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Attn: Erin Berry

Thames-Coromandel District Council
Private Bag,
Thames

September 8, 2015

Care of Karl Daldwin: karl@ktbplanning.co.nz

Attention of Erin Berry:

Ref No: RMA2013/184, 206A Silverstream Falls Row, Whenuakite

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the submission for an application for resource consent from Serenity Retreat Ltd at 206A Silverstream Falls Row, Whenuakite.

I wish to oppose the submission for the following reasons:

- The conference/wedding facility would add a dramatic increase to the amount of traffic on the road at Silverstream Falls and there is no mention in the submission as to who would pay for and maintain the roads if this proposal was accepted. The roads currently have no road markings, centre lines or lighting and are not intended for large volumes of traffic. If this were to change there would be a considerable impact on the aesthetic look at Silverstream Falls and light pollution from an environmental perspective.
- The submission mentions a total of 52 car parking spaces plus mini buses, plus staff, plus they may even increase this number. This amounts to a terrific volume of traffic in an area that is deemed rural and as a lot owner of Silverstream Falls; this is not what was envisaged when we bought the property at Silverstream. The marketing and image created for the sub-division was one of peace and quiet, serenity in a tranquil bush environment. These numbers in the volumes of traffic are more akin to a town or city environment, which raises the question of why this submission cannot be rejected on this aspect alone? In section 8.1 of the submission it references Section 2 of the District Plan which attempts to contain most development within the existing settlement. This is not an existing town settlement and yet the scale of the development and the amount of traffic that would be generated implies that it is. The reason bush clad sites do not exist in town settlements are because they have already been cleared. This submission is also proposing clearing much of the existing bush for the numerous buildings and car parks, roads, driveways, which they are apparently so desperate to take advantage of.
- The submission mentions 'a spacious bush clad site' for the development but at what cost to the environment? There are many sites that are bare land and cleared farmland throughout the Coromandel and surely a development of this size and type would be more appropriate in these locations rather than clearing and destroying yet more bush clad sites for these numerous buildings and car parks. The bush sites should be treated with respect and not buried under tons of concrete.
- Noise – the submission in section 7.15 – 7.22 summarises the noise effects as 'no more than minor'. This is an interesting statement given that a DJ playing music at a wedding venue until at least 10pm or later, with the doors open, is a very different type of noise than listening to birds, wind in the trees and cicadas noise. When people buy rural property the latter type of 'noise' is expected and embraced but listening to booming disco music with loud bass vibrating around the valley is not.

September 8, 2015

- Noise - Section 7.20 also mentions the 'only other potential noise is that of traffic noise associated with the guest leaving a function at night'. This is not 'potential' noise, it is a reality. Cars and minibuses generate noise, and depending on the vehicles and the size of the engines, this may be a lot of continuous noise. The figures for '35 vehicles leaving the site in a single hour after 10:00pm' seem to be very creative. Why 35 and for how many hours after 10pm? There is no mention in the submission of when the wedding parties will terminate, it may be 2am? It also doesn't take into account the number of staff vehicles that will also be leaving. It would not occur for only 24 times a year, as section 3.2 states that 'There will be no restrictions on the number of business retreats, family reunions and other persons/groups wishing to utilise the facility throughout the year'. The reality could very well be 52 times a year.

- There is a fundamental shift that would occur if this submission were successful; and that is taking an environment that is currently incredibly quiet (except for the sound of Kiwi and Ruru in the evening; but would they also be at risk now with the number of vehicles driving on the Silverstream roads in the dark in the late hours?), where most people go to bed before 9pm and then turning it into a State Highway with the volume of traffic & noise and the additional noise of more than a hundred people and music with amplifiers and loud speakers. It's transforming a very silent, calm bush environment and turning it into a mini-city that comes with all its associated problems.

- The time period for seeking consent for a 10 year timeframe should be rejected. These are not special circumstances and it allows the vendors to sell on the land with the consent intact for a long and lengthy period, (if they cannot complete the project) to other hospitality companies and therefore almost guaranteeing that the development and even possible further expansion will take place.

I would like the Council to please reject the submission and take into account the points raised above. I am not able to attend to be heard to support my submission but have no objections to it being read out.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jude Kitching', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jude Kitching
(Silverstream Falls Lot 4 Owner)