

Milford Residents update

29 August 2023

Introductions

- Welcome / health and safety.
- Introductions and whakatauki.
- Session is being recorded to support a written summary for MOP's website.
- Permission to photograph attendees for website.
- Journalist attending via MS Teams.
- Purpose for the meeting to provide an update on Milford Opportunities since our last visit in early June 2023.
- Always keen to hear feedback and we want to hear the range of perspectives.

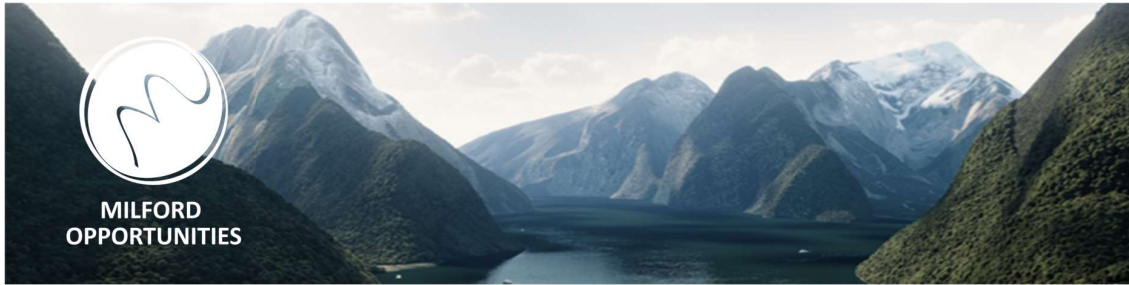
Update from Milford Opportunities

- **Phil Tisch and Lizzy Sutcliffe – Comms and Engagement.** In June 2024 we will put up recommendations and the business case to cabinet and they will make some decisions about the future.
- **Tania Short and Jock Edmondson – Visitor Experience.**
- **John Twidle – Lead Heritage and Ngāi Tahu Partnership.**
- **Courtney Hart and Tom Hopkins - Transport and Infrastructure Team.**

Feedback

MOP Tom

- We are building on the first stages of the project; five contracts are out to market for tenders in terms of feasibility testing including Landscape Values; Economic Impact Assessment model; Ecological Assessment; Walking and Cycleway; and the Energy Assessment. The assessments will help determine the feasibility and placement of infrastructure. You may see various consultants working, we expect that as we start to learn more, we will want to touch base with you again. We are aware that you are heading into a busy period.



MOP John

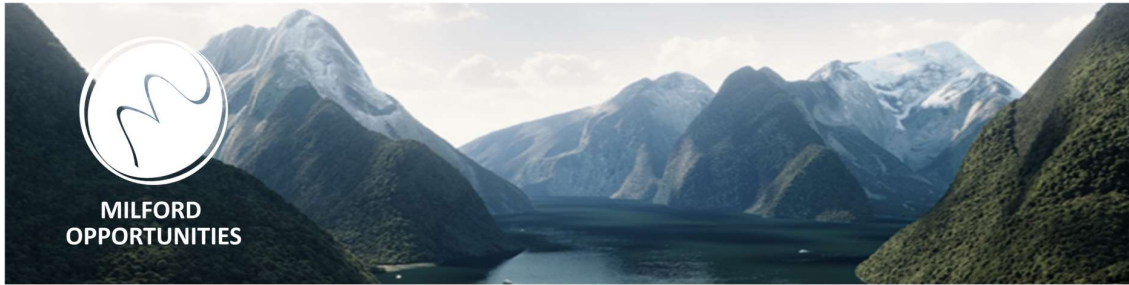
- One of the few locals at the MOP office in the town, the touch point for a lot of local stuff. If you have something on your mind that you want to express those thoughts, the hub is always open. People feel a passion that is sometimes hard to articulate in a meeting setting, so I encourage people to come in and share what is on their minds.
- Iwi are a big part of the story, they have rights and expectations. Ngai Tahu are central to MOP. It is vitally important that we all understand that so we can learn from it, respect it, and do the right thing going forward, understand what might be appropriate, what might not be appropriate at certain places, understanding how we can offer another few layers to the experience, the stories that historical stories. The creation story is fundamental to Māori, currently they have very little presence in Piopiotahi. The visible presence of their rights and expectations - we will be exploring.
- Acknowledging and honouring the Treaty and the Treaty Settlement Act.
- I know you are all passionate about this place, that is fantastic. It is about the passion and the sincerity. Sometimes that passion is extremely hard to articulate, so again. There are no wrong thoughts. They are all valid.

Te Anau community member

- We have lakefront Lodge in Te Anau and have a lot of people that visit that want to know a lot more about Māori history. It would be beneficial to a lot of operators like Southern discoveries, Real New Zealand. I know there is a lot more Māori history in the area, not only in Milford and Martin's Bay, but also Te Anau and Manapouri. It is so beneficial to the area.
- I love the project you have set up and I have read the plan and it needs to happen. I used to do the freight run to Milford, we need a lot of change in there and the plan covers it well. I take my hat off to you all for effort you have put into it. Something needs to change, not only in Milford but also Te Anau.
- Keep up the excellent work, but certainly like to know we bit more about our Māori history.

MOP John

- That is really uplifting to hear that sort of support. When it comes to the Māori history, we have a specialist consultant doing Iwi heritage and Ngāi Tahu heritage. It's from the beginning of time at this place and within the Iwi heritage workstream we will be developing more clarity about what was appropriate and what is inappropriate at various places, and they will come from stories that have been shared or held close, but we will be talking with the people who understand what is appropriate. That is also for the infrastructure and placement.
- It feeds nicely to what you might have seen in some of the documentation about the cultural heritage, cultural narrative. We are working hand in hand with Ngāi Tahu and encourage them



to share their stories where appropriate. If you go online and see the masterplan, the introduction by Sir Tipene, Muriel Johnstone, Bubba Thompson, and others. You will see that Sir Tipene makes it clear that that Ngāi Tahu are happy to share the stories. They will always be the proprietors of their own stories, and they want to get themselves into a position where they can be telling their stories.

- If I were to look for the crystal ball within 12 months or two years, that sort of time frame, we'll end up with stories that we can start to share and not just share amongst ourselves but share with the visitors that come to this place. We are all about adding a layer of richness to this experience which currently does not exist.

MOP Phil

- We have spoken to lots of businesses in Te Anau particular. Our focus will now include Queenstown. To date, our priority has been Te Anau, we need to understand all perspectives. We also want to understand what the rest of New Zealand and think and feel about the masterplan. We are planning wider sessions with the Queenstown Chamber of Commerce, Rental Car Assn, Tourism Industry Aotearoa. We have heard from Fiordland Marine Guardians, partner agencies on how the marine area and the rest of the Fiordland area could be impacted.
- We will be hosting webinars for a range of stakeholders.

MOP Courtney

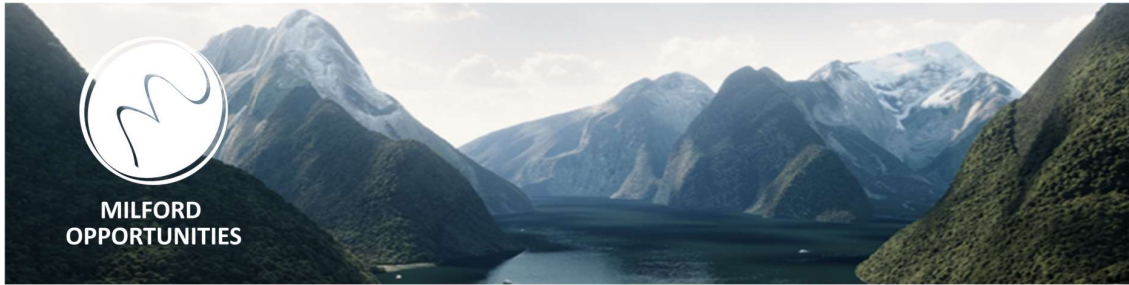
- We have finalised the tender documents to ensure that they are concise and asking the right questions to inform the information gathering. We do not want to be redoing work that has already been done.

Community – Accommodation

- This is my first meeting I have been to, the accommodation that is planned down in the village, is that still planned to be like a block? I do not think that there is anybody in this room that wants this.

MOP

- We have heard a lot of feedback on accommodation. What we heard loud and clear from the last session was that people need and want separation, spaces to break out to socialise and to exercise. From a social perspective, what is proposed in the masterplan was a multistorey building and that does not fit your needs.
- That is our job, to test the feasibility of it, is it physically possible, testing it on a range of fronts, including where you can build things. All the natural hazard and geotechnical things to consider. Back in stage two, there were studies completed around the risks, risk of a big earthquake. Part of the thinking was, could we design structures that would prevent mass loss



of life in a big event? Obviously, the easiest way of doing this is to build one bumper structure, right? Good design can consider the sorts of things that we heard.

- If the accommodation proposed in the masterplan is not feasible or desirable, what are next best options, what is going to cost. This work will start to shape into the Business Case.
- When we get the consultants on board, we will be briefing them, and this is the feedback that we are providing them. The feedback that we have heard from you.
- At the end of the day they, Cabinet will decide if they like what has been proposed or not. We will be putting up recommendations, including what we have heard informing recommendations. So, we are not making decisions, we just we just providing high quality advice showing the decision makers so they can make a good decision.

Community

- Are you looking at alternatives now?

MOP

- That is out with consultants and that is what they are feasibility testing.

Community

- I have lived in that style (multi storey building) in Austria and I do not think it is going to keep long term staff wanting to stay there.

MOP

- Last time we were here we had a tour of the village, we got to see the range of accommodation that exists.

Community

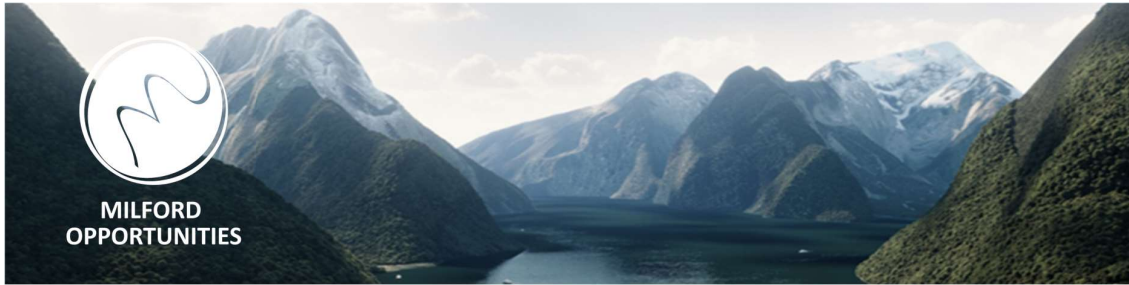
- That is what it all comes down to. Do you want to live in it? We all want different things or have diverse needs.

MOP

- Can you tell us a bit more about where you lived? You said that you lived in a complex? And someone else lived in a student complex?

Community

- My experience was overseas, I was there to party. I was there for a season, a lot of young people, there was a building of five stories and different companies were on each story. It was



just like party central. It was fine for a season, but not as a home. The hotel provided meals, the place had a tiny kitchen on each floor that you could make a cup of tea.

Community – Energy

- I was interested about energy, is there is anything that has been done there?

MOP

- We just brought someone on at the start of this week, early days and I will be speaking to you later about what we can do. Energy is a challenging bit of work. What we have heard from some operators this year is that they want to see more people getting into buses. The journey using current technology could mean battery-operated buses. Stantec are the consultants looking at that and future energy technologies, charging stations etc. What else is available worldwide.
- Q. Isn't Milford Village the second biggest consumer of diesel in New Zealand behind Stewart Island. I had read a report out of Southland, Manapouri power station, Ti Wai smelter what they could do re energy. Looking at Stewart Island and other systems from smaller places in the region, how they get their energy.

Community

- A. No, that is wrong and will call it! The genset has had 250 hours since I have been here, that's been two and a half years. We have done a major upgrade on the hydro. It was cutting in and out with frequency problems.
- The genset works out to be about 8 hours running every two months. We do a routine shut down to clean tanks. I checked it today, it is efficient.

Community

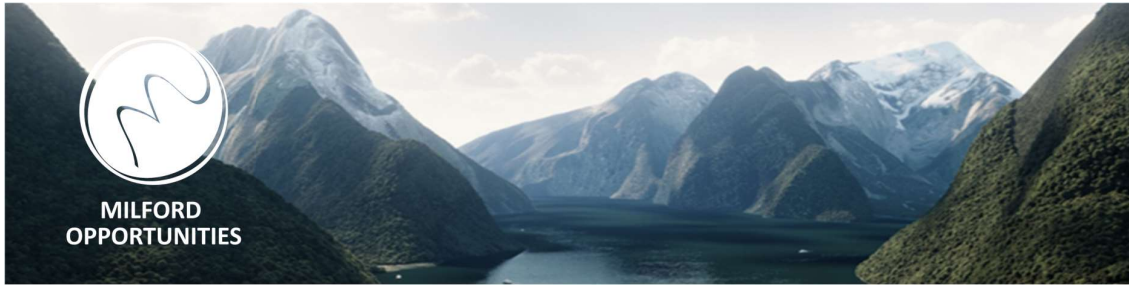
- I have an energy question. We are all about the future being electrical, but to supercharge a Tesla takes a lot of electricity, so is it possible?

MOP

- That's exactly what the energy work is about, testing the staff accommodation, the charging points, the island system. What you have here has had an impact but it doesn't enable growth.

Community

- Energy is temporal and climate change is a real thing. We have the hydro renewable energy here but I am interested in knowing what direction you are going because it is about the whole infrastructure. Interested in how you get power into Eglinton.

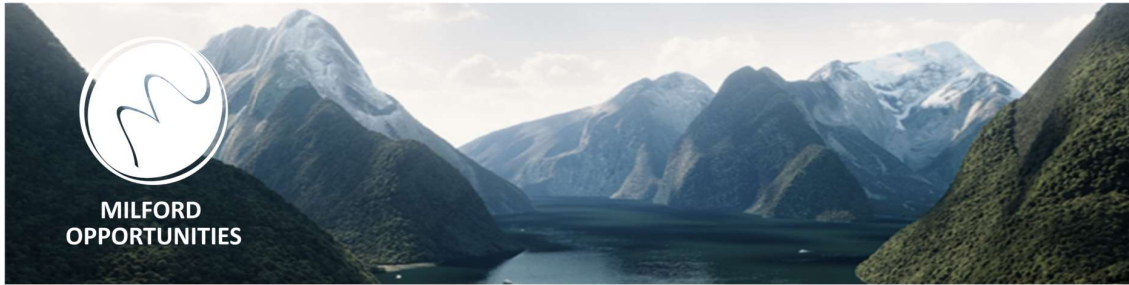


- I would be disappointed if we turned this into commercial place, detracting from the beauty of the place and the remoteness. We are passionate people because this is where we live, what we live in.
- We need to consider future technologies, blue skies and not just what's available now. Think 50 years into the future. Consider charging spots, some tech is too futuristic, green aviation, not realistic for a vertical take-off.
- New Zealand is stuck on electric, we need to consider hydrogen, biofuel, more hydro generation to power busses and other vehicles.
- Milford Hydropower has vastly improved efficiency in recent years and is no longer a large consumer of diesel. If Ti Wai closes where might Manapouri's power, go? There are limits to how much power can be provided.
- We need to consider all options but there will be a hard limit. Climate change is real and last summer was dry, the bush is dry, fire risk.

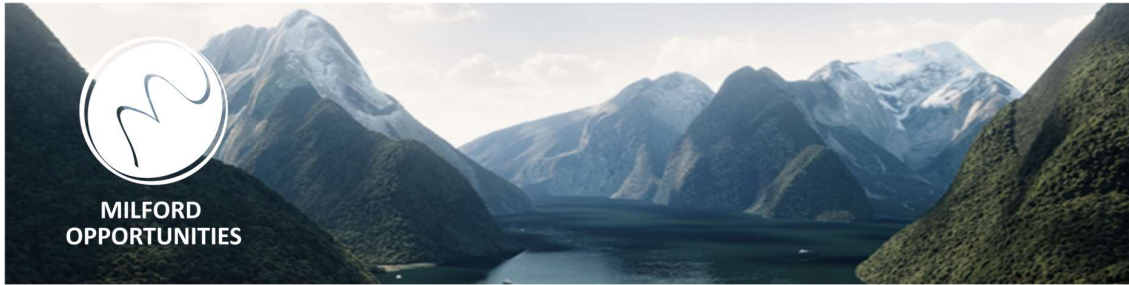
- MOP**
- And we have also heard that what is considered needs to fit in with nature. What goes in here needs to be appropriate.
 - Charging an access fee to support the things that are important, such as nature. People come here because they want to see nature. In terms of conservation, the proposal is to fund more conservation work, conservation goals and outcomes. One of the things we have got to do is understand what conservation work is taking place currently and how much does it cost, what are we trying to achieve, what are the longer-term goals that were working towards?
 - People come here for nature because it is a fantastic place, and good for business and they want to see it improve not get worse, so part of the case for change that will be put to the Government of the day, will be to outline the sort of things that this project could fund.

- Community - Airport**
- We could stall on some stuff that is very important to us now. Vertical take of aircraft etc, experimental flights, that is 15 years ahead of us. Don't stall a lot of good stuff that we could be doing now to try and meet something that is just not available for another 30 years. Aircraft etc.

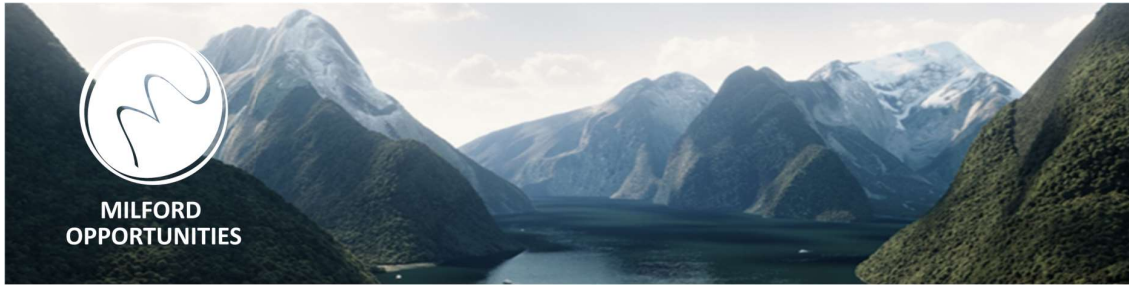
- MOP**
- The masterplan includes a set of aspirational goals, no matter where you are along the 50 year time line, the values, pillars should be considered in thinking. The masterplan is about those fundamental questions. It might be that we can do some stuff the day after tomorrow. It might be 5, 10 or 25 years out, but use the pillars in the masterplan and use it as your mechanism for understanding. That is the right thing to do.



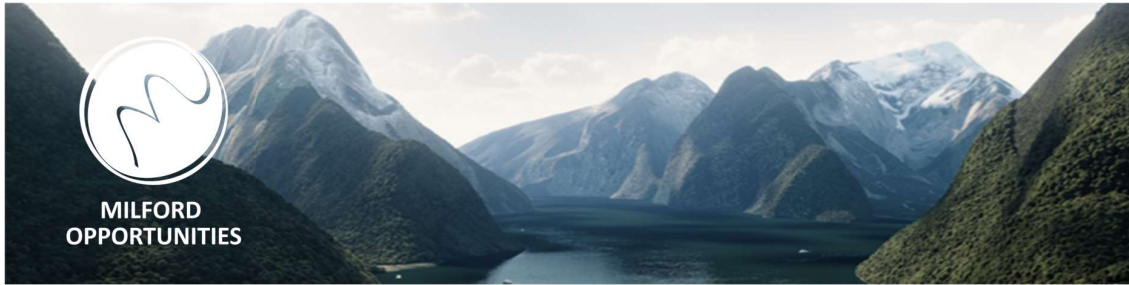
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It might be that we look to sustainable transport options - and in a year or so they're still not there, but we can still push sustainable as far as we can, and we can push for other things that may feed into that. They all fit on that timeline somewhere.
<p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In NZ we are very stuck on the electricity thing. There are more interesting ones. We are narrow minded. Vehicles that have electricity have certainly got major limitations, and environmental risks. • Hydrogen - studies have shown that it is something we should be developing the whole lot more, it still requires a lot of energy to produce but we have to think more laterally. Bring hydrogen in and use it. We are stuck on electric which is counterproductive.
<p>MOP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team that we have engaged is a Canadian company, but they're worldwide. They have experts, and we will be calling on them at some point for their expertise.
<p>Community – Tracks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interested in the work done on tracks and upgrading tracks, having a bike track in and tracks around Mistake Creek.
<p>MOP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work underway on all those walking and cycling proposals, hut locations, bridges, alternative locations like in the countess range. We went up Mistake Creek only today, familiarisation trip. We are looking at alternate proposals in the Countess Range, Cascade Creek to Te Anau Downs. • Another proposal looks at The Chasm down the true left to Cleddau bridge. • Depends on what the transport model comes up with.
<p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My big worry is a model that works for the lifestyle of the people around here and that it is not too big. It is a small village. It is quiet. People come here to find something very natural, quite simple. For me to put a big building and a gondola is not right. It is more about the spirit both for visitors and the staff. • Will be disappointed if the experience is commercialised. • Reluctance about more visitors staying overnight - Overnight the place takes a breath. Like now the weka can be heard running around in the carpark. The locals love having place to themselves after 5pm and road closure days are the best even though we know we need the visitors. Everyone who lives here is all about nature.



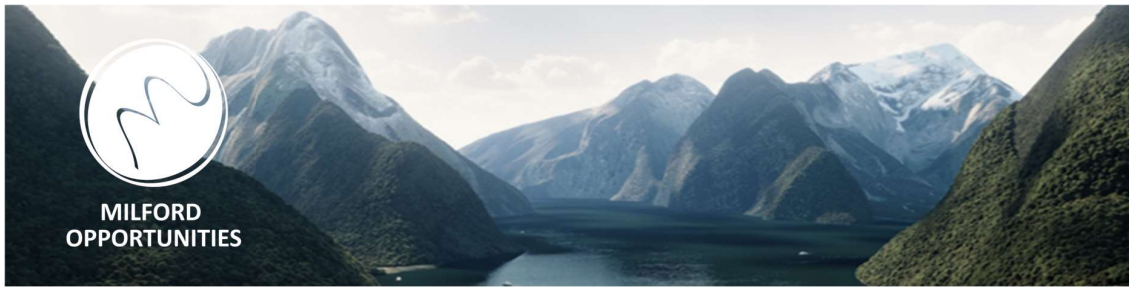
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to protect the diverse community. • If we are no longer happy, we will sell them a poor product. Visitors often comment on the happiness of the staff, on the lifestyle “we are happy to be here, and we lift each other up.”
<p>MOP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The masterplan and the concepts have been drawn up by an architect. They are concepts, it is not actually a gondola, what was proposed was a vertical lift on the penstock. But we hear what you are saying and what you will see is your feedback on the website.
<p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem is you got two lots of tours. You have the one wants to come and stay here; the types of guests enjoy that sort of thing. Then you have the bus loads of people who come, and they go to sleep on the way back to Queenstown.
<p>MOP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have heard from Regional Tourism Operators, what they are doing, that is interesting. • Regenerative tourism is the latest buzz word, doing tourism better. And if you think about sustainable, it is like wherever we are at now, we're just going to maintain it, regenerative is actually forcing us to take a step further, what do we need to do to be better than that? • Make the system work for us, that does not just mean better for businesses or better for the environment, but for better for the community, better for all. • I know that that is like an idealistic kind of thing to be reaching for, but it is key for us, getting the visitor experience right. • For example, iwi in Tongariro have asked for us to not have a Queens Street Transaction, because they said we don't want to see rolling numbers constantly increasing. They want you to engage with your visitors. So, they are not saying how they want you to do it, but they are asking operators to engage with that process. • One thing which is important is the view of the host community, and how you want to see a place managed. And this plan speaks to that well. But what is important is that these conversations are feeding back into the plan. The business case is not just measured on economic benefits, it is measured on social benefits, environmental benefits, the whole package. Your views are very important on how you want to host the visitors it's fundamental. • The Regional Tourism Operators are thinking more about attracting people that support the communities they visit, so what are the qualities of this place and who would we want to attract that would support those values. Current state is that most people come on a bus from Queenstown. Is it that you want to see in the future?
<p>Community</p>



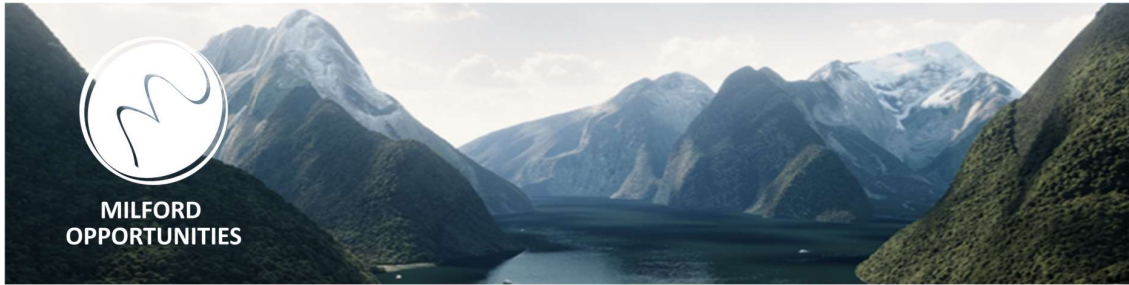
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The way around that is bring people into Te Anau and stay there, have a full day experience from there. Queenstown might not like that approach.
<p>MOP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A tourism survey that was done recently, that shows 90% of New Zealanders are happy to see tourism coming back, but the anomaly was the Queenstown area. I went to an event last week run by shaping our future, there was twenty people there, but they were saying they didn't want to see tourism numbers go beyond 2019 numbers. What that means is those visitors need to go somewhere else. I think you will find, a subset of the of the Queenstown community would be happy for visitors go to other places like Te Anau. • The Masterplan talks about charging an access fee to create a funding stream etc. There are different charging methodologies that encourage certain behaviours. So, what kind of behaviours do you want versus other ones.
<p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queenstown is organising the trips and that is part of the problem
<p>MOP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That is current state. I do not think you have to accept the current state as being what is going to happen going forward. We could reject what we currently have or aspects of it, there may be stuff that we don't like but there may be something we want to keep, and we want to build on that.
<p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are a gemstone of New Zealand by a long shot, but we need the money from the tourists.
<p>MOP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They could be different people with different values and different behaviours as you said and therefore there are different tourists, and they might behave differently. It does not show the value monetary or any other sense of value as any less, it's just a shift. We are not talking about capping numbers now, but we're wondering about what our visitor experience might be.
<p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whatever Government is elected in October needs an economy that is working. Agriculture has been knocked so hard lately, so they are really depending on tourism to keep the economy going. What I would like to say is that we really need to start promoting Te Anau now and Milford as destinations.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queenstown is our adventure capital, and it always will be. We need to promote Te Anau as the gateway to Fiordland. I think it is important for Te Anau now and Milford because we are in Southland, promote the Catlins and the southern scenic route. We really need to work together, which I know Great South is trying to do. • Te Anau needs to upgrade its accommodation; we really do need to move forward on that, and I am really a strong advocate for doing that.
<p>MOP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well, that is what we heard at the Fiordland Business Association session last night. They really liked promoting Te Anau as a destination and connecting it with the wider Southland.
<p>MOP- Courtney</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The landscape values assessment is currently what I am working on, asking the questions about appropriate building, size, design etc. so the landscape can absorb it and it won't look out of place. Planting to make it less obvious.
<p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am just an everyday kiwi, been working here for quite some time. What you just said about planting for the right reasons and making sure that it doesn't impact the view just made me think of plantings put in by Milford Sound Tourism around the car park. They have all been trimmed, why? - health and safety if you can't see the 30 kph sign? • One thing that I want to be able to continue to do is bring my children here, stop anywhere on the road and to be able to go anytime and not have constraints. We need to make sure that it continues to be available to everyday kiwi, whether it is going down to Gunns Camp. It cannot just be about the tourist dollar. It is still going to be about Kiwis having a good life too.
<p>MOP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's a good point, so we talked to the Aotearoa Climbing Access Trust. They say things like they look at the forecast and want to go, and they want that access to continue. They access the road at random times, stop in random places. Fish and game are the same, NZDZ, Hunting. The general principle is front of mind. • There is an issue with volume and that is the focus, and we are very mindful of unintended consequences. It is about an 80 / 20 percent split between international and kiwis coming here. • And then you look at the stats going through the tunnel, information from Kevin Thompson is around ¾ of the cars have 2.1 people in them.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lot of the busyness of this place is about vehicles, parking and people trying to find place for their car. If we can start to manage those somehow by getting them onto a bus, we all start to manage the vehicle.
<p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand what we're all trying to do, it is just trying to get around the unintended consequences. Freedom to use your driver's licence – could have a bar code, swipe your card, and away you go.
<p>MOP Courtney and Tom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy team are looking at that. Kiwis, generally speaking will able to do what they want whether they just book a permit online, or via the DOC website. We very much want to keep this place as the best place in the world. • People hear that it is excellent which reflects the charge. There's some of the best hunting in the world, that sort of thing. • Policy team are feasibility testing what's [the charge] appropriate. They are looking at other parts of the world. Managed access is not new, not new around the world. • How we might be able to make it work here. Recognising the things that are important to us is New Zealanders and our own values. How we want to engage with place, acknowledging the 10 key concepts in masterplan.
<p>Community – Access and Visitor Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is just about access or the experience that you want to preserve. Not just for Kiwis but for the tourists too. Everybody needs to have the experience of getting to Milford Sound, but I just want to make sure that it available to anyone and everyone at any time.
<p>Community – Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am not a resident, but I have been here for six years. I'm on the side of the nature. I want to have access to everything all times. The community is a huge part and there is something magical about the place. When I got here, I was living in Dunedin. That was it for about a year and I struggled to find a job as an international. I had a good resume, went everywhere and no one would hire me. Most of the people told me it was because I was not a Kiwi. • When I arrived here at the lodge, it was at its worst. As I drove in there was huge storm, and it was the most beautiful thing I ever seen. I was driving through this valley with 1000 waterfalls, thinking I'm going to die. When I arrived here, they didn't have space, someone offered me a place to stay on an emergency site because the weather was bad. I was struggling to find a job, I noticed that everyone here at the lodge had accents, was very fit and that everyone was very



smiley. A guy told me about lifestyle and that is why people come here. This place gave me a full 180 in my life and I'd hate to see anything change. It's home.

- When I arrived it was busy summer, one of the busiest summers in 2018. I remember there was a lot of people living here, about 400 people and I remember just feeling at home, which I did not feel the in Dunedin. It's also an international community. As an immigrant, you just want to be welcomed. That's not easy anywhere.

MOP

- When I went to the shaping our future event in Queenstown, I was talking to someone from Ireland, they said one of the things they like about Queenstown is diversity. They had a about 10 kids and English was their second language.

Community

- When you are in an isolated place, your community is small. Everyone knows everyone. That's the thing that you want to protect because that's your sense of community. We have a precious community, and we want to be protective of it.
- The sense of community is the most important part of it. Everyone comes from different backgrounds. What makes this place work so well and what's attracts so many tourists is because everybody wants to make it work well, because everyone wants to show it as it is.
- This is how we live, what we do.

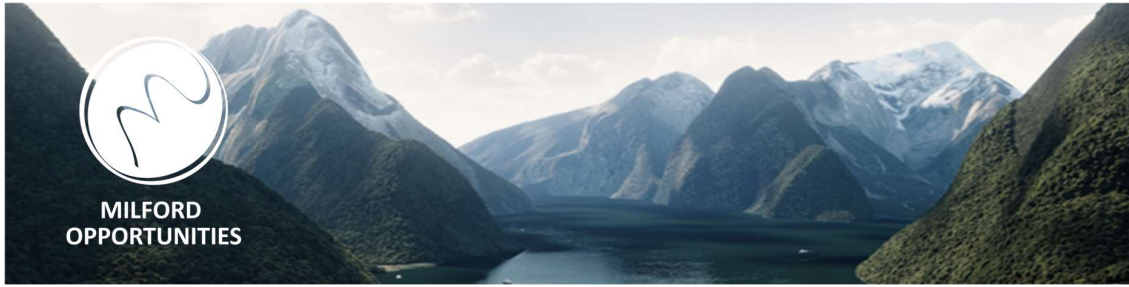
Community – transport timings

- I have a two-part question. If you're talking about buses coming in and out, what's the timings from leaving Te Anau to Milford. Every 10 minutes every half hour every hour? What's that sort of timing?

MOP

- That's part of our transport systems design RFP that's currently out to market.
- Transport modelling based on what is existing and then work out what is the most appropriate way to do it in the future. We have asked them to look at various scenarios, 2000 visitors a day, 4000 visitors a day and 6000 visitors a day. An adaptable model so when we look at the policy side of things, look at the different concessions and how to manage the parking etc. We can then adapt the model and hopefully get an answer for you.
- One of the main goals is to flatten the curve. There's a lot of people who try to get here as fast as they can to get to the boat, they're always late because they've underestimated the trip. One goal is to provide a greater range of people throughout the day, so there's less of a surge.

Community



- A bus left three people behind the other day, they were still here at 5.30pm. I went up to them because they looked lost. The bus left them and there was no way of getting out of here. No accommodation? Just the clothes on their backs. So if you're going to have a bus that leaves at 5.00pm, it could still leave people behind. You have to have some sort of system that accounts for people.
- The company from Te Anau had to come back and pick them up, so that is a very long day as they were going through to Queenstown. The driver forgot about them.
- It is a real possibility to leave people behind, here or Knobs Flat or the Divide

MOP

- Part of the permitting and managing your access will hopefully inform that. I don't think we could completely manage that. But part of this process is to have better processes for everyone including bus drivers.

MOP

- Farewell whakatauki

Themes

- Retain access and freedom to access for New Zealanders
- Retain the community that we have in here
- People come to Milford for its majestic landscape, it's the people here who make it work because we want to make it work and we want people to appreciate it like we do.
- Hop on and hop off needs to have good processes to ensure that visitors don't get left behind
- There needs to be more than just electricity options in the energy space, hydro, hydrogen