

From: MDCSendmail@mackenzie.govt.nz
Sent: Mon, 7 Nov 2022 14:24:30 +1100 (AEDT)
To: District Plan
Subject: Mackenzie District Council - Submission on Proposed Plan Change to the Mackenzie District Plan
Attachments: Stargazing-article-by-Amy-Menard_Twizel-Update_9.11.2022_for-MDC-submission.pdf

A new Submission on Proposed Plan Change to the Mackenzie District Plan has been received.

Plan Change Number

Which Plan
Change 22
number?:

Details of Applicant

First Name: Amy
Last Name: Menard
Postal
Address: 594 Manuka Terrace Twizel 7999
Email: amymenard@xtra.co.nz
Telephone
No: 0275451519
Fax:
Date: 2022-11-07 00:00:00

Customer
number (if
known):

Contact
person:
Contact
person
Telephone
No:

Submission Details

The
specific
provisions
of the
The provisions are: RULES: • Outdoor Lighting • Security Lights • Skylights
STANDARDS: • Direction • Shielding • Colour Temperature • Lamp Types •
Horizontal and Vertical Illuminance

Proposal
my
submission
relates to
are as
follows:

I support /
oppose
these
provisions:

I'm submitting in favour of all of the proposed changes. This is for the following reasons:

The reason(s) for my submission are:
Personal: so my family and friends can enjoy stargazing without unnecessary light pollution. Health and Wellbeing: to preserve my human right to darkness, to ensure good physical health and wellbeing. Darkness is crucial to the healthy function of the human body and mind, and is vital to a person's spiritual wellbeing too. Business: The dark sky reserve is a key selling point for my guest accommodation (MenardsNZ Ecosanctuary Accommodation). Almost all of my guests say that they've booked their stay at my place so they can stargaze. The proposed lighting changes will ensure the future of the dark sky reserve and allow me to retain this key selling point when promoting my business, as well as the wider Mackenzie Region. Environment: to protect our precious flora and fauna from the harmful impacts of unnecessary light pollution.

I seek the
following
decision
from the
Mackenzie
District
Council:

That the proposed lighting changes in Plan Change 22 are adopted then enforced for the entire Mackenzie Region.

I do or do
not wish to
be heard in
support of
my
submission:

If others
make a
similar
submission
I do
I would

I would or
would not
be prepared
to consider
presenting a
joint case
with them
at any
hearing:

Additional

information I've attached an article I wrote for the Twizel Update, to be published on 9 November
for this 2022. It includes a bit about my personal connection to the stars.

submission:

Attach a

supporting

document:

Stargazing-article-by-Amy-Menard_Twizel-Update_9.11.2022_for-MDC-
submission.pdf, type application/pdf, 60.1 KB

The Beauty of Darkness and How We Can Protect the Night

Dazzling stars filled the night sky, so many and so bright it seemed like the sky was almost white. I lay on my back in the lush grass of my parent's small orchard and pondered the incredible thought that the universe went on forever and ever. It was 1987 and I was eight years old on the beautiful Tai Poutini West Coast. This is one of my first memories of stargazing and I now call the Te Manahuna Mackenzie Region home, where the stars of my childhood are still resplendent in the epic Aoraki Mackenzie International Dark Sky Reserve. Now I lie on the trampoline with my children and marvel at the night skies, looking for constellations and planets and trying not to tell each other our wishes as we spot shooting stars.

My husband and I have created a 10-acre ecosanctuary on Manuka Terrace near Twizel, which includes our own home as well as guest accommodation. Our indoor and outdoor lighting is carefully managed to protect the environment, but it makes good business sense too as almost all of our international guests (and many Kiwis too!) tells us they've booked a stay in the Mackenzie so they can stargaze. I've often found myself standing with guests in the driveway at night, the door to the rental car open and suitcases forgotten as we gaze up at the stars. They're usually overwhelmed, saying "I've never seen stars like this!" I'm incredibly fortunate to have been born in Aotearoa New Zealand, a country where most people have access to a dark and starry sky. Darkness is crucial for human health, not just physical and mental, but for our spiritual wellbeing as well. Stargazing is a wonderful way to calm the busy mind and connect with the universe.

It's a sad fact of our modern world that approximately one third of the world can't see the Milky Way due to light pollution. However, in New Zealand around 74% of the night skies in the North Island and 93% in the South Island are considered pristine or degraded only near the horizon. This means our country has a very realistic chance of becoming a dark sky nation but with light pollution increasing here, we must be vigilant or we could lose our access to the night skies.

The Mackenzie District Council's updated lighting regulations proposed in Plan Change 22 will help protect our night skies and the future of our dark sky reserve. The proposed changes include "applying the lighting rules district-wide, to ensure that nuisance effects are better managed and that the potential effects of light pollution on night sky darkness are managed in the same way throughout the District; extending the rules to cover light spill from interior lighting, particularly skylights; and updating the rules, in line with advice received from Canterbury University, to better manage things like security lighting and to bring the controls up to date in relation to LED lighting."

The closing date for lodging a submission is Wednesday, 23 November at 5pm and you can submit online:

www.mackenzie.govt.nz/council/strategies-plans-and-reports/district-plan-changes-and-consultation/submission-on-proposed-plan-change-to-the-mackenzie-district-plan

I've submitted in favour of the changes for many reasons, including as a business owner and steward of an ecosanctuary, but mostly for my people – my family, friends, and community – so we can keep our rights to the dark and ensure the human spirit can shine as brightly as the stars above us.

Amy Menard

Note: I work with the board of the Aoraki Mackenzie International Dark Sky Reserve in administration and marketing, however, this article is written from my personal perspective as a resident of the Mackenzie Region.