

9. **MTB NITE RIDEZ COMMERCIAL MOUNTAIN BIKING – BOTTLE LAKE FOREST PARK**

Officer responsible Parks Manager	Author John Allen (Team Leader Consents – Parks), DDI 371-1699
Corporate Plan Output: Consents (9.4.8)	

The purpose of this report is to submit an application from Mr Carl Crow, trading as MTB Nite Ridez Ltd, to obtain a licence to operate a commercial guided mountain bike tour through Bottle Lake Forest Park in the evenings.

This report was before the Burwood/Pegasus Community Board at its meeting on 20 November 2000. The Board supported the proposal.

BUSINESS CONCEPT AND PROPOSED OPERATION

MTB Nite Ridez Ltd propose to provide its customers with a guided mountain bike tour through a designated area of Bottle Lake Forest Park (refer to the attached site plan). The equipment provided includes a mountain bike, a certified helmet which must be worn at all times when riding the cycles and high powered 12-volt front and rear bike lights to clearly illuminate the track. Mr Crow has given an assurance that the cycles will be maintained to the highest standards. MTB Nite Ridez Ltd propose to utilise the purpose-built mountain bike tracks at Bottle Lake Forest Park, as indicated on the attached plan. At present the use of the forest for mountain biking is high during the day and relatively under-utilised during evenings. For this reason the operation will have minimal effect on the integrity of the track, and will be compatible with other uses of the park.

The proposed hours of operation are between 6pm to 9pm during the winter months and 8pm to 11pm over the summer months. The operation of the concession be customer driven, with the sessions not being run when demand is limited. The tour parties will generally be limited to six people at any one time. However, larger groups with their own bikes will also be accommodated, Mr Crow being the one guide to provide direction and leadership. Mr Crow has been participating in night-time mountain biking for over two years and has taken various groups through the proposed circular route. He holds a current First Aid Certificate and will carry a first aid kit throughout the journey, and a cell phone. During major events at the forest park such as all night commercially sponsored mountain biking, the guided tours would need to be postponed.

The business will operate from the owner’s Seafield Place property, where customers will make telephone bookings for sessions. Mr Crow proposes to collect his clients taking part in the excursions and to drop them back to their respective collection points.

The proposal is expected to cater for the residents of Christchurch, with further target markets being backpackers staying at youth hostels, national and international tourists visiting the city. It is envisaged that the rate for partaking in the guided mountain bike tour will be approximately \$45 per person (\$10 where people provide their own bikes, helmets and both front and rear lights will be provided). This is a preliminary estimate with the final cost being dependent on the licence details. Mountain biking is an outdoor pursuit that allows all age groups to participate, with the proposed recreational enterprise focusing on a niche within the popular adventure tourism market.

The proposed commercial business does not require any infrastructure to be built, with the majority of equipment required for the operation being in the possession of the applicant. This equipment is to be stored off-site. The capital costs to run the business have been projected to be between \$1,000 to \$2,000, to be financed by the applicant’s own capital. No additional staff will be required to operate the proposed activity, with the applicant being the sole owner and operator. Mr Crow is not proposing to erect any signage or advertising on the park. The Bottle Lake Forest Park Management Plan requires a formal concession to be issued for any commercial activities located within the park (Bottle Lake Forest Park Management Plan (Part Vi Section 12.4,2).

SUMMARY

A guided mountain bike ride through Bottle Lake Forest Park would provide an exciting recreational experience in close proximity to the city. The low impact of the proposed activity on the plantation and the utilisation of the existing mountain bike tracks during times of little use makes this proposal an acceptable alternative recreational pursuit for Bottle Lake Forest Park. The Chief Executive of the Selwyn Plantation Board is comfortable with the proposal provided that the following conditions are attached to the licence to operate.

Recommendation: That, pursuant to section 601 of the Local Government Act 1974 and Section 7(c) of the Local Body Leases Act 1969, Mr Carl Crow, owner of MTB Nite Ridez Ltd, be granted a non-exclusive licence to operate a guided mountain bike tour through the designated mountain bike tracks in Bottle Lake Forest Park for a term of two years, with no right of renewal, subject to the following conditions:

1. The area covered by the licence agreement being available for public use at all times.
2. The MTB Nite Ridez Ltd guided mountain bike tour showing proof of having obtained \$1,000,000 public liability to the Area Parks Officer (Consents) before commencing operations on the park.
3. The concession operating only during the early evening hours through Bottle Lake Forest Park, and be restricted to no later than 9pm in winter and 11pm during daylight saving hours.
4. The route through the forest plantation used by the applicant being approved by the Bottle Lake Forest Parks Ranger, under designated authority from the Parks Manager, and taking into account forestry operations occurring at the time, and not crossing or traversing the road into the landfill site.
5. Smoking or cooking appliances being prohibited at all times the concession is operating.
6. The concession ceasing operation through the park should a fire outbreak occur, or the forest is closed because of extreme fire or wind conditions.
7. An approved health and safety plan being lodged with the Council, and the operator carrying a cell phone at all times.
8. No advertising being placed within the Forest Park.
9. Any other tour guide, other than the owner, being approved by the Parks Manager, before being allowed to operate the tour in the Forest Park.
10. The rent for the commercial licence being negotiated with the Property Manager, in consultation with the Parks Manager.
11. The Parks Manager being the duly authorised officer of the Council to liaise with the licensee on any points requiring attention during operation of the licence, and to cancel the operation at short notice for reasons such as health and safety or danger to other users.
12. Either party being able to terminate the licence on the giving of three months' notice subject to 11 above.

Chairman's Recommendation: That the above recommendation be adopted.