9:05 pm
To: Contact Property
Cc: Christoph Zink
Subject: RE: Submission Opposing Commercial Sauna Operation at Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

To Whom it May Concern,

We are writing to formally oppose the proposal to allow a commercial sauna operation within Ivon Wilson Park and agree on the following:

While we appreciate the value of community wellbeing initiatives, we have significant concerns about the appropriateness and fairness of permitting a private commercial enterprise to operate within this park under the current framework.

1. Exploitation of an Outdated Park Management Plan
The proposal appears to rely on provisions within an outdated park or reserve management plan that did not anticipate the scale or nature of modern commercial operations. Using legacy provisions to justify new commercial activity risks setting a precedent that undermines the intent of protecting public spaces for broad community use. Any decision of this nature should be guided by an updated plan that reflects current community expectations, environmental considerations, and equitable land use principles.

2. Lack of Fair Commercial Contribution
It is concerning that a private business may be allowed to operate on public land without contributing at a level equivalent to other commercial operators in the district. Businesses operating in commercial zones are required to pay full commercial rates, rents, and associated costs. Allowing a business to operate in a public park without similar financial obligations creates an uneven playing field and effectively subsidises a private venture using public assets.

3. Increased Pressure on Public Infrastructure
A commercial sauna operation will inevitably increase foot traffic, vehicle use, parking demand, waste, and pressure on facilities such as toilets and accessways. These impacts will not be isolated to the business itself but will affect the wider park environment and its users. The cost of maintaining and upgrading infrastructure to accommodate this increased use will ultimately fall on ratepayers, rather than being fully borne by the commercial operator generating the demand.

4. Erosion of Public Space Purpose
Public parks are intended to provide open, accessible, and largely non-commercial spaces for recreation and enjoyment by the entire community. Introducing private commercial operations risks gradually shifting these spaces away from their primary purpose, reducing accessibility and altering the character of the park.

Conclusion
For the reasons outlined above, we too strongly oppose the approval of this commercial sauna operation at Ivon Wilson Park under the current conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this matter.

Alessandra Menegatti and Christoph Zink

Dr Alessandra Menegatti

[redacted]

From: Kate Dowling [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 9:06 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: RE: Submission Opposing Commercial Sauna Operation at Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,
I am writing to formally oppose the proposal to allow a commercial sauna operation within Ivon Wilson Park.

While I appreciate the value of community wellbeing initiatives, I have significant concerns about the appropriateness and fairness of permitting a private commercial enterprise to operate within this park under the current framework.

1. Exploitation of an Outdated Park Management Plan
The proposal appears to rely on provisions within an outdated park or reserve management plan that did not anticipate the scale or nature of modern commercial operations. Using legacy provisions to justify new commercial activity risks setting a precedent that undermines the intent of protecting public spaces for broad community use. Any decision of this nature should be guided by an updated plan that reflects current community expectations, environmental considerations, and equitable land use principles.

2. Lack of Fair Commercial Contribution
It is concerning that a private business may be allowed to operate on public land without contributing at a level equivalent to other commercial operators in the district. Businesses operating in commercial zones are required to pay full commercial rates, rents, and associated costs. Allowing a business to operate in a public park without similar financial obligations creates an uneven playing field and effectively subsidises a private venture using public assets.

3. Increased Pressure on Public Infrastructure
A commercial sauna operation will inevitably increase foot traffic, vehicle use, parking demand, waste, and pressure on facilities such as toilets and accessways. These impacts will not be isolated to the business itself but will affect the wider park environment and its users. The cost of maintaining and upgrading infrastructure to accommodate this increased use will ultimately fall on ratepayers, rather than being fully borne by the commercial operator generating the demand.

4. Erosion of Public Space Purpose
Public parks are intended to provide open, accessible, and largely non-commercial spaces for recreation and enjoyment by the entire community. Introducing private commercial operations risks gradually shifting these spaces away from their primary purpose, reducing accessibility and altering the character of the park.

Conclusion
For the reasons outlined above, I strongly oppose the approval of this commercial sauna operation at Ivon Wilson Park under the current conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this matter.

[redacted]

From: Shaun Cantwell [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 9:18 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Intention to grant licence to occupy

This message is from an external sender

Hi
I wish to submit re: Sauna at Ivon Wilson Park.
1) While I think the concept is great and I would love to see the SDC support people who are being innovative I feel the only thing wrong is the venue.
2) People use IWP for a whole range of things. But these all fall under the banner of active recreation, relaxation and personal well being. It is a place of serenity, tranquility and beauty. Extra structures and commercial activities would detract from these values.
3) I regularly use the area in question for groups from the College doing raft building, mini triathlons and such like. The bush and tree areas I use for Orienteering training along the lake edges and elsewhere. The hills and grassed areas between the carpark and Lake Henry is used by large groups of athletes training. A path and structure here means we have to move on.
4) Lake Henry is a childrens fishing area and they fish off the small jetties.
5) There are a huge number and variety of other activities up there including weddings, scout groups, disc golf, and so on. Putting a commercial activity and structure into this would be inappropriate.
6) I was entrusted with Ivon Wilson's original plans and intentions which I still have. No where was there any mention of commercial activity and other structures that don't relate directly to the above points.
7) I would still like it to go ahead but in a more appropriate area eg jetty at yacht club, blue gum point, out from the bird park, out from the sportsground, DOC area, ie on Lake Te Anau itself. I know there are issues around National Park here - but at some point this will need to change.
I would like to have 10 minutes on my submission if that is possible. But if you feel my points are covered by others then I accept your wise judgement.
Thank you
Shaun Cantwell
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Sylven Reygaert [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 9:21 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission Opposing Commercial Sauna Operation at Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to formally oppose the proposal to allow a commercial sauna operation within Ivon Wilson Park. I have outlined some of my concerns below.

1)Erosion of Public Space Purpose
Public parks are intended to provide open, accessible, and largely non-commercial spaces for recreation and enjoyment by the entire community. Introducing private commercial operations risks gradually shifting these spaces away from their primary purpose, reducing accessibility and altering the character of the park.

2)Increased Pressure on Public Infrastructure
A commercial sauna operation will inevitably increase foot traffic, vehicle use, parking demand, waste, and pressure on facilities such as toilets and accessways. These impacts will not be isolated to the business itself but will affect the wider park environment and its users. The cost of maintaining and upgrading infrastructure to accommodate this increased use will ultimately fall on ratepayers, rather than being fully borne by the commercial operator generating the demand.

For the reasons outlined above, I strongly oppose the approval of this commercial sauna operation at Ivon Wilson Park under the current conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this matter.

Sylven Reygaert

[redacted]

From: Erin Keeble [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 9:25 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Floating Sauna Limited - Licence to Occupy

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,

I object to Southland District Council granting Floating Sauna Limited a Licence to Occupy in Ivon Wilson Park and wish to be heard in person in relation to my submission.

The application does not comply with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan 2008 and resource consent should not have been granted. . "To prohibit the lighting of fires in the Park other than in barbeques that may be provided by the Council." The application states "Being wood fired the proposed saunas will involve the lighting of fires within the Park." The proposed use does not comply with the Management Plan. There is no discretion.

"To keep the number of structures on the reserve to a minimum". The application proposes to add three additional structures. The best way to keep these non-essential structures to a minimum is to refuse the licence to occupy. The next best is to only allow removable buildings such that when they are not in use, they are simply not there.

Further detailed submissions will be made about this.

Issues with the Licence to Occupy:

1. While diagrams have been provided of the site there is no definition of the Licenced Area.

2. Consideration should be given to a bond being paid that will cover the costs of removal of the licensee's buildings.

3. The licence fee doesn't reflect the inconvenience to or loss of enjoyment of members of the public (particularly ratepayers) who are locked out of using the existing viewing platform (unless they pay to use the sauna). Consider charging a fee per person and vehicle.

4. It would be more reasonable to grant a licence to occupy to something that is temporary and only there when it is being used, which does not deny the public the use of the existing viewing platform unnecessarily.

5. There is no mention of the licensee paying for the upgrade of the existing toilet facilities.

6. There is no mention of the licensee paying for the installation of a path.

7. There is no mention of the licensee paying for the increased maintenance and upkeep of the paths/grass etc that will be required.

8. The licensee's annual contribution of $1000.00 plus GST towards the cleaning and maintenance of the public toilets located at Ivon Wilson Park is insufficient given the potential significant increased use.

9. The length of the licence to occupy is unreasonably long and if granted should be for a more modest period of 3 years with a further term of 3 years.

10. Do not agree that the existing parking area is sufficient. The traffic assessment is outdated as it was conducted in 2025. This last season has been significantly busier. At maximum capacity and changeover time there could be 24 people plus the 2-6 staff and 2 for deliveries. It is particularly unrealistic to expect people to walk or bike to the sauna in winter. Consideration should be given to setting aside a specific number of parks for the sauna - each of which the licensee pays a licence fee for. The assessment understates the effect of cyclists and pedestrians crossing the road, which is on top of those that already come from the holiday park. There is no pedestrian crossing.

11. Naive to believe that the sauna will operate on a zero waste basis. That is not what is experienced in a tourist town such as Te Anau, particularly with a lot of tourists travelling and sleeping in self-contained (or not!) vehicles. The licensee should be required to provide extra bins and remove that rubbish.

12. It says there is no restriction for the public to access the existing pontoon and picnic table. However, the sauna buildings will block any view or access to the lake from the existing platform. The simplest solution would be to refuse the licence to occupy or alternatively require the licensee to build their own pontoon which the public can also use - this would enhance i.e. add to recreation opportunities.

13. The application says ash from the wood fired saunas is to be utilised in gardens to improve soil quality. Please confirm that this is offsite as the amount of ash will quickly become too much for the immediate vicinity of the proposed location.

14. There is insufficient mitigation of fire risk. Do not appear to be any smoke alarms or signage with the emergency number given the number of foreigners who are unlikely to be aware of the emergency number.

15. It should include a condition that the licensee cannot object to other commercial recreation activity at Ivon Wilson Park.

16. It's been noted that people swimming in the water wearing sunblock is not deemed to be a discharge. However, it appears that inadequate consideration has been given to the potential for a significant number of users swimming in the water on a regular basis to alter the water quality by washing perfume, sunscreen, deodorant, shampoo/conditioner into the water either through cold plunging and/or through the floorboards of the sauna (I couldn't find where the interior design of the sauna is specified). A condition should be included requiring users to shower before use and for the licensee to collect and remove that water. The licensee should also be required to pay for regular monitoring of the water and conditions imposed such that if certain standards aren't met then operations cease immediately for a set period of time.

17. Given the minimal fees being paid by the licensee, personal guarantees of the licensee's obligations should be provided by the directors.

18. An increased number of tourists at Ivon Wilson Park is likely to invite undesirable behaviour such as freedom camping, dumping of rubbish and result in an increase in complaints. The licensee should be required to contribute to the Council's costs of monitoring and enforcement.

Kind regards,
Erin Keeble

[redacted]

From: Jim Loose [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 9:55 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Ivan Wilson Park sauna submission

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern.

My children are the third generation to use Ivan Wilson park my parents Ted and Mere Loose took me there and many friends and tourists. It is a fantastic place to go and chill and to get away from the rush of life even on a windy day it's peaceful. To allow a commercial business the sauna to operate on the lake will destroy what essentially the park was established for and generations of our family have enjoyed . I am deeply concerned about this proposal therefore I totally oppose the sauna being established on the lake in the park

Thank you. Jim Loose.

I would like to speak to my submission.
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: laura patterson [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 10:17 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

To Whom it May Concern:
I do not support the proposed floating sauna on Ivon Wilson Park. I do not have an issue with the concept of the business, but Ivon Wilson Park is not the right location for this business.
The park is a unique area, valued for its natural state. Buildings and paying customers in the park are not needed. The community enjoys this space (and needs a space) that doesn't involve commercialisation.
The current structures on the lake are enjoyed and utilised by the whole community, not just one business taking over.
The community should have been consulted early on in this process, regardless of the park plan and zoning.

Thank you
Laura Patterson
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 10:11 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission to opposing commercial Sauna operation on lake Henry in Ivon Wilson park

This message is from an external sender

To the Senior Property Advisor / Southland District Council,

I am writing to formally submit my opposition to the proposed licence to occupy for a floating sauna business on Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Park, as noted in the Southland District Council Public Notices.

While I support local business initiatives, I believe that placing a commercial enterprise in this specific location is inappropriate for the following reasons:

- **Public Access Restriction:** Lake Henry is a valued, quiet, and public recreational space. Granting a private commercial business a long-term license (up to 30 years) essentially privatizes a part of a public reserve.
- **Conflict of Use:** The presence of a commercial operation with music, noise, and constant foot traffic will destroy the tranquil nature of the area. It conflicts with existing uses such as walking, bird watching, and picnicking, which rely on a peaceful environment.
- **Environmental and Wildlife Concerns:** Lake Henry is a peaceful spot inhabited by local wildlife. The constant presence of a structure and the disturbance caused by a commercial venture could have an adverse impact on this ecosystem.
- **Precedent Setting:** Allowing a commercial business on this public lake sets a dangerous precedent for the future of Ivon Wilson Park, moving from a passive recreational area toward commercialization

I strongly believe this proposal does not align with the original intended use of the reserve. I request that the council denies this licence to occupy and keeps Lake Henry as a pristine, public space.
I do not wish to be heard in relation to my submission.

Kind regards,

Antje Parker

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: helen [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 10:24 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Ivon Wilson Park.

This message is from an external sender

I am writing a submission in opposition of the proposal for a floating sauna in Ivon Wilson Park.

As Te Anau tourism reaches new heights and the number of tourists heading South continues to grow unabated it is time to consider the local community.
This park is well loved and utilised by many. The children of our community spend hours here. Think bush kindy.

Biking and running tracks.

It is a joy for everyone to utilise.

Why put a commercial venture like a floating sauna in this community space?

How where will those using the sauna get changed? I have an image of overbearing tourists with their tummies hanging out drinking and smoking in the park.

A commercial venture taking up space and resources in what I believe to be a community space.

You may think what? There is space for all.

In a region welcoming hundreds of thousands of visitors ask those who work with and make a living off these visitors about some of their ignorant behaviour.

There is often little respect.

Think smoking outside the primary school, washing their clothes in the main street, crapping in our national park.

While visitors are welcome their crap behaviour is not.

Why invite a commercial business to make money and exploit a well loved community space???
There are no guarantees the people using this business will act in a responsibile manner nor those making money off of it.

Management plans which are outdated are not fit for purpose in this instance.

If there is a hearing I would like to be able to speak on my submission.

Helen McFelin[redacted]
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Braven Family [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 10:09 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Intention to grant licence to occupy

This message is from an external sender

Dear Council,

I am writing to oppose the granting of a Licence to Occupy (LTO) under the Reserves Act 1977 for the proposed floating sauna on Lake Henry within Ivon Wilson Park. While I understand the applicant has received resource consent for the land use component under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), the Commissioner's decision and associated reporting make it clear that the appropriateness of occupying reserve land and lake space for a commercial venture must be assessed through this Reserves Act process. Granting resource consent does not authorise commercial use of the reserve, nor does it constrain Council's decision-making on the lease/LTO.

Key reasons for opposing the LTO

1. **Does not meet the conditions of the Fiordland Community Board letter**
   "We would like the sauna to be out of line of sight of the main viewing platform on Lake Henry."

Highly visible in the proposed location.

"We anticipate a suitable pathway, that does not impede other park users, would be constructed by the sauna operator so that the park grounds do not turn into a muddy track and that this path is maintained by the operator."

Proposed

"We would also ask the sauna operator to make a one off contribution toward the upgrade of the toilet facilities as their customers will likely increase the use of them for the sauna operator to also hold suitable public liability insurance should the sauna cause any damage to the park or surrounds."

One off contribution is not proposed. A contribution to signage is proposed.

2. **Inconsistent with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan**
   Council officers and the applicant have acknowledged the proposal does not meet the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan. In my understanding, Council cannot properly issue an LTO that is inconsistent with the operative management plan without first changing the plan through the appropriate process. Issuing an LTO despite that inconsistency would undermine the plan and the public's expectations for how this reserve is managed.
3. **Conflicts with the reserve's primary purpose: open space, natural values, and public enjoyment**

Management Objectives from Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan 2008

(i) To promote and facilitate multiple use of the Park based on identifiable recreation activities compatible with the character and sustainability of the resource.

(ii) To enhance and maintain the scenic values and attractions of Ivon Wilson Park.

(iii) To as far as possible maintain Lake Henry and surrounding bog in its natural state.

(iv) To foster public appreciation for the Park, facilitate public access to, and recreational use of, the area.

This proposal is contrary to the first three objectives above. A commercial activity is not 'compatible with the character of the resource'. It does not 'enhance and maintain the scenic values and attractions' nor does it 'maintain Lake Henry and surrounding bog in it's natural state'. This proposal intends to modify all of those aspects of the park that are the character of the park.
The Management Plan emphasises the retention of open space and outdoor recreation for "the physical welfare and enjoyment of the public" and "the protection of the natural environment and beauty of the countryside." It also notes that reserves are created principally for open space, with only some buildings (e.g., changing rooms, toilets, clubrooms) being necessary for the full utilisation of the reserve. A paid commercial floating sauna is not comparable to these kinds of necessary facilities and introduces a new commercial structure into a setting intended to remain largely open and natural.

4. **Restricts public access to a public asset**
   The proposal would effectively restrict public access to parts of Lake Henry and the existing pontoon/area around it, including for casual recreation and for uses such as photography. Even if not formally "exclusive," the presence of paying guests and a commercial operation can create a sense of occupation/ownership that discourages others from using the same space.
5. **Visual and amenity impacts (including noise)**
   The site is not out of view from the main viewing platform; it is in full view. Noise also carries across water, so a commercial activity in this location risks degrading the quiet enjoyment many park users seek. The building's location out on the water raises concerns about not blending with the surroundings, contrary to the intent to keep structures minimal and sympathetic. The application material also appears unclear/inconsistent about whether signage is proposed. It states signage is not proposed, yet the land use consent states there will be consultation with Te Ao Marama around signage. Also, there is likely to be safety signage required to meet the building code, including lit/reflective fire escape signs. These are not discussed or shown on the building render's.
6. **Pathway/earthworks and park character**
   Much of Ivon Wilson Park is open grass without formed paths, which is a key part of the park's character and visitor experience. Creating a dedicated pathway to service the sauna risks funnelling users directly to the commercial activity, changing how people naturally move through and enjoy the reserve.
7. **Fires/smoke conflict with reserve policies**
   The Management Plan prohibits fires, yet the proposal includes two wood burners. Beyond policy inconsistency, the ongoing presence of smoke in a recreation reserve setting has not been adequately addressed. It is stated that fire extinguishers be kept onsite in case of an uncontrolled fire. These should be addressed to ensure they would not be harmful to the environment if needed to be used. Powder and foam extinguishers are generally toxic to the environment.
8. **Ecological effects and uncertainty about debris/vegetation disturbance**
   The application states no vegetation will be affected; however, there are tree

branches and debris across the lakebed in the area. If these are moved to install the structure and/or to facilitate swimming, that would alter lakebed habitat and affect the lake ecosystem. The process for dealing with this material needs to be clearly stated and assessed.

9. **Water quality and intensity of use**
   A commercial sauna operation could drive a high turnover of users and increased swimming in a small lake. Potential cumulative effects on water quality should be addressed before Council enables this intensity of use through an LTO. See also Fire conflict above.
10. **Costs and infrastructure burden on Council and ratepayers**
    The proposal's contributions (e.g., a modest lease fee and limited contributions) do not appear to account for increased costs to maintain and clean public facilities, and to convey, treat, and dispose of additional wastewater associated with increased toilet use. The costs and responsibilities should not be shifted to ratepayers, and should be equal to those expected of a commercial activity with paying guests.
11. **Safety and operational details are unclear**
    While safety measures are referenced (e.g., supervision by qualified staff, emergency equipment), other operational details remain unclear (for example, where the staff member will be located and what additional safety signage/equipment will be required on site). These elements have amenity and visual implications and should be transparent as part of the LTO decision.

Requested outcome

For the reasons above, I request that Council decline the Licence to Occupy. At a minimum, Council should not grant an LTO unless and until the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan is reviewed/changed through the proper process and the proposal can be shown to be consistent with the reserve's primary purpose and the public's rights of access and enjoyment.

If Council is minded to approve despite the above (minimum conditions)

1. Relocate and/or redesign the facility so it is out of the line of sight of the main viewing platform (noting the currently proposed site appears to be in full view), and not be utilising an existing public asset.
2. Any access route must avoid impeding other park users, must not result in an informal muddy track, and must be constructed and maintained at the operator's cost (including reinstatement if discontinued).
3. Require a meaningful contribution toward upgrading and maintaining toilet facilities, reflecting expected increased use, and an agreed approach to ongoing servicing costs (cleaning, wastewater conveyance/treatment/disposal).
4. Require comprehensive public liability insurance and indemnities for any damage to the reserve and lake environment.
5. Require a robust assessment and enforceable controls to avoid smoke and fire risk (including monitoring and complaint response).
6. Require a clear, consented method for dealing with lakebed debris/branches and any ecological disturbance, including confirmation of what will be moved/removed and where it will go.
7. Require baseline and ongoing water quality monitoring with clear triggers for suspension/cessation if adverse effects occur.

8. Require a complete signage and safety plan (including locations and appearance), consistent with what will be installed in practice.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Yours faithfully,

Tracey Braven

[redacted]

26th March 2026

[redacted]

From: Sky Lovill [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 10:40 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: RE: Submission Opposing Commercial Sauna Operation at Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to formally oppose the proposal to allow a commercial sauna operation within Ivon Wilson Park.

While I appreciate the value of community wellbeing initiatives, I have significant concerns about the appropriateness and fairness of permitting a private commercial enterprise to operate within this park under the current framework.

1. Exploitation of an Outdated Park Management Plan

The proposal appears to rely on provisions within an outdated park or reserve management plan that did not anticipate the scale or nature of modern commercial operations. Using legacy provisions to justify new commercial activity risks setting a precedent that undermines the intent of protecting public spaces for broad community use. Any decision of this nature should be guided by an updated plan that reflects current community expectations, environmental considerations, and equitable land use principles.

2. Lack of Fair Commercial Contribution

It is concerning that a private business may be allowed to operate on public land without contributing at a level equivalent to other commercial operators in the district. Businesses operating in commercial zones are required to pay full commercial rates, rents, and associated costs. Allowing a business to operate in a public park without similar financial obligations creates an uneven playing field and effectively subsidises a private venture using public assets.

3. Increased Pressure on Public Infrastructure

A commercial sauna operation will inevitably increase foot traffic, vehicle use, parking demand, waste, and pressure on facilities such as toilets and accessways. These impacts will not be isolated to the business itself but will affect the wider park environment and its users. The cost of maintaining and upgrading infrastructure to accommodate this increased use will ultimately fall on ratepayers, rather than being fully borne by the commercial operator generating the demand.

4. Erosion of Public Space Purpose

Public parks are intended to provide open, accessible, and largely non-commercial spaces for recreation and enjoyment by the entire community. Introducing private commercial operations risks gradually shifting these spaces away from their primary purpose, reducing accessibility and altering the character of the park.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, I strongly oppose the approval of this commercial sauna operation at Ivon Wilson Park under the current conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this matter.

Cheers,

Sky

[redacted]

From: K Aitken [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 10:34 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Intention to grant licence to occupy

This message is from an external sender

To whom it may concern
I would like to oppose granting the licence for the floating sauna on lake Henry Te Anau
This is a beautiful natural park that is and has been enjoyed by so many for so long and this proposal would definitely spoil the beautiful landscape that the Viewing platforms were put there to showcase. So many family photos and occasions are photographed there and the amazing Aurora that can be captured so beautifully there, the proposed structure would ruin these photos and would just spoil the beauty of the place. Please don't let this happen

Karen Priestley
Te Anau
Sent from my iPhone

[redacted]

From: Francisco Ortega [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 11:01 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Floating Sauna at Lake Henry in Ivon Wilson Park near Te Anau - New Zealand

This message is from an external sender

To Whom it may concern,

I am writing in support for the Southland District Council to grant the opportunity for Floating Sauna Ltd at Lake Henry New Zealand develop the proposed floating sauna.

This initiative represents a thoughtful and innovative approach to enhancing wellbeing and connection to the natural environment. By drawing on proven Nordic traditions, the floating sauna offers a unique opportunity for both residents and visitors to engage with the water in a calm, restorative way. As a Tasmanian resident in Australia, we have witnessed the success this type of wellbeing has produced in remote townships.

Importantly, the proposal aligns strongly with New Zealand's values of environmental stewardship and sustainable tourism. The low-impact, non-permanent nature of a floating structure ensures minimal disruption to the surrounding environment, while careful design and operational management can protect water quality and marine ecosystems.

From an economic perspective, as can be demonstrated through Floating Sauna Ltd's achievements in Tasmania and Canberra Australia, the sauna would contribute positively to the local tourism offering, attracting visitors seeking high-quality, nature-based experiences. This in turn supports surrounding businesses and strengthens the region's appeal as a premium destination.

Overall, I believe this proposal represents a well-considered and beneficial addition to the waterfront. I strongly support its progression.

Regards

Francisco and Naomi Ortega

[redacted]

From: Diana Zadravec [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 11:23 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Submission to SDC Intention to issue license to occupy to Floating Sauna in Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

Submission to SDC Intention to issue license to occupy to Floating Sauna in Ivon Wilson Park

Submitter: Diana Zadravec
Position: Oppose
I'm unable to attend the hearing to speak to my submission.

Introduction

I'm Diana Zadravec, a Te Anau resident and ratepayer. My training and experience is in biology, environmental science and planning. I have 10 years + experience in community planning in Southland through my role at (then) Venture Southland. More recently I have been creating and teaching art and owning and operating a small Airbnb in Te Anau. I have an 8 year old child and a dog. While living in Europe I used a Finnish sauna on a weekly basis, have worked in one briefly, and I continue to use a proper Finnish sauna at any opportunity I have.

Summary of submission

I oppose the submission on the basis that it does not comply with the Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan (IWPMP) in several points. Most notably, fires are prohibited for protection of vulnerable bog plant communities. This wording is the strongest possible in planning and unequivocal; it leaves no room for discretion.

I oppose the effective privatisation and commercial use of a public structure resulting in loss of public access and amenity, parking pressure and the displacement of well established local uses and users.

I'm concerned about the landscape assessment used in this proposal that assessed the northern jetty as little used, this project having low landscape and amenity effect when it's visible from just about every vantage point. I would like clarity about the methodology that was used, whether it was based on monitoring and factual evidence, or anecdotal evidence, and if so, why and provided by whom.

I strongly oppose any decisions to be made before the current review of the 2003 Reserve Management Plan has been publicly consulted on and completed later this year. I'm concerned that issuing this Licence to Occupy will preempt the outcome of this review and potentially open a floodgate for other similar applications to the detriment of the character of Ivon Wilson Park.

I'm concerned about the inconsistencies and lack of detail about several important issues in the documents provided by the Council and applicant, most notably about the taking of water and discharges to the lake, including washing water and stormwater. These issues have to be considered

as they may require a resource consent and they are subject to the IWPMP. I'm also concerned about lack of detail about anchoring, potential disturbance to lake bed, and access for the public outside working hours.

I'm perplexed by why the Coucil would set such a low license fee for a commercial operation that reduces public amenity and uses public infrastructure; ask for so little in terms of development contribution, and offer an extremely long term plus right of renewal which seems unproportionate to the terms of some other recently issued licenses to projects with clear community benefit.

I am very concerned about the process that has been followed to the point when the intention to issue License to Occupy has been announced, and since. The public has been completely excluded from parts of the process; a letter of support by the Fiordland Community Board has been given significance in the Land Use resource consent process as if it was support from community (which knew nothing about it); and information provided by the Council to make submissions, has been insufficient and drip-fed.

Ivon Wilson Park is valued by the community for its peaceful character, open access to the lake and bog vegetation (which is rarely so accessible), and opportunities for education, passive recreation and connection with nature. In this it is quite different in character to other public recreational reserves in Te Anau and hence very precious to the community. Any commercial development proposals in Ivon Wilson Park should be full transparent to, and involve the public.

Privatisation of a public structure

The proposal effectively privatises an existing public structure. The proposed pontoon would connect directly to the exisiting jetty. While the public may technically and legally be still able to access the jetty the reality is that a private commercial structure with a solid wooden fence will completely change the public character of the jetty and act as a deterrent.

Why would the public wish to use this jetty anyway, with the view completely blocked by the structures and the fence, not being able to access the lake, swim off the jetty, kids not being able to cast for a fish or launch a leaf boat? The reality is that the jetty would effectively cease to be public. A key public structure and lake access point would effectively be privatised for the use of one business - to claim anything else is insincere.

Existing users and uses

The IWPMP includes the objective:
"To foster public appreciation for the Park, facilitate public access to, and recreational use of, the area."

This proposal undermines that objective as it will displace a number of existing users and uses.

The northern jetty is frequently used by the community, particularly by children and families. Te Anau School and Scouts use it for their educational programmes due to easy access to the bog plant communities at this location. Fiordland Kindergarten through their weekly Nature Discovery programme and Southern Stars regularly use the lake edge and this jetty in particular as part of environmental education activities, as do many other local informal groups. Families and children also use the jetty for exploring the lake, fishing and interacting with nature. All these groups would be displaced from access to this jetty.

I visit this jetty every single time I'm in Ivon Wilson Park, more frequently than the other jetties, as it has the most unaltered view of all the jetties which is what the applicant has also recognised and would like to capoitalise on. I will sketch the view and the bog plants, look for eels, or just enjoy the little winding path and the view for a while. I also frequently visit it with my daughter and now, our puppy. We would be displaced.

Another significant use of this jetty is for aurora photography by local and visiting photographers. This is the best view towards the southern horizont, which is where you mostly see aurora in these latitudes, without any light pollution and on calm nights, perfect reflections. I'm not sure if people would stay an extra night in Te Anau for an hour in the sauna, but they sure do for a night of aurora photograpy. These users, both local and visiting, would be completely displaced.

The applicant suggested - and seems to have persuaded some - that the opportunities for aurora photography would in fact be improved by the pontoon offering more space. This is not the case. I would suggest that the applicant does not have experience in aurora photography where exposure times are in tens of minutes if they believe this; no floating structure, no matter how sturdy, will allow for such exposures.

The applicant suggest that outside of opening hours the fence would be unlocked and the public would have access to the pontoon. Personally I would feel uncomfortable to walk around someone else's business property. Nor am I confident that this would always be the case considering it is not included in the terms License to Occupy. A staff member may forget to leave the gate unlocked (I doubt there will be a 24h sauna hotline). Security and safety concerns realised at a later point by the license holder may not make it feasable for them. Considering that this sauna could be here for the next 30 years it may simply be forgotten that such an expectation ever existed.

Another user group that would be partially displaced would be the frisbee golf players. With the sheer number of people that may be coming and going to the sauna it would require players to stop their game frequently at one of the longest and most satisfying holes to play.

Landscape effects

The landscape assessment concludes that the proposal will have very low landscape effects.

The floating sauna is not a small structure for what is really a small lake. It will be highly visible from every vantage point around Lake Henry.

It will be visible from both other jetties. In its letter of support from September 2024, Fiordland Community Board specifically based their support on the sauna not being visible from the main jetty. The only way it will not be visible is if one was looking straight ahead. With blinkers on. Based on this fact, it would be prudent of the FCB to withdraw its letter of support in this matter considering that this is clearly not the same project that has been presented to them.

As per the applicant's renders, at the northern jetty the view will be completly blocked by a fence and three buildings, one of them white and highly visible, as acknowledged by the assessment and Council.

How can it be possibly concluded that this proposal will have a low landscape and amenity effect? Has the landscape architect actually been on these locations? Has anybody from the Council? The Community Board?

The assessment also suggests that the northern jetty is poorly used. This does not reflect the reality of how the jetty is used by the local community. I would like to see the methodology based on which this was concluded, and by whom - did it include monitoring? Over what time? Or was it anecdotal evidence, if so, coming from who?

There have been instances where poor understanding of community use, values and priorities has led to poor decisions that have been strongly opposed by the community; the attempt to remove small mature bush trees on the questionable basis on of an undocumented risk assessment in Henry Street reserve comes to mind. There is little tolerance left in the community for this type of decision making.

Scale of activity

The proposal allows for two saunas with up to six users each per session, with operating hours between 7am and 9pm, a potential maximum of 168 users per day during summer. This represents a significant level of commercial activity within a passive recreation reserve, and does not compare to any other single current use. Assuming an overlap between sessions, up to 24 people plus staff could be present as the facility at any one time.

While I support further uses of Ivon Wilson Park I don't support it in the form of a commercial activity at this scale that would change the character of the place.

Parking and transport

The transport assessment suggests that approximately ten parking spaces may be required. I believe this is underestimated for peak hours, as people could be booking and arriving separately and there will be an overlap between sessions. I have no doubt that sauna users would also enjoy taking a walk in Ivon Wilson Park, meaning that the parking places could be occupied for much longer periods of time than the actual sessions.

Looking at parking now, in afternoon to late eevning when many people come out to enjoy the park, the carpark can be pretty full. I don't think it's acceptable for current and local users to be displaced by this proposal.

While the proposal suggests visitors will walk or cycle, this really is greewashing and the reality is that most users, like locals, will likely drive (few visitors travel with bikes in the first place, nor are there any bicycle parking facilities within Ivon Wilson Park).

I'm also concerned about safety aspects of potentially significantly increased vechicle movements on what is not a very good line of sight up the incline from the main road.

Public toilets

The proposal includes a contribution of $1,000 per year toward cleaning public toilets. This is inadequate for the use that the business would likely generate with a potential of 168 sauna users plus staff per day. In the peak period it would be realistic for the toilets to have to be cleaned twice daily. The expectations of the applicant about the use of the sauna are very positive, so based on typical cleaning cost this could amount to $20,000 or more per year.

A question that arises is also why is the applicant not contributing to the upgrading of the toilets, which would have an actual community benefit. This was a request in the letter of support by the

Fiordlabd Community Board, and the applicant offered a development contribution in their presentation to the Board.

Why has this not been included in the terms of the License to Occupy? Again I consider that the Fiordland Community Board's letter of support be withdrawn in light of this.

It is hard to avoid the impression that the Coucil is not pushing for a good financial return, not even upgraded toilets, for this community, especially considering the huge loss of amenity to the same community.

Fireplaces and wood-fired saunas

The proposal includes wood-fired saunas and also references a firepit on the dock beside the changing room. Introducing these fires will cause smoke and smell, especially on days with inversion. This would be another major effect on the environment and enjoyment of the park by other users by a commercial entity, while the same is clearly prohibited for public users, for IVMP very clearly states, on page 17:

“to prohibit the lighting of fires in the Park other than in barbeques that may be provided by the Council”.

Clearly commercial buildings constructed of wood, heated with small wood fires that have to be repeatedly opened and topped up with firewood do not fit into this description.

In planning terms, "prohibited" is the strongest, and unequivocal wording, with no room for discretion.

The reasons why such strong prohibition of fires is well explained in the IWMP (p.17)

"*Fire is the singluarly most disruptive threat in the Park, especially in the area immediately adjoining the lake as it drastically modifies the habitat and plant communities. Once alight the peat surrounding the lake could smolder underground for long periods before flaring up again."*

The proposal is inconsistent with the IWPMP on this mayor point and should be declined on this basis alone.

Water Quality

The information on discharges to the lake provided by the applicant and in council reports are inconsistent. The applicant intends to take water from lake Henry for creation of steam and the License to Occupy states that there will be no discharge to the lake. Yet on p.6 of the notification report it states “The application has confirmed that water taken from Lake Henry will be used to rinse down the sauna. No chemicals will be added to the rinse water.” In yet other locations in the application/proposal and in Council reports, it states that there will be no discharge to the lake.

So how will the sauna be cleaned? Where will the water go?

I would like to comment here on the type of sauna that is considered. This is not a Finnish sauna. In a Finnish sauna users take a shower immediately before using the sauna and dry off. The sauna is enjoyed in the nude, usually with a large towel or sheet for modesty but also to cover all areas where skin comes into contact with the wood, including backside, back and feet. The users of the proposed

sauna will not have a shower immediately before. If they walked, biked, or even tramped before the sauna experience, they will bring with them sweat, body oils, sunscreen and other body and hair products, as well as laundry products on their togs.

The sauna users will supposedly also jump into a 2m deep lake with a muddy bottom and often pollen, leaves and insects on the surface and bringing these materials back onto the pontoon and into the saunas (the applicant frequently references Lake Derby in Tasmania which is however not comparable; Lake Derby is not a natural lake, it's a submerged mining bowl, and the depth of water in front of the sauna there is 20m.)

These saunas will have to be cleaned. Properly. Where will the water go?

Even a Finnish sauna is usually cleaned with diluted etheric oils, not just water.

There is also no mentioning of the stormwater runoff that will inlude woodfire particles from the roofs of the buildings.

I'm very concerned that this issues has not been addressed by the Council at any point of the process. This is a significant issue as all the above mentioned contaminants will have an effect in a small (35ha surface, average 3m deep), spring-fed, hypotrophic lake without any water flow. The bog plant communities are adapted to this low nutrient state (hence their fabulous adaptations including carnivory in some) and can dissappear with even low levels of eutrophication.

A resource consent for a discharge of a contaminant to surface water would be required under Environment Southland as a discretionary activity. However, any discharges to the lake are also relevant to the decision about issueing a Licence to Occupy, as this is one of the policies in the IWPMP (p.16) and a key attribute of the environmental value of Lake Henry.

Further concerns I have in this respect that have not been addressed:

There are submerged branches in the lake which presumably will have to be removed and the lake bed disturbed to make it safe for sauna users to take a plunge.

The anchoring system - what type, and sort of damage to the lake bed will this cause, especially if it turns out the lake is not always as still and sheltered as in promotional photos, and a more significant anchoring sustem is necessary. If the anchoring system includes concrete that too is a possible concern for changes to water quality due to leaching.

Lease term

The proposed licence term of 15 years with a further 15 year renewal is excessive.
This could allow occupation of part of the reserve for up to 30 years. For comparison, the Fiordland Community Garden in Memorial Park, a well-loved community
initiative run by a registered charity and providing clear public benefit, receives only a five year Licence to Occupy, even upon it’s recent renewal the council would not consider a longer term.

I very strongly oppose to a private commercial activity receiving a licence of up
to 30 years. To put this in a human perspective:

If we all do the average New Zealand thing, this proposal will prevent me from seeing the view I love for the reminder of my life. My daughter will not be able to play on this jetty again for reminder of her

childhood, or enjoy the view she grew up with since 3 years old, until into her late thirties. My daughter's first child, and the second, will never have this experience at all.

Management plan review

The Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan was adopted in 2008 and states that it should be reviewed at ten-year intervals. A full review should therefore have occurred around 2018. However, the plan has not been reviewed since its adoption.

The Council is currently undertaking a review of the district-wide Reserve Management Plan (2003), which will likely inform the future management of individual reserves, including Ivon Wilson Park.

Granting a long-term commercial Licence to Occupy of 15 + 15 years before the relevant management planning framework has been updated risks pre-empting the outcome of that process and limiting the ability of the community to shape the future management of the park.

Community projects within the park are currently being paused while Council determines the future direction of the park through the management planning process. For example, last year, with the support of the Council, a community planting project with local schools and youth groups was undertaken where 500 native trees in Ivon Wilson Park. This planting programme is consistent with the objectives and policies of the management plan. However, when enquiring about further planting with kids this year, The Council stated this wasn't not possible while the management planning process is underway so that Council can determine what the community wants for the future of the park.

It is inconsistent, and on a personal level, enraging, that community planting projects which align with the management plan must wait for the outcome of the management planning process, while a commercial development and long-term occupation of the reserve which is at odds with the Management Plan is being progressed.

I oppose any determination in this matter until the Reserves Management Plan review process is undertaken including full public consultation and operational, expected by the end of 2026.

There really isn't any desperate need with it - we already have a sauna.

Community Board letter of support

Unbeknown to the public at the time, a presentation was made by the applicant to the Fiordland Community Board in March 2023. This presentation puts a strong emphasis on the business interests and achievements of the applicant in Te Anau and elsewhere but offers little in terms of detail about the project. The document has only very recently been made public by the Council and very few submitters would know about it or even the presentation to the FCB.

This resulted in a letter of support by the FCB in September 2024 that states several conditions, including that the sauna should be out of line of sight of the main viewing platform, and that the developer should make a contribution to the upgrade of toilets. Neither of these conditions have been satisfied.

The letter of support by the FCB has had a significant influence in the partially notified Land Use resource consent process from which the public was excluded, where it was taken as community support by proxy, when this support had not been given.

I believe it prudent for the FCB to withdraw this letter since the project has "evolved" and does not satisfy their requests at the time, so it does not unduly affect the current process as well.

Financial return to the public

The proposed licence fee of $2,391 per year plus GST, along with $1,000 contribution toward toilet cleaning is extremely low, or as others have said, the cheapest rent in town.

I am perplexed as to why the Council would not determine a more meaningful license fee that is more proportionate to the private benefit derived from a commercial operation occupying part of a public reserve, displacing public use, and relying on public infrastructure.

Concerns about the process

The public has been completely excluded from the Land Use consent process and any part of the process until now.

Even when the intent was published (once on social media, which gave it very shortlived visibility) no background information had been initally published by SDC for people to be able to make informed submissions. This information has since been drip-fed to the commmunity only as a result of repeated requests for information from some determined members of the public, with the last piece of information only made available 3 days before the submissions were due.

My biggest concern however is with the letter of support by the FCB, based on a public-excluded meeting/workshop with the applicant. Minutes of this workshop have been requested but never received, and it seems there were no minutes taken. This is concerning on many levels. It's hard to avoid the impression that other investments that the applicant has in Te Anau may have played a role in the FCB support. When asked about this presentation, the Board did not engage, but Cr Greany who met with some members of the public to discuss their concerns (thank you), passed on that the FCB acted on the priorities it had identified, which include attracting business, investment and visitors.

I don't object to FCB offering support for this type of business at the time although it was in my mind presumptious to assume that the local community would be happy to have it in IWP, the most peacful and underdeveloped reserve in town. It's a sentiment I heard over and over. The problem arised from this letter being given significance by the commissioner in the Land Use resource consent process (from which the public was excluded) as support of the community, which clearly wasn't the case.

I would like to know who was at this workshop from staff that may have been able to raise this scenario with the FCB, and would they have been happy to sign it off if they knew the potential consequences. Did any staff advise FCB on the inconsistencies with the IWPMP and the fact that the Reserves Management Plan was due to be reviewed. Did it not occur to anybody that this may be significant? I find it unprofessional that supposedly no minutes have been taken. Despite several of the FCB's conditions from this letter not being met (as covered above), this letter still exists as a proof of community support in the current submission process when it's clear that it does not represent the community's views unequivocally. The FCB had been asked via Cr Greany to consider withdrawing it but has (via Cr Greany, no direct engagement) declined.

I still believe it would be prudent to withdraw the letter of support. I believe that the alignment of this project with the FCB's priorities anyway is overstated. It may satisfy the Outcome 1 (attracting business, visitors) and even this I believe is overstated - I doubt many people will extend their stay in Te Anau for an hour in a sauna. It will create minimum wage 1.5 FTE, which in summer will probably be working visa people and in winter some local woman on a zero-hours contract. The benefit really is to this business (especially on this fee) and the loss this community's. Outcome 2 and 3 it doesn't meet at all in my mind, and to claim that a floating sauna aimed at visitors will improve wellbeing is a bit preposterous (and we have a sauna already).
As this process played out, I think I can speak for many in the community who feel they have been completely sidelined. The Land Use resource consent was partially notifed and handled by a commissioner; the report reads like a semantic planning exercise, and for good reason - there is no community knowledge and soul in it. Nor does any deep understanding of the community come through in the Council reports (the landscape assessment!). FCB and Cr Greany will not be part of the decision making on this matter. So where exactly did the community have its say and/or is represented?

If the applicant and Council came to the community earlier in the process I'm sure the project would have a more positive reception and the applicant would recieve feedback that would enable them to create something the community would support. As it is, it feels like another valuable thing is about to be taken away from us. It is very hard not to feel that this is all a done deal and the community is wasting hours of family time to write submissions that will be duly processed but not given the weight they deserve, Council possibly ignoring its own planing processes.

Even the timing of the hearing - immediately following Easter and Southland Anniversary Day which many people, especially those with school aged children use to fit in a last bit of camping etc as the tourism season is winding down etc - is unfortunate and does not show an understanding of the local community nor demonstrate an honest committment to engage with the community.

Diana Zadravec

[redacted]

From: Stephen Martin [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, 26 March 2026 11:24 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Intention to grant a License to Occupy over part of Ivon Wilson Recreation Reserve, Te Anau - S J Martin submission
Attachments: Proposed License to Occupy Agreement between SDC and Floating Sauna Limited S J Martin submission 2026-03-26.pdf

This message is from an external sender

Dear SDC Senior Property Advisor

My submission to the above proposal is attached. I request that the application is declined in full.

Regards

Stephen Martin

[redacted]

[redacted]

Intention to grant a License to Occupy over part of Ivon Wilson recreation reserve, Te Anau

I object to the proposed license to occupy agreement and request that Southland District Council declines the application from Floating Sauna Limited in full.

The reason for this objection is that the application does not comply with the Vision and the Management Objectives stated in the Southland District Council Ivon Wilson Park Management Plan January 2008.

1. The proposal breaches the Ivon Wilson Park vision of a *landscape of trees* (page 4 Section 4 page 12 Objectives) by introducing buildings to the focal point of the park within the trees, Lake Wilson.

2. The *landscape of trees vision* of Ivon Wilson Park is especially pertinent to Te Anau, because Ivon Wilson Park is the only park landscape in Te Anau that is free of visual aspects to buildings. As such Ivon Wilson has a particular value as a 'green lung' in Te Anau where park users can enjoy a vegetated public space free of buildings. The addition of buildings within Ivon Wilson Park would ruin the vision of a *landscape of trees*.

3. The proposal is incompatible with the management objective to facilitate recreation activities that are compatible with the character of the resource. The proposed activity requires buildings, which are incompatible with the stated character of a *landscape of trees*.

4. The proposal is incompatible with the objective to enhance and maintain the scenic values of Ivon Wilson Park. Inserting a pair of sheds into a landscape of trees is detrimental to the scenic values of the *landscape of trees* that are intrinsic to Ivon Wilson Park. The sheds detract from the scenic values of the park.

5. The addition of buildings is non compliant with the management objective of maintaining Lake Henry and surrounding bog in its *natural state*. The proposal can be rejected on this breach alone.

I recommend that Floating Sauna Limited moves its sauna proposal to private land in Te Anau.

The stated vision for Ivon Wilson Park is a landscape of trees with a lake within. Please maintain this vision by rejecting this non complying application.

[redacted]

From: SDC <sdc@southlanddc.govt.nz>
Sent: Friday, 27 March 2026 8:27 am
To: Contact Property
Subject: Fwd: Julie Walls Te Anau Submission Opposing Commercial Sauna Operation at Ivon Wilson Park
Attachments: Submission Opposing Commercial Sauna Operation at Ivon Wilson Park_sent26March2026.docx

This message is from an external sender

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, March 26, 2026 8:57 PM
To: sdc@southlanddc.govt.nz
Subject: Julie Walls Te Anau Submission Opposing Commercial Sauna Operation at Ivon Wilson Park

This message is from an external sender

Attached
Submission Opposing Commercial Sauna Operation at Ivon Wilson Park.

I have send this email to this address as tried twice to send and tells me its invalid. As deadline is midnight on 26 march 2026 not sure why this is a problem.
i hope this reaches the approprotae area.

Will check tomorrow to make sure it was received.

Kind Regards
Julie Walls
[redacted]

Submission Opposing Commercial Sauna Operation at Ivon Wilson Park

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to formally oppose the proposal to allow a commercial sauna operation within Ivon Wilson Park.
While I appreciate the value of community wellbeing initiatives, I have significant concerns about the appropriateness and fairness of permitting a private commercial enterprise to operate within this park under the current framework.

1. Exploitation of an Outdated Park Management Plan

The proposal appears to rely on provisions within an outdated park or reserve management plan that did not anticipate the scale or nature of modern commercial operations. Using legacy provisions to justify new commercial activity risks setting a precedent that undermines the intent of protecting public spaces for broad community use. Any decision of this nature should be guided by an updated plan that reflects current community expectations, environmental considerations, and equitable land use principles.

2. Lack of Fair Commercial Contribution

It is concerning that a private business may be allowed to operate on public land without contributing at a level equivalent to other commercial operators in the district. Businesses operating in commercial zones are required to pay full commercial rates, rents, and associated costs. Allowing a business to operate in a public park without similar financial obligations creates an uneven playing field and effectively subsidises a private venture using public assets and ratepayer contributions.

3. Increased Pressure on Public Infrastructure

A commercial sauna operation will inevitably increase foot traffic, vehicle use, parking demand, waste, and pressure on facilities such as toilets and accessways. These impacts will not be isolated to the business itself but will affect the wider park environment and its users. The cost of maintaining and upgrading infrastructure to accommodate this increased use will ultimately fall on ratepayers, rather than being fully borne by the commercial operator generating the demand.
I particularly dislike this timeframe given to a new entity without due diligence on the result from their presence may cause for terms of 15 years and ROR for further 15 years. Obviously in the climate we currently are in sets a dangerous precedence.

4. Erosion of Public Space Purpose

Public parks are intended to provide open, accessible, and largely non-commercial spaces for recreation and enjoyment by the entire community. Introducing private commercial operations risks gradually shifting these spaces away from their primary purpose, reducing accessibility and altering the character of the park.
Te Anau Fiordland needs to keep its natural surrounds in all areas of the town so it provides a marketing strategy to provide visitors with positive information on the area.
There are a number of towns in New Zealand who have had their beauty destroyed such as Queenstown which is being continually ruined of its beauty, natural green spaces, overcrowding and traffic woes. Te Anau continues to attract permanent residents, workers and visitors which is providing a unique experience to all visitors and residents alike.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, I strongly oppose the approval of this commercial sauna operation at Ivon Wilson Park under the current conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this matter.

Julie Walls
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Maria Cournane [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 27 February 2026 11:13 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Intention to grant licence to occupy

This message is from an external sender

Floating sauna Enquiry

I thought there was already a beautiful and mpst importantly a locally owned sauna in Te Anau - Wildwood Saunas?

Who has put the proposition forward for the floating sauna?

Locally owned or off shore?

Thank you 😊

[redacted]

From: Lois Dungey [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 4 March 2026 5:55 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: Intention to grant licence to occupy

This message is from an external sender

Hello,
I have a couple of concerns regarding the floating sauna.

1. How much will it impact movement around Lake Henry? Whether it is people who are biking, running, playing or sitting enjoying the peace and quiet.
2. How visible will it be to those sitting by the lake or walking around the lake? e.g. if people using the sauna are going naked into the lake.
3. What area of the lake will they be using? Will there be a separate entrance?
4. What happens if there is a wedding or a funeral.

I have read a few comments on the Community page but would be interested in getting facts not speculation.
Regards,
Lois Dungey
[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

From: Jennifer Beardsall [redacted]
Sent: Friday, 6 March 2026 2:49 pm
To: Contact Property
Subject: INTENTION TO GRANT A LICENCE TO OCCUPY OVER PART OF IVON WILSON RECREATION RESERVE

This message is from an external sender

Kia ora,

Please can I ask for some further details relating to this licence application including:

- Confirmation as to whether this use is already established/in operation at Lake Henry;
- Whether the application /actiivty is supported by a Management Plan relating to emergency management procedures, particularly fire risk.

Ngā mihi,

Jen Beardsall

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]