

Good Morning,

My name is Roger Hambleton.

My Involvement—Since the 2016 earthquake I have been on committees, first the East Coast Protection Group , then RAWE. I wrote the Code of Conduct with consultation with beach users. Immediately after the earthquake I was involved with returning paua to the sea.

I have assisted in putting markers and signs on the beach to encourage responsible behaviour . I have spent many hours talking to vehicle users and encouraging good practice.

The East Coast Protection Group.

This was created as a result of the public meeting at the Ward town hall in Jan 2017. It was proposed by Mark Wills as a way to find common ground so that we could all share the beach. This did not happen and I resigned at the end of 2018, frustrated by the lack of positive action with members on one side of the table only interested in banning vehicles.

The Code of Practice.

This was written as a result of discussions with other beach users. The aim was to encourage a standard of behaviour which would allow all beach users to share the beach without encroaching on other beach users rights and enjoyment and to protect the environment. Those who supported this were asked to sign the agreement and commit to this.

Approximately 222 people agreed to comply with the code, most of whom were people who had accessed the Cape at sometime in vehicles. The code worked,

The guide signs and markers.

These were another method used to encourage beach users to stay below the high tide line. This was a RAWWE initiative. By looking at the vehicle marks on the beaches, this has worked.

The sharing of beaches.

The beaches are a public domain and as such should be shared by all New Zealanders. They are not the property of adjoining landowners and our rights should not be eroded by tourist development. Vehicle users have consistently shown courtesy to other beach users over the least 20 years that I have been enjoying this area. Walkers have on many occasions been assisted when they have suffered mishaps.

The evidence.

There have been many claims of damage. Before restricting public rights, credible evidence must be produced to support this action. This has not been done. Photos have been produced showing birds, seals, animals and plants. Of the hundreds I have seen in the last five years, only one shows damage to a plant, a motorcycle track over a purilla mat plant. No evidence has been produced showing where vehicles have run over birds or their nests. Photos of wheel marks on beaches do not show where the wheel marks have been washed away by the next tide. Speed of vehicles has never been substantiated. Experience shows that 50kph to be reasonable and is the existing norm.

Vehicles and numbers.

The vehicles used are largely secondhand farm bikes and some older 4wheel drive vehicles, not high performance machines. They are tools to transport fishermen and their equipment and sight seers, not racing machines. The numbers quoted in some reports are wildly inaccurate with the best recorded figures available from Bill Matthews, a long term camper who has kept a reasonably accurate diary. From my observations, the numbers were increased by sightseers after the earthquake but have since decreased.

Safety.

No evidence has been produced of accidents. No evidence has been produced of vehicles versus pedestrians. No evidence has been produced of vehicles versus horses. No evidence has been produced of vehicles versus bikes. As far as I am aware, other than minor incidents where people have fallen off their bikes, no accidents have been recorded. The council reports do not show any accidents occurring. Safety is definitely not an issue.

The beach in front of Marfells Beach Camp.

The people using vehicles in this area are not fishermen or sightseers, but are people using vehicles as toys. This is the main area used by families and children playing on the beach. The use of vehicles between the proposed boat launching ramps and in front of the camp is inappropriate. I support the closure of this area to vehicles.

Boat launching areas.

I see no problem with Marfells Beach proposals but I consider the Ward Beach launching area to be down right dangerous. I note that there is no hazard assessment report from the Harbour Master in any reports from Council.

The area of the Proposal.

I feel that that the councils reports include a lot of land where the bylaw does not apply.eg private land and DOC reserves. A large proportion of the endangered flora and fauna quoted by council is found only in these areas which is not covered by the bylaw and where vehicles do not have access.

This area has been a valuable source of recreation, kaimoana and enjoyment to myself and my whanau. At the age of 73, if the bylaw is passed I will lose this. I have not broken any laws, I have not killed any endangered species, I have not run over any endangered plants. My vehicles are legal including registration and helmets .I do not deserve to lose an important part of my life activities.

I believe that a bylaw is not the answer to the problem, education and sharing is. Some restrictions are appropriate but a ban on vehicles is not. It is a gross intrusion into the rights of the people who use this area .

Thankyou.

To all users of the beach area Marfells beach to long Point.

As you are probably aware a local landowner/ commercial enterprise would like all vehicles prohibited from using the beach. This would result in the end of recreational use of the beach for fishing, diving and other activities for many people unless they have a private arrangement with the landowner for access over his property. It is alleged that this is to prevent environmental damage to flora and fauna caused by vehicles. The landowner claims that this damage has been made worse since the 2016 earthquake. To assist their claim they have enlisted the support of Forest and Bird, Professor David Shiel of the Canterbury University Marine faculty and others. Forest and Bird have already asked the Marlborough District Council to ban all vehicles from the beach subject to a long term solution being introduced.

It is our view that the only sign of the passing of vehicles is the tyre marks. Our vehicles have been accessing the area for the last forty years and it is to be noted that-

1. The seals are still there,
2. The birds are still there.
3. Spiders, lizards and insects are still there.
4. There is no reliable evidence to show that numbers have been reduced due to vehicle use.

Our vehicles do not run over the maram grass or sand dunes with the exception of a site approximately 30m by 30m where traditionally cray pots have been stored. The suggestion that rubbish has been left behind is not correct, many users of the beach regularly collect rubbish and dispose of it.

It has been suggested that some people have ridden on to private property. This may have occurred but those responsible have been spoken too and discouraged by other beach users.

Legal situation.

At the present time vehicles are allowed on the beach. All vehicles must adhere to the road code as all beaches and riverbeds are included under the Transport Act. These rules could be changed by DOC or the MDC by the introduction of a Bylaw.

If the vehicle users follow the proposed Code of Conduct we believe most of the claims would be addressed. By signing you agree to follow the rules in the code and by doing so you will help to protect and preserve this part of our environment for future generations.

This code will be an interim measure until a more permanent solution is found by DOC and MDC.

The signed codes will be summarised and presented to DOC, MDC, East Coast Protection Group, and a copy will also be circulated to other interested groups, eg Forest and Bird, 4x4 club, Marlborough Recreational fishing, Marlborough tramping club and any other group that share the beach.

Voluntary code of conduct for vehicles using the area Marfells beach to Long Point.

1. All vehicles must travel below the high tide line.
2. No vehicle is to access private land without permission from the landowners.
3. All vehicles must give right of way and maximum separation from all other beach users.
4. Passing birds and seals should be done quietly and carefully with maximum separation.
5. Vehicles on rock shelves should avoid rock pools and marine growth.
6. A voluntary speed limit should be observed as follows -
50kph on open beach
25 kph rounding the cape from 1 km on the north side of the lighthouse to 1km on the southern side of the lighthouse.
7. Cray pots and fishing equipment should only be stored in marked areas approved by DOC.
8. All rubbish to be removed and disposed of responsibly.

Name

Signed

Phone

E mail

Address

To the Commissioners.

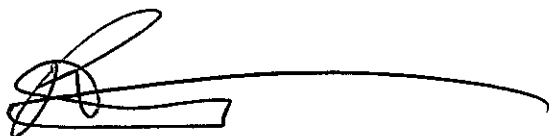
I have brought to the attention of the Mayor, that persons attempting to make a submission on line were unable to do this. It was the unclear instructions on the Council website that gave rise to the problem. It must be realised that a lot of those attempting to submit are not especially computer literate. Because of Covid, the alternative method of hand delivery to the Council offices was compromised.

Within two hours of the list of submitters becoming available, we identified 18 people who were unable to have their submission accepted. Of those most believed that their submission had been received by Council, sadly this did not happen. If you feel that the matter should be investigated, we are able to supply names and contact details.

We believe that there could be many more affected on both sides of the discussion.

We believe that these members of our community have the right to be heard, particularly as the number of people for and against has apparently got some significance.

Roger Hambleton RAWE.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized initial 'R' followed by a long horizontal stroke that ends in a small hook.