

LTCCP 2006-16 SUBMISSION

Submissions close on 5 May 2006

I do NOT wish to present my submission at the hearing, and ask that this submission be considered.

I am completing this submission:
On behalf of a group or organisation

Number of people you represent:
approx 2-300

My submission refers to:
Full Version of the LTCCP

Page Number:
130

I also want to respond to:

Name:	James Coubrough
Organisation:	Akaroa Heritage Festival Society Inc
Daytime Phone:	03 304 7517
Evening Phone:	03 304 7517
Email:	info@wildernesshouse.co.nz
Address:	42 Rue Grehan AKAROA
Your Submission:	Do you have any comments on the major projects in our Draft Community Plan?
	Do you have any comments on groups of activities (The activities and services the Council provides?)
	<p>Proposal It is proposed that the Council become responsible for the annual delivery of the Akaroa French Fest in order to provide rate payer satisfaction with the quality of the event.</p> <p>Background Events are often used as a very specific marketing tool to create additional awareness for a destination, as well as generating significant economic benefits for a town/city if the events are successful. In a world of mass marketing, marketers must look past traditional marketing mediums and integrate their marketing plans, with credible and tangible events and festivals.</p> <p>Specifically, local authority involvement in events can include: Funding community <input type="checkbox"/> events managed by non-local authority organisations Wholly or partially <input type="checkbox"/> funding major events that have an economic benefit for the local authority Funding and/or managing local authority initiated <input type="checkbox"/> events</p> <p>Research undertaken by Lincoln University in 2003 indicated that tourism was an important contributor to the Banks Peninsula economy Tourism <input type="checkbox"/> is a major employer, particularly in Akaroa (172 FTEs - 2002), 50% of all jobs directly or indirectly related to tourism Direct spending by visitors in <input type="checkbox"/> Akaroa = \$17.3m Akaroa is a visitor dependent centre <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Previously, the Peninsula had an Events calendar of which the French Fest was recognised as the most known 'destination event'. In 2004/2005, the Banks peninsula District Council granted \$6,000 to Festivals. This grant has gone to the Akaroa French Fest each year.</p>

**Your Submission
(Cont'd):**

Discussion

Both the New Zealand Tourism Strategy 2010 and Post Cards from Home: Local Government Tourism Strategy (2003) have identified the contribution tourism makes to the economic well being of the nation and regions/districts. The Local Government Tourism Strategy lists ways in which local government is involved in the tourism industry:

By statute, local government is the engine room that drives the planning and management of New Zealand's natural and cultural resources. Tourism, among other industries, relies on having these resources in a healthy state.

Local government provides the core utilities and infrastructure on which the tourism industry is based. This includes district and city roads, lighting, water and sewerage, public transport systems, signs, airports and ports. Local government operates attractions such as museums, art galleries, sports stadia, convention centres, parks, gardens, events, tours, and other amenities. Collectively, this represents a multi billion-dollar investment of public money. It also means that local government is perhaps the largest 'tourism operator' in the country.

Key tourism destinations have become well known through high event investment:

Nelson - Wearable Arts
Hokitika Wild Foods Festival
Kaikoura Sea Fest
Bluff Oyster Festival
Queenstown Winter Festival

The unique geography, history and beauty of the Akaroa Harbour and Banks Peninsula presents a natural setting for events. There is much to celebrate: the unique French, British and Maori histories, the creative population, the magnificent gardens, a remarkable collection of historic buildings and living in a crater! Community groups are currently doing this, however in a very village 'fete' manner. With this high level of community commitment, and foresight, plus an already established event, Council should reward the community. The event is in line with the objectives from the Draft LTCCP Our Community Plan and fits in well with Akaroa's brand values: nature, heritage, seascape and lifestyle.

The French Fest

The Akaroa Heritage Festival Society became an Incorporated Society in September 1998

Purpose: To undertake festivals with the general aim of celebrating and promoting the special attributes of Banks Peninsula with the emphasis on heritage.

Objective: To promote local activities and business with the emphasis on French heritage.

Theme 2004: A week of peripheral activities culminating in a Festival Day of family entertainment, food and wine to celebrate Akaroa's French history.

Intended Theme 2005: A celebration of Akaroa's Heritage through music, local food, wine and family entertainment. Preceded by the Akaroa French Film & Music week.

Theme 2006: A little bit of France in the Heart of New Zealand.

The organising committee is made up of a very enthusiastic and dedicated group of volunteers. It is also significant that over 50% of the committee members are not involved with any business interests, but offer their own time to support the whole community. The cost of hiring tents and equipment, as well as paying for 12 hours of top class entertainment, is significant. Therefore, the cost of holding the French Fest is borne through grants, donations and sponsorship. This is an onerous task and has to be supplemented by an entrance fee, which is kept to a minimum, but is essential to help cover costs.

**Your Submission
(Cont'd):**

A significant highlight undertaken by the Committee in 2005 was to engage professional and local consultants to develop a Marketing Strategy. It was always a concern that the cost of holding the French Fest was entirely dependent on grants, donations and sponsorship and this was inhibiting growth. The Marketing Strategy was seen as critical in allowing an opportunity to analyse the event, establish a vision, review the current status and develop a plan to promote the Festival as a branding event for Akaroa well into the future. However, this will be slow and extremely difficult to achieve under current funding and management levels.

An analysis of the potential growth of the French Fest follows:

**AKAROA FRENCH FESTIVAL
SWOT analysis 2005**

Strengths Weaknesses

- o The only place in NZ which can claim "Frenchness"
- o Low entry price vs other festivals
- o Close proximity to Christchurch
- o First festival of the season
- o Takes place in peak summer, in school holidays
- o Proactive and committed organising committee
- o Good local infrastructure
- o Number of visitors growing
- o Attendance very weather dependant
- o Lack of consistent and clear identity ie what does French really mean to people, and do we deliver it?
- o Lack of "trigger" event or big idea to really create a buzz
- o Lack of commitment from the whole of Akaroa (stall holder quality, only for one half of town)
- o Limited repeat visitors except locals (perception only?)
- o Perception that it is a village fete not an international festival
- o Lack of high end cultural attractions / lack of gravitas

Opportunities Threats

- o Clarify and exploit "Frenchness" more (involve embassy?)
- o Develop a NZ vs France competition eg wines, cheeses?
- o Make less weather dependant
- o Generate enthusiasm from whole community
- o Widen geographical appeal and promotional plan (small towns, not just ChCh)
- o Promote "kick off the festival season" with Akaroa?
- o Build on existing heritage eg "Riviera of Canterbury"?
- o Encourage visitors to book a year in advance (need to define date at least 1 year ahead)
- o Involve other groups associated with French (specific invites)
- o Weather
- o Donations and grants dry up
- o Bastille day splits local and national enthusiasm and dilutes impact of French Festival
- o Committee "wearout"
- o New festivals start up at same time
- o Community and local operator support wanes

Options

a. Remain with the Status Quo.

Continue to have a "village fete" style of French Fest reliant on gathering together a group of volunteers to run the event. Success, and therefore ratepayer satisfaction, is totally dependent on the level of funding achieved which in turn puts jeopardy on the short and long term viability of the event.

**Your Submission
(Cont'd):**

b. Council become responsible for the annual delivery of the Akaroa French Fest.
In order to provide rate payer satisfaction with the quality of the event, Council funding and management will ensure growth potential is realised.

The Festival will be able to be professionally run and promoted to key domestic markets which in turn will generate significant long term economic benefits for the area.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Council become responsible for the annual delivery of the Akaroa French Fest.

Do you have any other comments or suggestions you want to make?