

A. Permission Application Number and Name of Applicant

45654-OTH Fiordland Lobster

B. Proposed Activity and Location(s)

Restriction of access via installation of a permanent fence to the commercial port area of Deepwater Basin, Milford Sound Piopiotahi.

C.2 Your name

In placing your name and organisation below, you acknowledge that you are the person or authorised person submitting this objection or submission. You are also acknowledging that your name and organisation will be published.

Printed name of submitter or person authorised
on behalf of submitter

Mark Quickfall

Organisation

Destination Milford Sound

Date

31 January 2025

D. Statement of Support, Neutrality or Opposition

- ☐ I **Support** this Application (I am making a submission)
- ☒ I am **Neutral** on this Application (I am making a submission).
- ☐ I **Oppose** this Application (I am making an objection).

E. Hearing Request

- ☐ I **Do Not** wish to be heard in support of this objection or submission at a hearing.
- ☐ I **Do** wish to be heard in support of this objection or submission at a hearing

F. Objection or submission

The specific parts of the application that this objection or submission relates to are:

- > Restriction of access to the 'White House'
- > Restriction of access to the commercial port.
- > Encroachment into the area available to vehicles towing trailers.
- > The fence's location could impact the route trucks and trailers use to access MSTL infrastructure near the wastewater plant and the helipad.

DMS has no objection to the installation of a permanent fence in the commercial port area of Deepwater Basin for health and safety reasons; it is concerned with the proposed location. Alternative public facilities currently operated from the 'White House' must be provided before public access to this facility is restricted.

My reasons for my objection or submission are:

Destination Milford Sound (DMS) submission is a neutral response to a Department of Conservation (DOC) application by Fiordland Lobster Company Limited. The application proposes restricting Deepwater Basin access with a fence for safety reasons. DMS supports the fence for health and safety but objects to the proposed location, with concerns about impacts on vehicle access, especially for trailers and emergency services. Crucially, DMS insists on adequate public toilet facilities at Deepwater Basin before restricting access to existing facilities. There needs to be a balance between safety improvements and the needs of tourists and other area users.

DMS submission relates to public safety, facility access, and the fence's placement.

The outcomes that need to be addressed by this application are:

Give precise details, including the parts of the application you wish to have amended, and the general nature of any conditions sought if the application is approved.

Here are the specific outcomes DMS proposes:

Public Safety: DMS suggests that managing public safety in the area should not be the sole responsibility of Fiordland Lobster Co. or other operators and that the Department of Conservation (DOC) should implement additional safety measures.

Public Toilets: DMS insists on suitable 24/7 access to public toilets at Deepwater Basin. If a permanent alternative is not provided, DMS suggests public access to the "White House" should remain. DMS is concerned that the lack of public toilets at Deepwater Basin will force people to defecate in the surrounding bushes and shrubs, which will have a substantial adverse environmental impact.

Fence Placement: DMS asks that the fence's placement be reconsidered to allow more room for large vehicles, especially those towing trailers. During peak summer days, vehicles are already difficult to manoeuvre, and the lack of space is already a concern.

Emergency Services Access: Adequate access to emergency services is needed, especially at night if Freshwater Basin is unavailable for medical evacuations.

Oil Spill Kits: Easy access to oil spill kits is essential.

Alternative Public Facilities: DMS suggests that alternative public facilities should be established before restricting public access to the "White House." These facilities must be permanent and not temporary. DMS also notes that showers could be provided in the new facility on a user-pay basis.

The current proposal does not adequately address the needs of the area's public and other stakeholders.

DMS is not opposed to the fence in principle but wants to prioritise public access and safety in any plan.

Destination Milford Sound (DMS)

We are the single, unified voice representing those who operate in Milford Sound Piopiotahi.

DMS was formed in October 2021 in response to the Milford Opportunities Project and to advocate for Milford Sound Piopiotahi.

The key to all our submissions and discussions is the security of tenure, which will enable operators to upgrade and invest in improving Milford Sound so that quality, safe, and sustainable visitor experiences can continue. Please refer to the attached documents.

G. Attachments

If you are using attachments to support your objection or submission clearly label each attachment, complete the table below and send in your attachments with this 'objection or submission form'.

Document title	Document format (e.g. Word, PDF, Excel, jpg etc.)	Description of attachment
DMS Framework	PDF	DMS analysis on how to resolve current issues in Piopiotahi Milford Sound
DMS Milford Sound Piopiotahi Solution Summary	PDF	DMS Milford Sound Piopiotahi Solution

How do I submit my objection or submission?

Complete this form and email to DNSubmissions@doc.govt.nz. You may also mail your objection and submission to: Director-General, c/o Department of Conservation, Ōtepoti / Dunedin Service Centre, Level 1, John Wickliffe House, 265 Princes Street, Ōtepoti / Dunedin 9016.



DMS analysis on how to resolve current issues in Piopiotahi Milford Sound

Moving forward with investment in Milford will deliver on key government objectives and priorities. These are:

1. **Rebuild the economy:** Milford businesses are hurting because of a lack of certainty, which is stalling investment. We need certainty over the future of Piopiotahi to invest in our assets, as well as government contribution to public infrastructure. This will help to rebuild the local and national economy and ensure the economic benefits from Piopiotahi are preserved and enhanced.
2. **Grow economic prosperity:** Milford tourism underpins the region's economy and economic prosperity. A sustainable, safe and resilient Milford is nationally important.
3. **Become an export power house:** Enhanced investment in visitor experiences at Milford maximises added value from our tourism offerings.
4. **Deliver better public services:** Cutting red tape to make it easier to invest and grow. The current decision making process is stalling investment in critical infrastructure and needs to be modernised to utilise local knowledge. Decisions are best made with the involvement of all parties at a local level.
5. **Deliver modern, reliable infrastructure:** There is a need to make good decisions about how to plan, invest, deliver and manage our infrastructure. New Zealand ranks in the bottom 10% of high-income countries for the quality and efficiency of our infrastructure investments. Our solution for Milford will ensure greater stability of infrastructure priorities to help New Zealand maintain our most nationally significant asset.
6. **Improve the quality of Government spending and regulation.** The current Milford Opportunities Project is not fit for purpose. \$18m has been spent to date and we are no closer to an outcome for Milford. Decisions on the future of Milford need to include local businesses and groups who know and understand the region best.

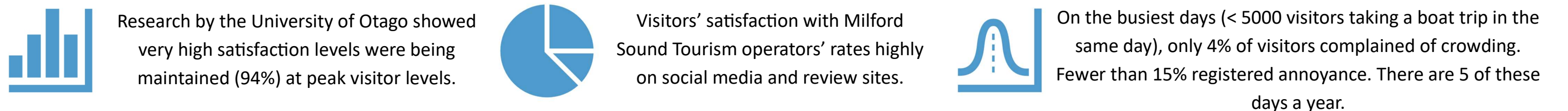
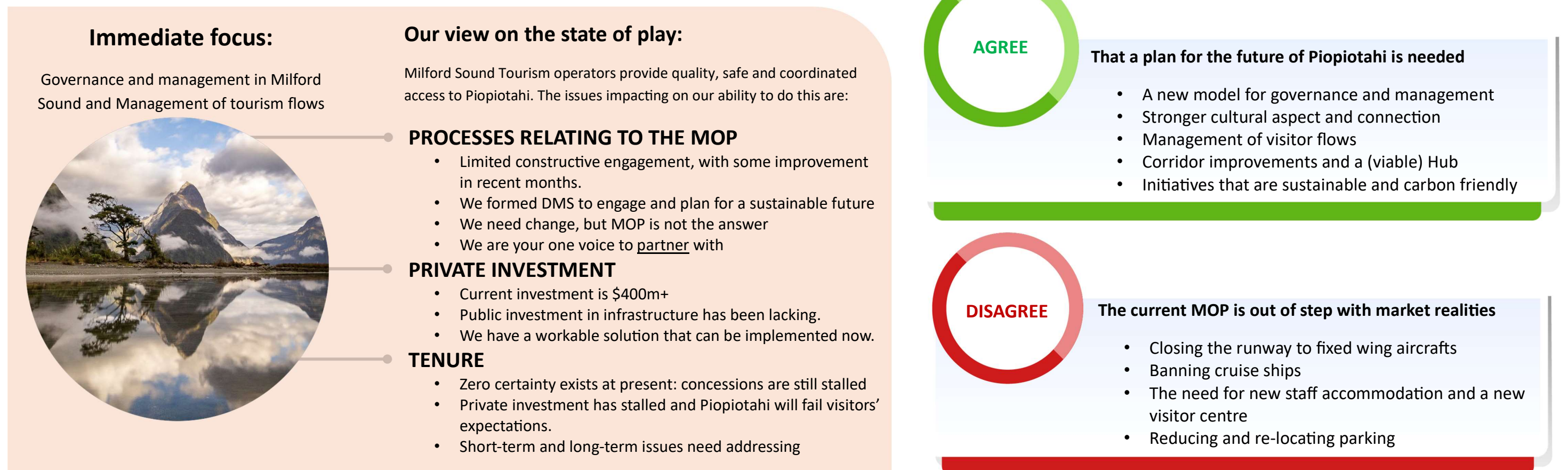
Problem	Solution	Implementation considerations
Concessions There is a backlog of concessions that DOC have been working on for 18 months (some are up to 10 years overdue) with no clear progress or process. There is zero certainty which is impacting private investment. DOC are also taking an inconsistent approach to expired concession renewals, creating further uncertainty.	- Clearly articulate how DOC should give effect to the Treaty of Waitangi when processing Milford Sound concession applications. - Establish clear targets for DOC to meet in processing the backlog of concession applications. Set up a new decision-making model to make rapid concession decisions. - Group up and make decisions on similar types of concessions e.g. related concessions or those in a geographic location. - Incorporate the principles from the Limited Supply Agreement from 2008/2009 as these remain valid.	The Minister could appoint a board to make fast-track/rapid recommendations on concessions with independent expertise and full participation from applicants and stakeholders. The Minister could also make decisions in consultation with the Ministers for Tourism and Regional Development. DOC concessionaire reference group should review the 2008/2009 agreement
Infrastructure In some cases, critical infrastructure is at risk of failure. We can progress some projects immediately.	- Infrastructure at Milford Sound needs to be upgraded and improved. Many of the required upgrades could be privately funded if regulatory permissions were grants. - Integrate the sensible bits of the Masterplan in the right way, for example Destination Milford Sound supports proposed development of the Knobs Flat and Kiosk Creek sites, including food and accommodation offerings and an information centre.	Businesses need to have confidence that concessions will have decisions made in a timely manner and that further investment in Milford is coming.
Governance and management Businesses have been shut out of governance processes despite asking repeatedly for a seat at the table. Without business operator support an enduring solution for Milford Sound Piopiotahi will be difficult to achieve.	- In the short term, create a new governance and management model made up of local businesses, industry, iwi and stakeholders to move solutions forward. - In the longer term, create legislation empowering the future governance of Milford Sound.	This will make sure solutions are collaborative and consultation happens before decisions are made. Precedent exists in a number of government agencies and models. Legislation change is not necessary to enable this short-term.
Natural hazard risk mitigation There is a lack of scientific information in relation to actual tsunami risk – something MOP should have addressed at the onset.	Coordinate research. Once understood, plan for the infrastructure and mitigation measures around known risks and scientific information gained.	Allow private sector investment with clear knowledge of the natural hazard risks.
Fee The recent announced increase in the international visitor levy (IVL) of 185%, the MOP proposal of \$50 - \$100 Milford access fee (potentially leading to other at place levies), plus DOC concession fees is at high risk of deterring visitors to Milford Sound. Concession and infrastructure fees are currently collected from Milford operators.	- Ideally, there should be one fee for all covering the IVL, DOC fees and Milford Sound access fees. - If there is not one fee, there should be a reasonable fee to generate revenue needed for the necessary infrastructure.	Fees must reflect activity and be consistent and realistic. Officials should analyse what fees are currently being paid, where they are collected and how fees are spent.

The Enduring Solution for Milford

Opportunity	Solution	Outcomes/Considerations
Park and Ride – New	Establishing a park and ride solution starting from Knobs Flat/Kiosk Creek which will limit the number of cars and camper vans allowed to travel into Milford Sound each day to pre-booked available car/camper park spaces.	Significantly improved road safety by reducing private vehicle numbers. Improving the carbon footprint. Enhance visitor experience. Better management of carparking in Milford.
Knobs Flat Development – <i>Repurposed</i>	Development of improved facilities at Knobs Flat including accommodation/camping ground/café/interpretation and other visitor activities eg walks. Knobs Flat is the logical point for park and ride hence improved facilities required.	Improved visitor options for accommodation in the area. This would improve the flow of visitors to Milford Sound, enabling those staying to travel to Milford earlier in the morning or later in the day. Potential location for additional staff housing.
Existing Visitor Terminal – <i>Repurposed</i>	A repurposing of the existing terminal is timely and there are plans that have been drawn up to this end. Since the building was originally constructed there have been changes in customer demands and preferences, with significant bookings now being made away from Milford and the opportunity to reduce administration and selling activities in the terminal exists enabling a repurposing to provide greater visitor space and amenities eg. Viewing areas, souvenirs and light refreshments	Providing a world class visitor experience enhanced.
Visitor Centre – <i>New</i>	If deemed necessary, a new visitor centre could be established behind the existing visitor centre (over the existing coach park).	Visitor flows will be more harmonious with one drop off point in Milford at one central location where the visitor will enjoy the new facility and experiences carefully integrated with the landscape setting and the cultural identity of Ngai Tahu to be expressed in the built environment. It is located at a critical central location, for those passengers about to depart on a boat cruise, or experience the proposed Bowen Falls Experiences. The visitor centre will be a place to learn about the wonders of Piopiotahi Milford Sound.
Foreshore Enhancements – Returned to Nature – <i>Repurposed</i>	Relocation of the foreshore public carpark to (point 4 below) and relocation of a significant portion of the existing coach park (point 10 below) will allow the foreshore to be a more naturalised edge.	Fulfils a long term aspiration of the Department of conservation.
Multi Level Carpark/Tsunami Evacuation Point – <i>New</i>	It is proposed that all existing visitor carparking is condensed into a multi-level carpark that is integrated within the landscape. The new space will be capable of parking 250 cars at once (and over 500 during the course of a day), which will be pre-booked during the season. The facility will also function as a large refuge with safety features that will offer protection for visitors and staff in the event of an AF8 event and possible resulting Tsunami. A rooftop helipad will also be constructed for emergency evacuation landings.	Consolidated parking location, improved health and safety outcomes.

Existing Public Toilets - <i>Upgrade</i>	Built around 2000, these facilities are utilised by many visitors as they arrive at Piopiotahi Milford Sound as they are the central to the existing carparks. The facility is in need of an upgrade/refurbishment.	Enhanced visitor experience.
Hotel/Discover Milford Sound Café – <i>New or Redeveloped</i>	The establishment of a new or redeveloped hotel and café on the site of the existing Hotel and Café. Several plans have been proposed however DOC has been unwilling to make any decisions regarding this redevelopment.	Enhanced visitor experience and better utilization of prime land.
Barren Peak Spur Walkway – <i>Upgrade/New</i>	An upgrade of the existing track leading up to the spur is proposed for able-bodied visitors. The track would connect to two new treetop canopy viewing structures that are carefully configured to minimise removal of mature Beech forest.	Enhanced visitor experience.
Existing Runway remains where it is – <i>Upgrade</i>	Retain the runway and upgrade if required. Fixed wing flights to Milford provide a highly regarded transport option to Milford and assists in spreading passenger loads into the mornings and later afternoon.	There is no compelling case for closure and no evidence base. No work has been done on the impacts of closure.
Airport Terminal/Facilities – <i>New</i>	Build a small terminal so that passengers have somewhere to shelter from the elements and sandflies, rest if infirm while waiting for a shuttle, offer safe separation from vehicles and provide adequate access to toilet facilities.	Enhanced visitor experience.
Coach Park – Little Tahiti or other location this way – <i>New</i>	Relocate the coach park away from the visitor terminal in order to avoid congestion. The coaches will drop passengers at the re-purposed visitor terminal and then relocate out too Little Tahiti or another similar location. Drivers room facilities will need to be established at the new site.	Improved H&S outcomes and enhanced visitor experience. Allows existing land to be used for alternative purposes. Allows for growth in coach numbers to compensate for reduced private vehicles.
Coach Park – <i>Repurposed</i>	10-12 premium coach parks are retained in the area of the existing coach park, which utilised and paid for by permitted coaches.	Enhanced visitor experience.
Redevelopment of the existing hydro electric power scheme.	This initiative is needed to future proof hydro electric to assist in the growing demands of electricity and the long term aim to have zero carbon emissions vessels and coaches.	Needed for modern, reliable infrastructure.
Water Based Viewing Deck – <i>New</i>	The existing foreshore walk will be extended along a boardwalk out toward freshwater basin.	Enhanced visitor experience.
Milford Community Centre – <i>New</i>	The community centre has been a planned project of the Milford Community Trust for many years, whilst they built up capital to be able to fully fund the project. It was recognised that there needed to be a facility available for staff to hold functions, events and congregate in a social environment.	A much needed community facility.
Existing Staff Housing Remains – <i>No Change</i>	\$15 million was spent by central government in raising the Cleddau Delta to provide safer accommodation for staff housing, along with considerable investment in staff housing by	Relocation of staff housing would be problematic due to lack of suitable alternative sites and significant capital investment.

	each of the operating companies. Multi-storey accommodation within the existing area should be allowed along with the removal of any substandard housing.	
Long Term Boat Trailed Parking – <i>New</i>	If deemed necessary, the utilisation of this proposed area would make sense for a long term boat trailed parking by recreational fishermen.	Recognizes the increasing number of recreational fisherman using Milford Sound.
Short Term Boat Trailer Parking – <i>No Change</i>	Boat trailer parking should remain where it currently is, and parking could be more formalised to use the available space more efficiently.	Recognizes the increasing number of recreational fisherman using Milford Sound.
Recreational Boat Ramp – <i>No Change</i>	The location of the concrete dual access boat ramp should be retained.	Maintain status quo to allow integrated use.
Commercial Fisheries – <i>No Change</i>	Commercial fisheries area is retained and no change other than health and safety enhancements.	Maintain status quo to allow integrated use.
Bowen Falls Walkway – <i>New</i>	A new floating pontoon walkway is proposed to avoid rock fall hazards, linking to the existing track that takes visitors through the bush to Cemetery Point for unimpeded views out to Piopiotahi Milford Sound, and a boardwalk structure at the base of the dramatic Bowen Falls.	Enhanced visitor experience by providing visitors more options.
Fiordland National Park Entrance and Eglinton reveal	Providing a sense of arrival into the Fiordland National Park, and facilities at the Eglinton Valley.	Enhanced visitors experience.
Transport/Walking System- <i>Repurposed</i>	The introduction of an autonomous electric monorail (or similar concept) alongside the current walking route from the Milford Lodge, via Park and Ride, Airport and Visitor Terminal would cater many visitors needs.	Enhanced visitor experience, advanced technology would be required to enable this to occur (eg. Overall shortage of power at Milford).



Our solution for Piopiotahi provides integrated outcomes across 5 areas

New facilities, upgrades and repurposing of many existing facilities. Including:

- Infrastructure of scale: airport terminal, a multi-level carpark and a community centre (all if financially viable)
- Upgrades to hotel/café, existing public toilets and the airport runway
- Repurpose the existing visitor terminal, coach parks and existing carparks.
- We are ready to start on the above as soon as possible.
- This solution has the potential to offer millions of dollars in cost savings and will result in broader and more integrated outcomes.

What we need from Government		
Genuine collaboration <i>Work with us to progress solutions</i>	Security of tenure <i>Short term results; long term fixes</i>	Investment in public infrastructure <i>Targeted investment, with certainty</i>

DMS solution for the future of Piopiotahi

