

Pauline Sargisson

15 Acheron Heights

**Hanmer Springs**

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**To: Hurunui District Council – [submission@hurunui.govt.nz](mailto:submission@hurunui.govt.nz)**

**Cc Hanmer Springs Thermal Pools and Spa c/- Cequent Projects [nradburnd@cequent.co.nz](mailto:nradburnd@cequent.co.nz)**

As a new permanent resident and home owner in Hanmer Springs, I **strongly oppose** the issuing of a resource consent for the entire proposal to develop a commercial Flywire venture (“the proposal”) on Conical Hill.

My major concerns relate to the following;

**1** The proposal does not align with the policies of the Hurunui District Plan in terms of, but not limited to;

**Chapter 8 – Transportation** – *“Development that increases traffic can impact levels of service, safety and congestion, and reduce the contribution that the transportation network makes to the economic prosperity of both the district and the wider region by making the network less effective.”*

The proposed Flywire venture does not allow for any parking facilities, as would be required of any other business development. This increased traffic volume and pressure on parking on both Conical Hill Road and Acheron Heights will not only disadvantage those who either own or are using the homes there but will most certainly have an impact on levels of service, safety and congestion.

As one example, the *FENZ Firefighting operations emergency vehicle access guide* recommends a minimum access width of 4m – something that will not be able to be attained with vehicles parked on both sides of these roads for extended periods of time.

<https://fireandemergency.nz/assets/Documents/Business-and-Landlords/Building-and-designing-for-fire-safety/F5-02-GD-Firefighting-operations-emergency-vehicle-access-guide.pdf>

**Chapter 14 – Heritage** – 14.1 *“Heritage resources are considered worthy of protection, not only because of their special values to the current generation, but also because their loss would foreclose opportunities for future generations to appreciate their values.”*

If you google ‘Conical Hill, Hanmer Springs’ there are repeated descriptions of the walk as ‘peaceful’, ‘full of birdsong’ and a ‘must do’ when in Hanmer. The Council itself describes the hill as an ‘icon’ of Hanmer Springs on its own website!

*“Conical Hill Reserve is one of the best known features in Hanmer Springs”. Conical Hill Reserve is a Hanmer Springs ‘icon’ along with the thermal pools. The summit walk has always been a significant aspect of the Hanmer Springs experience, particularly as a family outing or as a prelude to soaking in the thermal pools. Being a reserve that has been visited for almost a century, the reserve is testimony to the beginning of forestry in New Zealand. All of these factors must be taken into account when considering the standards of maintenance and any development proposals.”*

Generations of visitors and residents’ have enjoyed the peace and views on this hill walk and this is part of their heritage. Its importance should not be ignored or dismissed. Allowing this location to be destroyed by

a commercial activity is not only not in line with the Council's own District Plan but risks breaching the requirements of the Resource Management Act 6(f) to protect the hill as a heritage resource for the town.

**Chapter 15 – Natural Hazards –Para 15.4** seeks to avoid development of land within any Fault Awareness Zones. Hanmer Springs lies in direct proximity to the Alpine Fault and Conical Hill is a significant sized hill at risk of landslide or subsidence in the event of a major earthquake. The proposal seeks to remove an unacceptable number of trees in a relatively small area which will inevitably increase the risk to users and residents below. It is not at all evident that adequate investigation has been carried out to counter or adequately mitigate this argument sufficiently to adhere to the requirements of the Resource Management Act s6(h) regarding significant hazards.

**2 Loss of Amenity** The proposal will have significant detrimental effects for residents, particularly those living on or close to the hill, and all who seek to enjoy the quiet enjoyment of the forest walk. Noise travels - screams from the Hot Pools can clearly be heard at our home on Acheron Heights. We do not need similar noise even closer.

The noise assessment completed by the Applicant suggests that additional noise from people and vehicles accessing the ride will “... have a less than minor effect, and no change will be noticeable in the wider area”. With a proposed volume of 50-60 persons per hour, for 7 hours a day, it is farcical to suggest that noise levels will not be significantly increased. It is also not relevant to talk about noise levels as though these are a one off sound – it is the continual emitting of such sounds that is the key issue here. The stress caused by this continual noise levels will severely affect the quality of life of those of us who choose to call Hanmer home.

During testing undertaken by the company engaged the predominant sounds (currently) were noted to be “Noise sources audible in the area included: **♣ Birds and the natural environment**” -LETS LEAVE IT THAT WAY!!

We, along with many other homeowners, purchased our home to enjoy the close proximity to the forest, the serenity of the quiet environment and the birdsong. All of these things will be lost to us should the proposal go ahead in this location. For those directly below the ride, they will be robbed of their right to privacy and quiet enjoyment of their properties. As ratepayers we should have the expectation that the Council will not allow any activity that would jeopardise these property rights.

**3 Protection of fauna habitat** - Section 6(c) of the Resource Management Act imposes an obligation on Councils to protect significant fauna habitat. Conical Hill is home to a rare species of gecko – how does the Council explain allowing their habitat to be destroyed or having these ‘relocated’ out of their natural habitat is upholding the specific requirements of the RMA to avoid this adverse affect on the environment?

In addition, native Falcons have been seen (and photographed) nesting in the area and it is home to many species of birds, all of whom would be under threat of being forced away from the area due to the noise and disruption of the proposed venture.

In closing, allowing this proposal to go ahead would be taking one of the primary drawcards of Hanmer and ruining it – forever! The Council should seek to build on the town’s strengths as a location of quiet enjoyment – the forest walks, hot pools, mountain bike trails. Leave the ‘Adventure Capital’ title to Queenstown. If there is a place for this sort of activity here, it is NOT on Conical Hill, it should be further out and away from residential areas.

The very reasons people enjoy Conical Hill will all be taken away with the addition of the Flywire ride.

By its very definition, the Conical Hill Reserve should be exempt from development that is not directly benefitting or improving the existing purpose – to be enjoyed as a forest walk and left as a local icon in its own right.

I wish to be heard in support of my submission.

If others make a similar submission, I will consider presenting a joint case with them at the hearing.

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