

Report / decision to determine notification of a resource consent application

(Sections 95A / 95B)

Application number:	RMA/2025/1880
Applicant:	Rolling Meadows Limited
Site address:	240 Lower Styx Road
Legal description and site area:	Lot 1 DP 50725 64.985 hectares
Zone:	Rural Urban Fringe zone
Overlays and map notations:	
District Plan:	Liquefaction Management area Fixed minimum floor level overlay within Flood Management Area Flood Ponding management area
Road classification:	Collector
Activity status:	Restricted discretionary (if a temporary activity); or Non-complying activity
Description of application:	To hold the Rolling Meadows festival on the site for a three-year period - from 29 th December to 1 st January (preferably for 2025-2027).

Proposed activity

The applicant company, Rolling Meadows Limited (RML) seek resource consent to enable the relocation of the Rolling Meadows festival from a site at Waipara, to this rural site closer to the city. They seek consent for a three-year period for up to 10,000 ticketholders each year. The festival is predominantly a music festival held across three stages (A-C) and provides for up to 5000 of the ticket holders to camp on site utilising temporary camping facilities for the duration of the event. Campers are not permitted to take any cooking equipment onto the site, and they leave their vehicles on arrival in an inaccessible dedicated parking area for the duration of the event. Campers are only allowed out to access vehicles with supervision or if they are departing the site. A dedicated food caravan area is proposed centrally on site alongside Stages B and C, chill out tents, a skate facility and activation zones (sponsor areas). Day ticket holders do not have access to the camping area. A site plan showing proposed layout is duplicated on the following page.

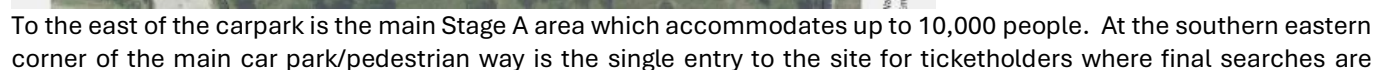
The site is a large site, close to the size of South Hagley Park (70.507 ha). Only a portion of the site is proposed to be utilised for the event as shown on the site plan. A detailed version of the site plan taken from the RFI response 1st October Appendix 8 is attached as **Appendix 1**.

There have been various iterations of the proposal, and a compilation of the application is provided which excludes much of the interim documentation and includes the revised proposal for which consent is now sought. The RFI response submitted October 1st includes final versions of key documents.

Management of festival and other traffic on Lower Styx Road from 7am on the 29th of December to 4pm on the 1st January would be in accordance with an approved (by Council) Traffic Management Plan (TMP). The TMP includes two modes of operation. In summary, the site entry is via an access toward the northwestern end of the site, and all vehicles leave with left turn only via an exit toward the middle of the site's road frontage. When the event traffic is not resulting in queuing to enter the site, traffic is managed by signage, road cones narrowing lane width, reduced speeds and STMS supervision. When queuing to access the site occurs, manually operated traffic lights will operate to ensure straight through traffic continues to flow safely while allowing event traffic to safely enter the site from both the north and the south.

At the northern extent of the site is a large area dedicated to staff and ticket holder car parking, which is set back some 200 metres from the road. The crossings into the site, track and pick up/drop off (PUDO) area will be formed with

An aerial photograph of a road layout. A road runs diagonally from the bottom left towards the top right. A zebra crossing is marked on the road with white stripes and labeled "Zebra Crossing". To the right of the road, there is a green area labeled "Carparking". Further to the right, there is a dense green forest. Three labels "Pedestrian" are placed near the road, indicating pedestrian paths or crossings.



completed and tickets checked. South of the entrance is the food caravan village, and Stages B and C, with the camping and glamping areas beyond to the south. A large area west of the camping area and outside the event fences is proposed as an evacuation area in the event of an emergency. No other day to day use of this large area outside the event fencing is proposed during the event. The entire ticket holder area is double fenced with security fencing. Running along the eastern side of the site is Golf Road, not a legal road but a forestry road, which is otherwise kept locked to exclude vehicles. Golf Road links to Lower Styx Road some 335m northeast of the application site entrance via another forestry road, 12th Avenue. Vehicles supporting the festival will utilise this road for set up, servicing during the event, and for packing up after the event.

Pack in and pack out for the event is proposed over a four and a half week period, roughly two weeks either side of the event.

Amplified music is proposed for the duration of the event as follows:

Stage A (Main stage)

- 29th December 12pm-12am (for campers only)
- 30th December 1pm- 1am the following morning (plus sound checks on Stage A between 10am-noon)
- 31st December 2pm-2am the following morning (plus sound checks on Stage A between 10am-noon)

Stage B

- 30th and 31st December 10.05am-10pm

Stage C

- 30th and 31st December 10.05am-10pm

The event would run in accordance with a certified Noise Management Plan (NMP), and a draft of this is attached to the application (version dated 30th September, Rev 13). The NMP notes the noise levels at source that RML have committed to not exceed at Front of House sound desk and provides for monitoring during the whole event of noise levels experienced at sensitive receivers (residential zone at Spencerville, campers at Spencer Beach Top 10 Holiday Park and rural residents nearby). Direct lines of communication are provided so that those in control of the sound desk can alter noise levels to achieve compliance with the consented noise conditions if exceedances are found (unless modelled and anticipated). The NMP also provides assurances re receiving and passing on complaints to Council and sharing of monitoring information.

Regarding noise levels, there has been much discussion regarding what is proposed, and the applicant has thoroughly investigated, via their Acoustic consultant, a number of scenarios for the event since this application was lodged on June 19th. Many different iterations of the site setup were submitted and considered and on receipt of feedback, further changes and rerunning of the modelling occurred. At one point an 8 metre high solid wall was proposed by the applicant around the Stage A compound in response to feedback that noise levels in Spencerville and the Holiday Park modelled were unacceptable. This proposal was found to be cost prohibitive for the event proceeding so further options were considered. The final version of the site set up proposed is as set out in the site plan above and detailed in the Acoustic assessment dated 30th September, Rev 13.

The revised proposal includes:

- All stages to be oriented towards the ocean to the east/south-east with the orientation of the main stage, Stage A, being altered significantly.
- More use of Stage A which is sited further away from the closest neighbours, and no use of Stage B on the 29th of December or after 10pm on any day.
- Finishing music earlier on the 30 and 31 December (originally was 03.00 and 04.00 hours respectively, but now 01:00 and 02:00 hours).
- Scheduling the main acts to finish by 22:00 hours on the 29th and 30th December and by 24:00 hours on the 31st
- Some increase in noise levels during the day but less amplified music overall during the nighttime hours.
- Removal of fireworks display on New Year's Eve.
- Stage setup alterations to achieve
 - compliance with daytime noise levels (or exceedance by 1-3dB)
 - compliance with night-time noise levels (or exceedance by 1-2dB)
 - compliance with Lmax levels at all times
 - exceedances over 3dB for some properties between 10pm and midnight only (up to 7dB for two sites) on the 31st of December
- Offering a suite of conditions (see **Appendix 2**) that now form part of the proposal including:
 - Proceeding in accordance with an Event Management Plan, an Alcohol Management Plan, a Noise Management Plan and in accordance with the Acoustic modelling outcomes from the Acoustic Assessment
 - Limiting scale of event to 10,000 (and 5000 campers), over a three year period

- monitoring and recording event noise levels and sharing results with Council
- utilising the specific stage orientation and speaker position that has been modelled, using stages at times advised, meeting noise levels at residential receivers and campground camp sites as modelled
- controlling noise levels at source
- complying with a condition re bass noise at all times, with a more restrictive standard applicable after 10pm
- traffic management in adherence to Traffic Management Plan
- pre-sale and pre-allocation of parking tickets so demand does not exceed supply
- communication with residents
- ongoing work with Fire and Emergency NZ to obtain input in fire mitigation measures
- noise management during pack in and pack out; and compliant lighting
- a review condition to address adverse impacts unanticipated on an annual basis

These were significant changes to the proposal compared to what was initially proposed. The modelling of predicted noise levels at sensitive receivers was rerun and updated information submitted to assess the revised proposal.

Fireworks were proposed at one point but have since been withdrawn from the application¹. These included on stage pyrotechnics and a 90 second display at midnight on 31st December though the noise levels were such that the Acoustic report concluded they could not be mitigated.

The event includes ancillary elements such as a national Skate competition, and an area which may be utilised by several amusement rides to operate only when Stage A is open.

The event will be run in accordance with applicable legislation to meet the applicant's health and safety obligations. This will include provision of security both inside and outside the fenced compound, toilets, hand washing facilities, showers for campers, facilities for performers and fire evacuation routes. Portable toilets and hand washing facilities, first aid, and security managing ID and intoxication, crowd care and management is proposed within the balance licenced premise area (performance areas, food caravan area). The camping areas are not licensed for alcohol consumption. Litter and waste management will be conducted throughout and after the event. Campers are unable to take cooking facilities on site and tents will be laid out in rows with circulation spaces between rows. A helicopter landing area is set aside and is confirmed as for emergency use only.

Background

Approximately half of the site was cleared of a thick layer of gorse and broom in April 2025, revealing a sandy base. Much of this vegetation was then burnt off as green waste. At the time of the site visit (May 27th), grass seed had been planted in the proposed parking area and areas proposed to be within the fenced event compound (other than the camping area) to reestablish a firm ground cover on the site. Numerous trees have been retained on site and limbed up to provide shade, make them unclimbable and delineate various areas of the site. The area south of the food truck area has been mostly cleared of a thick cover of gorse and broom, with this piled up and currently being moved closer to the southwest boundary to make bunds around the site. There is further work levelling the ground to make the balance of the fenced event compound site area useable for camping which is also underway. The site plan, including recent aerial drone photography shows the extent of recent changes to the site.

Neighbourhood interest and opposition

Council has received emails opposing the event from some 25 residents in the area and supporting the event from one resident. These have been coming in since the proposal was first public knowledge around April 2025. Some of the points made are irrelevant due to a modified proposal, but many concerns were general ones. A common theme is that this is a quiet rural environment, and such events are not wanted in the area. The range of concerns advised include potential noise nuisance (including for campers at Spencer Park (up to 1500 mostly in tents at this time of year and including families with young children), being over a three day period, including annoying bass, actual levels being dependent on wind direction and sea noise, late finishing times of 3am and 4am impacting ability to sleep, impacts on mental well-being and stress levels of sustained high noise levels, campers noise after music ends, whether compliance with noise levels will be monitored by Council, reduced screening of noise when forestry harvested); disruption from fireworks; additional traffic, congestion and drink driving; narrowness of road and safety for cyclists and impacts on Spencerville Gala event on January 1st; close proximity of exit to driveway at 234 Lower Styx Road and inclusion of this residential driveway in the area where road management is proposed; negative impacts on campground likely means less bookings in subsequent years and loss of revenue at Spencer Beach Top 10 Holiday Park; another event will make the community less tolerant of Easter Camp and Two Minds festival currently held at the campground; infrastructure

¹ A subsequent application may be made when more information is forthcoming re the noise levels associated with any proposed fireworks are known.

required to construct access and egress to site; limited public transport; drunk people passing homes after leaving via Golf Road; concern about how Golf Road is accessed for service vehicles; fire risk and lack of water supply for firefighting; rubbish or use of forest as toilets; adequacy of parking; impact of driveway construction; litter and freedom camping impacting Styx River; disruption to cell phone coverage people rely on in emergencies; camp ground festival already creates a nuisance and disrupts sleep; impact on people with vulnerable health and sensory needs; lack of evacuation plan for tsunami or natural disaster; disturbance to farm animals/wildlife; impact of property values; flooding; lack of fencing around the site; anti-social behaviour and security issues.

The purpose of this report is to determine whether the application should be processed on a non-notified, limited notified, or publicly notified basis, pursuant to Sections 95A and 95B of the Resource Management Act.

Description of site and existing environment

The application site and surrounding environment are described in section 2.1 and 2.2 of the AEE submitted with the application. I adopt the applicant’s description and note the following additional points.

The site is surrounded on three sides by Bottle Lake Forest, noting the forest adjoining the site is in different stages of growth. To the north the forest is semi mature, to the east it is relatively young and includes slash and debris post harvesting. The area to the southeast is semi mature and harvesting in this area is ongoing.

The Pūharakekenui Styx River across the road from the site is noted in the District Plan as a downstream waterway and has a notation as a site of ecological significance (LP23) and is considered a significant feature with regard to the natural landscape (SF3.0). It has cultural significance to Ngai Tahu as identified by its notation Ngā wai, a river meandering from the Belfast area to Te Riu o Te Aika Kawa (Brookland Lagoon).

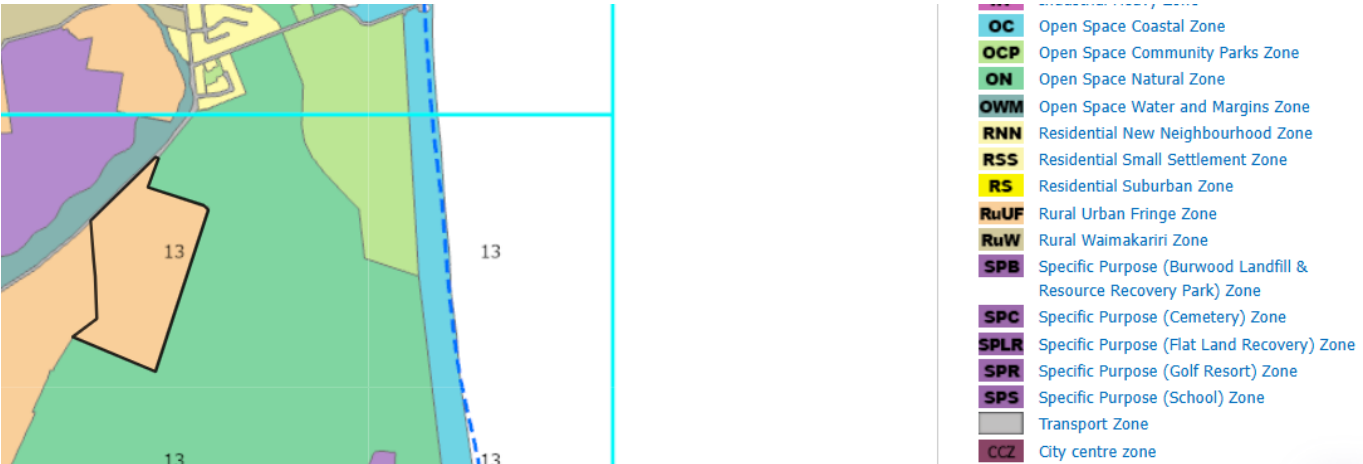
To the southwest of the site is the Sheppards Stream wetland which directly adjoins the site and is identified in the District Plan by notation LP31. The wetland is ecologically significant as a remnant dune-slack wetland which is home to at risk bird species.

Activity status

Christchurch District Plan

The site is zoned Rural Urban Fringe. This zone provides for a wide range of rural activities and residential activity as well as home occupations, conservation and recreation activity, rural tourism activity veterinary care facilities and additions to existing lawfully established community facilities, commercial film or video production and visitor accommodations.

The zoning of the application site (see black outline on plan below) and the surrounds are shown on the plan below, an extract from the District Plan.



While located in the Rural Urban Fringe zone, the activity proposed is considered a “temporary activity” under the general city rules. These rules seek to enable such activities in order to recognise the important role that such activities play in the rebuild of Christchurch while managing the adverse effects on the environment.

Under the temporary activity rules of the District Plan, concerts that comply with a range of activity standards specified in rule 6.2.4.1.1 P2 and rule 6.1.6.1.1 P1(c) are permitted, irrespective of the zone rules. The definition of ‘temporary activities and buildings’ is duplicated below:

Temporary activities and buildings

in relation to [Chapter 6](#) General Rules and Procedures, means activities and their [ancillary buildings](#) that are intended to have a limited duration and incidence (one-off, infrequent, transitional or with a defined end date, as opposed to regular and ongoing) and:

- a. are not part of a permanent activity that occurs on the [site](#); and
- b. create no, or only negligible, lasting alteration or disturbance to any [site](#), [building](#) or vegetation.

It includes:

- c. [public artworks](#), [recreation activities](#) and [entertainment activities](#); and
- d. the provision of car [parking areas](#) [ancillary](#) to a temporary activity, whether sealed or unsealed, provided in accordance with an approved Traffic Management Plan, except as otherwise specified in [Sub-chapter 6.4](#) Temporary earthquake recovery activities.

It excludes:

- e. temporary [utilities](#), which must comply with the relevant provisions in [Chapter 11](#) Utilities and Energy.

Advice note:

1. Temporary buildings are required to comply with the provisions of the [Building Act 2004](#).

The activity fits within this definition as the event is of limited duration and only occurs once a year for three years. I note that although the event is not a ‘one-off’ it is infrequent, and there is a defined end date. The activity is not a permanent one on the site, being an annual event, and the application confirms there will be negligible lasting alteration to the site with buildings mostly removed after the event each year, vegetation managed to maintain a useable surface and metalled driveways left to grow over while not in use. It does include car parking but that is ancillary to the festival and will be in accordance with an approved Traffic Management Plan. I had wondered if the extensive clearance of gorse and broom and some trees on the site to enable levelling and grass seed to be laid amounted to a sizeable disturbance of the land. I sought legal advice on this and was advised that as this clearance had occurred before the application was made, it was not a part of the proposal. The partly cleared site now forms part of the existing environment and no rules in the rural zone appear to be relevant, so it is considered to be a permitted activity. Some ongoing work is occurring with regard to moving remaining piles of dead scrub into a row away from the compound area to enable rolling of land for campground use.

The proposed event over four days from a Monday to a Saturday (over the three-year period 2025-2027) is in accordance with rule 6.2.4.1.1 P2a. and the application confirms the event lighting will be such that it is able to meet the outdoor lighting rule 6.3.6 from 10pm – 7am in Rule 6.3.6. The event does not meet the noise standard applicable to temporary activities.

The proposal requires resource consent for a [restricted discretionary activity](#) under the following rules and there are no relevant clauses in these rules which give any indication about notification:

Activity status rule	Standard not met	Reason	Matters of control or discretion
6.2.4.1.3 RD2	6.2.4.1.1 P2 Temporary concerts and festivals where amplified music does not exceed four hours including sound checks. Temporary activity to occur between 9am and 10pm	The event is proposed to include amplified music between 12 noon and midnight on the 29 th December (12 hrs); between 10.05am and 1am the following morning (15hrs) on the 30 th December, and between 10.05am and 2am (16 hrs) on the 31 st December. As noted above, amplified music will be outside the permitted hours of 9am-10pm on any given day.	a. Amenity - Rule 6.2.5.1 b. Transport - Rule 6.2.5.2 c. Economic recovery and resilience - Rule 6.2.5.3 d. Competing requirements for the location - Rule 6.2.5.4 e. Site disturbance or alteration - Rule 6.2.5.5

Activity status rule	Standard not met	Reason	Matters of control or discretion
6.1.6.1.3 RD1	6.1.6.1.1 P1 c. Temporary concerts and festivals where amplified music does not exceed four hours including sound checks. Temporary activity to occur between 9am and 10pm	Events are proposed to include amplified music for up to 43 hours duration over four days. On each day the 4 hrs permitted is exceeded as noted above. Amplified music is proposed on each of the four days outside the permitted hours 9am-10pm	6.1.8 Rules - Matters of discretion a. When considering applications for restricted discretionary activities, the Council's discretion to grant or decline consent, or impose conditions, is restricted to the matters over which discretion is restricted in the tables in Rules 6.1.5.1.3, 6.1.6.1.3 and 6.1.7.1.3, and as set out for that matter below. i. The level, duration and character of the noise, and proximity and nature of nearby activities, and the adverse effects that may arise from these factors on activities anticipated in the receiving environment and associated amenity. ii. Whether the noise generated would be of such a level as to create a threat to the health or well-being of persons living or working in the vicinity. iii. The proposals made by the applicant to reduce noise generation, including: A. reduction of noise at source; B. alternative techniques or machinery which may be available; C. insulation or enclosure of machinery; D. mounding or screen fencing/walls; E. hours of operation; v. The value and nature of entertainment activities and their benefit to the wider community, having regard to the frequency of noise intrusion and the practicality of mitigating noise, or utilising alternative sites. vi. The extent to which achieving the standard is appropriate where the existing noise environment is subject to significant noise intrusion from road traffic, or Transport Zone activities in the Central City. vii. Any relevant standards, codes of practice or assessment methods based on sound acoustic principles, including those which address the reasonableness of the noise in terms of community health and amenity and/or sleep protection.
6.2.4.1.3 RD2	6.2.4.1.1 P4 Temporary buildings or other structures ancillary to a P2 event (includes concerts and festivals) shall not be erected on or remain on the site for more than two weeks before or after the event opens or closes to participants.	Pack in is proposed to commence on December 10th and pack out to be completed by January 12th. Pack in commences five days earlier than is permitted. Several event storage containers and some ancillary structures are proposed to remain on site for the three-year period during which the	a. Amenity - Rule 6.2.5.1 b. Transport - Rule 6.2.5.2 c. Economic recovery and resilience - Rule 6.2.5.3 d. Competing requirements for the location - Rule 6.2.5.4 e. Site disturbance or alteration - Rule 6.2.5.5

Activity status rule	Standard not met	Reason	Matters of control or discretion
		music festivals are held.	

If the Commissioner does not accept that the activity proposed falls under the temporary activity rule, then the activity would be a non-complying activity under the Rural Urban Fringe zone.

Activity status rule	Standard not met	Reason	Matters of control or discretion
17.4.1.5 NC1	Any activity not provided for as a permitted, controlled, restricted discretionary, discretionary or prohibited activity.	A music festival/concert is not provided for as any of these categories of activity in the Rural Urban Fringe zone.	n/a

For completeness I note that:

- prior to clearance the site was a mix of grassed patches and dense broom and gorse. The contractor advises earthworks involving root raking up to 100mm depth occurred over some 22ha of the site, with other areas superficially bulldozed to remove the top layer of grass and weeds taking the area disturbed to some 39ha. It is estimated 2200m³ of earthworks occurred (with up to 3900m³ permitted over an area of 39 ha) (Rule 8.9.2 P1 earthworks)

Written approvals [Sections 95D, 95E(3)(a)]

No written approvals have been provided with the application.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION TESTS [Section 95A]

Section 95A sets out the steps that must be followed to determine whether public notification is required:

Step 1: Mandatory notification – section 95A(3)	
Has the applicant requested that the application be publicly notified?	No
Is public notification required under s95C (following a request for further information or commissioning of report)?	No
Is the application made jointly with an application to exchange reserve land?	No

Public notification is not mandatory under this section.

Step 2: If not required by Step 1, notification is precluded if any of the following apply – section 95A(5)	
A rule or NES precludes public notification for all aspects of the application	No
The application is a controlled activity	No
The application is a boundary activity	No

Public notification is precluded under this section.

Step 3: Notification required in certain circumstances if not precluded by Step 2 – section 95A(8)	
Does a rule or NES require public notification?	No
Will the activity have, or is it likely to have, adverse effects on the environment that are more than minor? (discussed below)	No

Assessment of effects on the environment

Temporary activity

If accepted as a restricted discretionary activity, the Council's assessment of the effects of this proposal is limited to matters included in rule 6.2.5 in the District Plan, identified in blue text further below and relating to amenity, transport, economic recovery and resilience, competing requirements for the location, and site disturbance or alteration; and the additional noise related matters of discretion under 6.1.8.

The temporary activity buildings and events objectives and policies in the District Plan set the context for assessing the effects of the application. Objective 6.2.2.1 anticipates a diverse range of temporary activities and events is enabled, while having regard to the natural, historic and cultural values and expected amenity values of the areas in which they are located. They are acknowledged as providing opportunities for artistic, social and/or cultural expression; contributing to the economic recovery and resilience of the district and/or reinforce or promote a positive sense of place and community. The related policy seeks to

- a. Enable temporary activities and buildings and events provided:
 - i. the location, frequency, scale, duration and effects of the temporary activity and building are compatible with the level of amenity anticipated by the surrounding environment or are within a range that can be tolerated given the temporary nature of the activity;
 - ii. parking and traffic generation are managed so that:
 - A. Road safety and network efficiency is not compromised.

In the context of the ‘expected amenity values’ in relation to noise, in discussion with John Alps, Council’s Principal Advisor Noise Control, we did not consider this was best represented by the 65 dB noise level applicable to amplified music for a permitted temporary event as that standard applies for four hour events between 9am and 10pm, albeit they could occur three days in a row. In any case, this applies to relatively short events during daytime hours only. The duration of this event is well beyond those hours being for 12 hrs day one, 15 hrs day two, and 16 hrs day three and extending beyond 10pm. A total of 43 hours over three days.

Instead, I consider that ‘**expected amenity values**’ re noise for temporary activities were reasonably considered to be closer to (though not the same as) the noise levels applicable for day-to-day activity that are incorporated in the District Plan standards and measured at the sites of sensitive receivers. These are laid out below:

Zone of site receiving noise	Daytime standard (07:00-22:00)	Nighttime standard (22:00-07:00)	L _A max (nighttime)
Residential	50 dB LAeq	40 dB LA eq	65
Rural, Specific Purpose Golf Resort, Open Space (including Spencer Beach Top 10 Holiday Park)	55	45	70
Rural assessed at any point within a <i>notional boundary</i>	50	40	65

Notional boundary in relation to Chapter 6 General Rules and Procedures, means a line 20 metres from any wall of a residential unit or a building occupied by a sensitive activity, or the site boundary where this is closer to the residential unit or sensitive activity.

Of the residents who have written in opposing this event, many have advised this is a quiet peaceful area and they want it to stay that way. The background noise levels in the vicinity are accepted as being relatively low and subject to prevailing winds can vary including in relation to noise from the ocean and forest.

It is relevant though that the District Plan standards do not anticipate that the use of land is constrained to a point that these quiet background levels appreciated by residents are protected day to day. The levels in the table above reflect what is considered acceptable in balancing competing expectations and enabling reasonable use of any land. Relevantly though, the general noise rules do seek to manage adverse effects of noise on the amenity values and health of people and communities; protecting sleep and amenity values of residential and other sensitive environments so far as is practicable.

The temporary activity policy is clear that aspects of such an activity are either compatible with expected amenity or *are within a range that can be tolerated given the temporary nature of the activity*. Mr Alps has advised that 1-2dB over these levels is indiscernibly different from the complying level in that the difference in noise levels is inaudible (unable to be distinguished). Even at 3db over these levels, the difference from a compliant level is barely audible. On this basis it is considered reasonable to treat up to a 3dB exceedance as being compatible with expected amenity. Beyond this level, from 4 to 7dB over the standard, Mr Alps advises noise level exceedances are discernible on an increasing scale with a 4dB exceedance representing a 32% perceived increase in the noise levels up to 7dB representing a 62% perceived increase in the noise levels. Such levels would be noticeably louder than compliant amplified sound and at the higher end of this spectrum, would likely only be tolerated for short periods at nighttime given the potential for disruption to sleep. This framework is applied later in this report when modelled noise levels at sensitive receivers are discussed for different times of the day.

Mr Alps expressed some concern about the fact the measurement and assessment of noise in the District Plan does not apply consideration of Special Audible Characteristics (SAC), such as bass. However, on review, it was found that the Independent Hearings Panel who determined these rules in 2016 had accepted evidence before it “that the specified noise levels are conservatively set such that they already take sufficient account of SAC influences”. While RML had been earlier asked to include a SAC penalty of 5dB in their noise modelling, it was accepted that this was a conservative approach and likely not reasonable in these circumstances. However, with RML having a ‘drum and bass’ aspect to it, the specific issue of bass also needs to be considered in terms of ‘expected amenity values’ and appropriate conditions if consent is granted. I note that a bass condition has since been included in the proposal with more onerous controls in place after 10pm.

Otherwise non-complying activity in rural urban fringe zone

If not accepted as a temporary activity, the event and storage of event facilities on site across the year would be a non-complying activity in the rural zone. Any effects on the environment would be relevantly considered and I will discuss this later in the report. As a non-complying activity, additional matters to consider would include security in the wider area, fire risk, concerns have also been raised about adverse impact on property values; impacts on ecologically sensitive or important areas in the vicinity; impacts on rural character, and impacts on highly productive land.

Permitted baseline

Section 95D(b) allows the effects of activities permitted by the District Plan or an NES to be disregarded (the “permitted baseline”).

Temporary events such as concerts are permitted in the City where they meet a range of parameters which include controls on frequency of events (across the year; and relative to each other), lighting outside of 7am to 10pm timeframe; fireworks; proximity to residential units (no closer than 30m); length of sound amplified activities (4 hours per day including all sound checks); hours of operation (between 9am and 10pm) and in accordance with specified noise standards (sound amplified activities to not exceed 65 dB LAeq at any residential unit) Rule 6.2.4.1.1 P2 and Rule 6.1.6.2.3.

This event intends to meet all these standards except the one restricting amplified sound to a maximum of four hours per day (with 12 hrs, 15 hrs and 16 hrs on three consecutive days proposed), and nine hours of amplified music proposed outside 9am to 10pm over the three days of the festival. A simple consideration of the application of permitted baseline would be to disregard any effects of an event related to a four-hour period of the event between 9am and 10pm for three consecutive days. As there are no controls in the rules on the scale of the event eg ticket numbers, and no requirement for parking in association with such events, arguably such matters could be disregarded.

I consider there are three reasons why some caution should be exercised in applying the permitted baseline for temporary events.

Firstly, the set of rules under which a temporary event is permitted are already provided for as **exceptions** to rules that apply to land use in these zones.

For example, in this location, day to day activities on this rural site are subject to noise standards to protect the amenity of the nearest residential units with a noise standard up to 10pm of 50dB LAeq to be met at notional boundaries. This protects residential amenity in part at these nearest residential units from exposure to unexpected loud noise from adjoining rural and open space activity to achieve a particular sought after environmental outcome for these sites. Special provision is made to depart from these accepted standards for a limited number of temporary events each year. So, the applicable 65 dB LAeq standard applicable for these four-hour events is already an exception to the otherwise accepted permitted baseline with regard to noise levels experienced at the residential units beyond the application site. Treating the temporary rule framework as a permitted baseline with adverse effects of those events disregarded, potentially further diminishes or erodes the protections put in place to adequately provide a residential environment of sufficient quality as anticipated as appropriate when the District Plan provisions were confirmed. It would mean providing for further concessions beyond the flexibility already provided by the temporary activities representing “double dipping” in some respects and should be applied with caution.

Secondly, the range of matters of discretion are broad and go well beyond a focus on the specific activity standard (or standards) that are not being met, so it appears to me that this potential for double dipping beyond the flexibility already provided by these provisions, and erosion of standards has been recognised in determining matters relevantly considered. For example, under the rules, although there is no requirement for a concert event to provide parking even if there are 10,000 ticket holders, matters of discretion in relation to an event that only requires consent due to length of time of amplified music include, in relation to Transport, how the specifics of an event will impact the efficiency of the transport network and public safety.

Thirdly, in relation to noise, Section 16 of the Resource Management Act places upon every occupier of land and every person carrying out an activity, a duty to avoid unreasonable noise by adopting “the best practicable option to ensure that the emission of noise from that land does not exceed a reasonable level”. I note that the District Plan rules specifically do not include controls on bass associated with amplified music. However, festivals can occur over an extended period and where heavy bass is prevalent, this can lead to nuisance and a significant increase in complaints compared to other events. In this context, it makes little sense to disregard such aspects of generated noise altogether. Indeed, after discussions the applicant has offered a condition related to bass noise generated on site. The standard is relevantly considered and compliance with it recognised as appropriate, but that should not be the end of the matter. In this regard, bass noise – which is not controlled specifically by the temporary activity rules for concerts, is a known aspect of such events that can cause considerable nuisance, and which needs to be considered. Indeed, a musical event at Bexley Park back in March 2023 attracted some 40 noise complaints due mainly to bass noise.

In my opinion, while the permitted baseline of a four-hour event finishing before 10pm should be kept in mind in a reasonable assessment, the fact that this event exceeds these hours and duration by some margin means that the cumulative effects of the noise across the whole event needs to be considered. The duty to avoid unreasonable noise is also relevantly considered, despite measures being introduced for a revised proposal that will see noise levels anticipated to comply with day-to-day district plan noise levels experienced at residential units for most of the event. This in the context of these temporary rules already being an exception to standards otherwise expected to be met to enable nearest residential occupants to enjoy their properties without unreasonable levels of adverse effects.

Assessment

When assessing whether the adverse effects on the environment will be, or are likely to be, more than minor, any effects on the owners and occupiers of the application site and adjacent properties must be disregarded pursuant to section 95D(a). Accordingly, this part of my assessment focuses on the wider environment beyond the application site and adjacent properties (the Styx River environs, forestry land and 230 and 234 Lower Styx Road).

The relevant matters of discretion for a temporary activity are noted below in blue italics and are then assessed under each heading. John Alps (Environmental Health) has specifically considered any of these that are relevant and also relevant matters under 6.1.6 in his reporting referenced below.

6.2.5 Rules - Matters of discretion

a. When considering applications for restricted discretionary activities, the Council’s discretion to grant or decline consent, or impose conditions, is restricted to the matters over which discretion is restricted in the table in Rule 6.2.4.1.3, and as set out for that matter below.

6.2.5.1 Amenity

- a. The extent to which the proposed activity will:*
 - i. contribute positively to local character, amenity values or sense of place and identity; or*
 - ii. activate otherwise vacant or low-amenity spaces.*
- b. The extent to which the location, scale, design, intensity or duration of the activity and any associated buildings will adversely affect the anticipated level of amenity in residential, ... open space zones, particularly with respect to:*
 - i. noise;*
 - ii. outdoor lighting;*
 - iii. hours of operation;*
 - iv. cumulative effects of all temporary activities and buildings using the proposed location;*
 - v. overshadowing;*
 - vi. loss of privacy;*
 - vii. visual amenity;*
 - viii. waste management and littering; and*
 - ix. alcohol-related anti-social behaviour.*

Assessment

The proposed annual event has the potential to **contribute positively** to some extent by providing a venue in an attractive setting including shade and shelter and a natural open rural setting close to the city, accessible to all ticket holders. The site has been cleared and grassed with many trees retained and limbed up to give the site an open space park like character. While a ticketed event, it would provide an event space unique in the district as described above and surrounded on three sides by plantation forestry, and with the Lower Styx Road and southwestern boundary also well vegetated to screen the site visually from other properties and the road.

The opportunity to **activate an otherwise vacant site** with low visual amenity is a positive outcome. A future or concurrent rural use of the site has also been made possible by this work, though the proposal does not include any such use at this time.

The events will undoubtedly have some **adverse impacts on the amenity** values of some residents (rural, residential and campers at Spencer Beach Top 10 Holiday Park), as would be the case with a fully permitted temporary concert event. Having made that point though, the scale of this event including amplified music is well beyond the permitted event duration which is envisaged as being for up to four hours a day and beyond the permitted daytime hours of 9am and 10pm. Adverse impacts on the amenity values noted include noise impacts, and the impact on the safety and efficiency of the road network. These matters are considered further below. Other than those matters though, the scale of the site and its layout and visual separation from other sites occupied by people, are such that the event is unlikely to have any other adverse impacts on amenity that are of any consequence. A key aspect of the site design is that ticketholders and traffic in general arriving at the site are readily accommodated in multiple long traffic lanes on site for sorting toward either the parking area or PUDO area, with all this occurring away from public view. The site is well screened along its frontage and the entry and exit both turn corners which will impede any direct views into or out of the site.

Of the above matters of discretion, the **buildings and structures** proposed to setup the compound and deliver the event over four days and including almost three weeks before the event and just under two weeks after, are unlikely to adversely affect the anticipated level of amenity for anyone except in a negligible way. The buildings and structures are likely not visible from Lower Styx Road or any other residential or rural zoned site. If they are, they would be quite distance glimpses of structures. No structure would have a physical prominence impacting the level of amenity experienced at these nearest homes. The event is concentrated in the northeastern corner of the site to take it as far away from the nearest homes as is possible, with a wide planted area retained along the roadside and the southwestern boundary, providing a visual buffer between the site and areas others have access to.

Temporary fencing of the event site, stages, amusement rides, shower blocks, water tanks, portaloos, food trucks will all be obvious building up to the event, during it and as pack out is progressed. For those cycling or walking on the track, these structures will be obvious and to some degree have physical bulk and prominence on what is otherwise an open rural site. However, these structures are not in the view of any residence. The applicant advises that the lease includes a requirement for any structures erected on the site to be removed from the site at the end of the lease, so the structures would be temporary ones, albeit several of them are proposed to stay on site for a three-year period. In the rural urban fringe zone farm buildings such as commercial greenhouses, wintering barns, produce packing buildings, and poultry hatcheries are permitted up to 12m in height, setback 15m from a road boundary and 10m from any internal boundary and covering 5% of the net site area or 2000m² (whichever is lesser). Structures of relatively large scale are therefore anticipated in this zone.

The structures are well separated from nearby residential and rural residential properties. The associated **lighting** for the event will be directed into the site and not toward the nearest adjoining road and homes. No **overshadowing** of other activities will occur.

I consider any **cumulative effects of all temporary activities and buildings using the proposed location** would be negligible as the event is only for four days a year, though in relation to noise there is further discussion later in this report. While pack in and pack out is proposed over an almost five week period (four weeks permitted), this reflects the intention to do this work in stages so that there is not a lot of intensive activity on site, and given it occurs at a time of year when statutory holidays during the week pre-event may reduce available pack in days. Limited structures will remain on site throughout the year and will be removed at the end of the consent period so are not permanent features. Two 40 foot containers, two 20 foot containers, six 30,000 litre water tanks, and the skate ramp are proposed to remain on site all year. The applicant advises these will all be sited to meet the built form standards that apply to permitted activities in the rural urban fringe zone, ensuring they will be no closer than 10m to any site boundary. Currently no other temporary events are proposed on the site. The site is very large the buildings and structures to remain on site all year are relatively small and will be well separated from the nearest homes and with limited visibility from any other sites other than the plantation forests.

One resident has raised a concern about the disruption to cell phone coverage such an event will have for people who rely on it in emergencies. The applicant has advised that they have a partnership with One NZ that will include provision of a portable cell tower for the event to boost coverage for the duration of the event.

With regard to **loss of privacy and visual amenity**, the closest sensitive residential activities on rural zoned land (excluding the adjoining sites at 230 and 234 Lower Styx Road) are to the southwest of the site.

The dwelling at 226 Lower Styx Road (a rear section adjoining 234 Lower Styx Road site) is the home closest to the event that is not on an adjoining site. That home is separated by approximately 605m from the exit track from the site and the closest end of the PUDO area, by approximately 515m to the Stage B and C compound, and approximately 490m to the nearest camping sites. Stage A is approximately 925m away.

To the north the closest homes in a residential zone are some 675m away beyond the pine forest. The southern end of the Spencer Beach Top 10 Holiday Park appears to be some 957m from Stage A.

The site is well screened from Lower Styx Road. I do not consider the event or use of the site as proposed will result in any loss of privacy or visual amenity on sites beyond those that adjoin the site.

Although there are occupied rural sites further afield, and the residential area to the north beyond the forest, the event will occur within an event compound that uses the northeastern corner of this large site, and ticketholders are not able to roam free in the area outside the fenced compound. No use of the southwestern corner of the site is proposed day to day during the event, except in the case of emergency where the “emergency location meeting point” is in this area outside the compound directly south of the PUDO area. The camping area is approximately 550m from Lower Styx Road, the food court and Stages B & C are approximately 350m from the road at their closest point, and the Stage A compound is setback 435m from the road at its closest point.

Ticketholders and staff with parking passes will be accommodated on site with all others being dropped off by buses, taxis, rideshare companies or private vehicles in a dedicated PUDO area on site and well screened from the road. There are “no stopping” cones along a 522m length extending each side of the entry and exit points, and no pedestrian access to the site, so those arriving at and departing the site will have no more impact on privacy and visual amenity of the residents in the area than would any other user of the public road.

With regard to **waste management and litter**, Closed Loop is responsible for waste management for the festival both on site and along the surrounding roads. WasteCo provide the necessary skips and bins. The Event Management Plan specifies waste clearance when stages are closed and throughout the event and up to two days after the event with proposed further collection if any waste remains beyond this time. During the festival any rubbish along roadsides in the vicinity of the site will also be cleared. Glass is not permitted on site, so there will be no noise disturbance involving the loud tipping of glass at sensitive hours as sometimes arises with such events.

Alcohol related anti-social behaviour and litter associated with the event have potential to adversely impact amenity for those beyond the site boundary, but in practice this is unlikely to occur. Proposed site management as noted in the Event Management Plan and Alcohol Management Plan is such that any behavioural issues will be able to be dealt with on site, including with assistance from Police if needed. The terms of any liquor license will have oversight of onsite measures to ensure appropriate management. In the case of this site, ticketholders are not able to leave the site on foot, so off site anti-social behaviours in the vicinity of the site where there is traffic management and onsite and external boundary security in place 24/7, is unlikely to occur, and if it does there are processes in place to ensure it will be appropriately managed. A resident who wrote in opposing the event was concerned that ticketholders would use the forest area as toilets, but this is not likely given the ticketed area is a fenced compound with people able to arrive and exit via a single pedestrian facility only.

With regard to **hours of operation and noise**, residents of the area have raised a number of concerns.

Concerns have been raised about noise nuisance associated with the use of Golf Road including its use by vehicles and ticketholders walking to the Spencer Beach Holiday Park. It is unlikely any such nuisance will arise as vehicles will not access Golf Road at the Spencerville end (passing by houses), they will access it via 12th Avenue which is a forestry road with direct access off Lower Styx Road at a point approximately halfway between the festival site’s public entrance and the southern extent of Spencerville. Camping is also available on site, and ticketholders are not permitted to leave the site on foot, so people walking to Spencerville from the event is unlikely to occur.

Another concern related to whether the modelling of noise levels was impacted by recent or future harvesting of forestry blocks. The Acoustic specialist has confirmed that this would make little difference to noise outcomes, likely 1dB.

Disruption from fireworks was a concern for many residents who wrote in to Council, due to fire risk but also the noise impacts from loud devices which were mentioned as being a problem for pets and animals. The fireworks display has been removed from the proposal after information was not readily available to the fireworks professional involved about noise levels.

Some had concerns about the duration of the event and the loud noise levels (including annoying bass) they would experience over the extended period. There was concern the noise levels produced would disrupt sleep (particularly for campers with young children and those with vulnerable health and sensory needs) as well as generally impacting mental well-being and creating stress over the holiday period. Late finish times (noted as 3am and 4am as they were initially proposed) were a particular concern regarding sleep disruption. Also mentioned was potential for noise nuisance from campers at the festival after the amplified music ended each day. Some people mentioned the cumulative effects of events held in the Spencerville area with Easter Camp and Two Minds campground two-day music festival (late summer) already occurring each year.

In addition, there were concerns that wind direction and background noise levels needed to be considered, and a concern that Council would not be monitoring the event itself.

Council as operator of the Spencer Beach Top 10 Holiday Park had concerns regarding noise nuisance for the up to 1500 campers who are on site at the time of the festival and noted potential for less bookings to occur in subsequent years and loss of revenue as a result.

John Alps, Council's Principal Advisor Noise Control with Council has considered the application in the context of the abovementioned planning framework and assessment matters. This includes the wide-ranging matters listed under rule 6.1.6 in relation to the noise level non-compliances noted in tables 10, 11 and 12 of the Acoustic assessment attached to the application (Version 13 dated 30th September 2025). He has considered and assessed the likely impacts of the proposed annual event for the next three-year period, and his report is attached as **Appendix 3**.

Based on his experience of monitoring similar events for many years for Council, and his consideration of the Acoustic Assessment and Noise Management Plan, Mr Alps confirms his view that the only aspect of the proposed festival that is likely to create any noise nuisance off site is the amplified music. The site is very large and relatively well separated from the nearest residents such that they are unlikely to be disturbed by day-to-day construction, people noise, operation of the food court, servicing, amusement rides and traffic.

Mr Alps has provided feedback to the applicants as they have refined and reconfigured their event proposal, to ensure potential noise nuisance is mitigated where this is reasonably achievable. This includes providing suggestions regarding potential conditions of consent that could be offered to provide clarity and certainty for those in the vicinity of the site that commitments made in the application will be met.

Mr Alps confirms that although the event has an extended duration including three days of amplified music, the event is now configured and proposed to be managed in a manner that compliance with District Plan daytime noise levels at sensitive receivers (residents and campers beyond the adjoining sites) will be achieved.² Of the 43 hours total of amplified music proposed over three days (12hr on the 29th, 15hrs starting on the 30th and finishing at 1am, and 16hrs on the 31st finishing at 2am), 34 hours will be during this period (between 10.05am and 10pm on the 29th, 30th and 31st).

These noise levels occur over an extended duration and on a day-to-day basis are quite out of character with the usual relatively quiet rural environs. However, for a temporary activity once a year, Mr Alps concludes they are acceptable. In this regard, they are occurring at levels that do not conflict with the expected amenity values of the area as represented by the relevant District Plan noise standards.

A total of 9 hours of amplified music is proposed during nighttime hours (10pm-7am), with a midnight finish on the 29th, 1am finish after the 30th, and 2am finish after the 31st. During this period, amplified music proposed on the 29th and 30th has been modelled as able to achieve the stricter (by 10dB) nighttime noise levels (or exceed by only 1-2dB on adjoining sites – considered later in this report). On the 31st from midnight to 2am reduced noise levels at source ensure the same can be achieved. Thus, seven of the nine nighttime hours of amplified music can meet the District Plan nighttime noise levels on all sites that are beyond those adjoining the application site. As concluded above, during these times Mr Alps concludes the event is acceptable as it is able to meet the expected amenity values regarding noise at all these residential receivers and for campers.

For New Years Eve from 10pm until midnight, the applicant proposes to increase noise levels at source in the build up to celebrating the dawn of the New Year. Table 12 of the Acoustic report shows that for this two-hour period there are exceedances of the noise standard as follows³:

- +2db at 176, 206, 218 and 220 Lower Styx Road and at the Spencer Beach Top 10 Holiday Park and the Specific Purpose (Golf Resort) zone site boundary

² On two adjoining rural sites to the southwest levels are exceeded by 2-3dB. This is considered below when impacts on adjoining sites are considered.

³ Exceedances at adjoining sites 230 and 234 Lower Styx Road are considered later in the report

- +3 dB at 212, 222 and 224 Lower Styx Road
- +4 dB at 228 Lower Styx Road and at the closest home in Spencerville (286 Lower Styx Road)⁴ – and near that at other nearby homes
- +5db at 226 Lower Styx Road

A series of three aerial photos with property addresses added are attached as **Appendix 4**.

As noted earlier in this report, exceedances of 1-3dB are inaudibly different (or barely so) to noise levels that meet the standard, so Mr Alps considers them acceptable as meeting the expected amenity values on these sites.

Mr Alps notes the levels at +4 and +5 dB over the District Plan standard will be perceived as noticeable but not extreme, with +4db perceived as a noticeable change and +5dB a clearly noticeable change. He advised a +4dB exceedance is an approximately 32% perceived increase in noise, and +5dB as an approximately 41% perceived increase in noise levels. Mr Alps notes that Table 12 of the Acoustic report shows that during this period, the District Plan standard L_{Amax} level of 65 dB at residential and rural zoned sites (highest level modelled of 55 L_{Amax} during this period); and 75dB at open space and specific purpose (Golf Resort) zones (highest level modelled of 57 dB L_{Amax}), will be met by some margin. He also anticipates that noise levels inside residential units (as opposed to at their boundaries or notional boundaries) will be less than those modelled due to mitigation provided by the structure itself and with the option of having windows closed, sleep disturbance would be limited. He notes though that campers will not experience a reduction in levels when in tents – with these levels complying at all times in any case except the two hours on New Years Eve. In addition, there will also be a bass condition in place for the whole of the event to manage noise impacts, and the exceedance at these levels is for a short two-hour period on one night of the year, albeit in association with an event of extended duration. For this extended duration event Mr Alps has already noted it is otherwise able to meet District Plan noise standards at these rural and residential receivers.

I accept this expert advice. I have carefully considered all the concerns raised by residents in the vicinity of the site, and understand that from their perspective, this is a quiet rural area and their expectation is events of this nature should be held elsewhere. They have said that the extended duration of the event and accompanying noise will impact negatively on the normal enjoyment of their neighbourhood. I accept that it will do this to some extent in that noise levels for the duration of the event will be louder than what those living or camping in the area are used to. *However, I am not of the view that it is the existing level of amenity that the proposal is reasonably compared to in applying the temporary activity framework of the District Plan, it is the expected level of amenity.* With regard to noise, this framework includes upper limits to be achieved, and the proposal is reasonably compared to those noise levels in the District Plan that are permitted day-to-day. The event is able to meet these standards for all but two hours from 10pm to midnight on New Years Eve, so on one night of the year, for the next three years. Despite the extended duration of the event, and it operating beyond 10pm on three consecutive days, I do not see this as unreasonable in the context of the District Plan framework. A framework that has considered the competing demands in such instances and includes provision to enable such events city wide in recognition of their benefits on an infrequent basis, with higher noise levels for a limited period. In the context of the policy and the framework for the noise rules, the event is largely compatible with expected amenity levels, and the two-hour period where the District Plan standards are not met from 10pm until midnight on New Years Eve, is a time when many people stay up late and celebrate. For this two-hour period, I also note the more restrictive measure offered in the bass condition will be applicable. Overall, I consider the proposed event will produce noise levels that are in accordance with expected noise levels in this area, and for the two hours building up to New Years Eve, elevated levels are within a range that can be tolerated given their temporary nature once a year.

In coming to this view, I acknowledge that while the applicant initially submitted a proposal that represented close to their ideal event, they have since been proactive in investigating alternatives and possible mitigation to minimise the impact of the festival on the neighbourhood whilst still being able to meet festival objectives. This included them suggesting at one point in their investigations, that an acoustic wall 8m high around the Stage A compound might be able to reduce noise levels significantly. This proved not to be cost effective, and similar outcomes were able to be achieved by reconfiguring stages, reducing use of Stages B & C and a range of other measures as discussed in Mr Alps's report.

6.2.5.2 Transport

- a. The extent to which the location, scale, intensity or duration of the activity and any associated buildings will adversely affect:*
- i. the efficiency of the transport network; and*
 - ii. public safety.*

Assessment

⁴ For modelling purposes, 286 Lower Styx Road as used as a proxy for the closest residential homes in Spencerville

Rolling Meadows have held a music festival for the last four years on a rural site near Waipara and have data around traffic generation that has been used to inform site design, layout, parking capacity, pedestrian separation areas and on road management of traffic. Most of the traffic is anticipated to arrive from the direction of Christchurch, being to the south along Lower Styx Road, turning off at the traffic light-controlled intersection with Marshland Road. Any other traffic will approach from the north, also from Marshland Road, likely mostly via Spencerville Road.

For the event, an event specific Traffic Management Plan has been prepared. An initial TMP design provided for right and left turns into the site entry when there was no on road queuing and exit as left turn only (south) at all times. Once queueing to enter the site arose, TMD 2.0 would apply which used cones to restrict right hand turns into the site from the south. This was considered potentially unsafe as most of the traffic coming to the site and approaching from the south would have had to drive past the site and turn around to approach from the north. This was considered likely to result in unsafe U-turns and extra traffic into Spencerville. The revised TMP introduced traffic lights to control manoeuvres once queueing occurs, managing south bound through-traffic to enable event vehicles to continue to access the site via both left and right hand turns into the site. A speed limit of 50kmphr applies when the traffic lights are not in action (TMD1.0) and this is reduced to 30km/hr when lights are used (TMD2.0). The exit remains as left turn only at all times. This TMP has been consented by Council's Temporary Traffic Management team.

Mr Liqi Chen, Transport Network Planner has reviewed the application, including the Event Management Plan, the Temporary Traffic Management Plan, and subsequent responses to Council's RFIs. Based on the information provided, he considers that the traffic and parking effects of the proposed event can be satisfactorily managed, with agreed conditions in place. He notes that the proposal is for a three-day music event with a fourth day for departure with maximum attendance of approximately 10,000 people on 30th and 31st December, and up to 5,000 people camping onsite from the 29th. The applicant estimates a maximum parking demand of 3,047 vehicles, including both daily arrivals and overnight stays. In theory, he notes the proposed internal parking area has sufficient capacity to accommodate this demand.

In relation to the matters of discretion Mr Chen reports as follows in relation to adverse effects on [the efficiency of the transport network](#):

Local Road Network

Lower Styx Road is classified as a collector road. Council's two most recent traffic counts confirm a moderate level of traffic along this route. The southern count, recorded on 08/02/2024 near the Marshland Road intersection, showed an average daily traffic of 3,471 vehicles. The northern count, recorded on 01/11/2022 near Heyders Road, recorded an average daily traffic of 1,701 vehicles.

Lower Styx Road connects to the wider arterial transport network via two major intersections: at the northern end with Main North Road/Spencerville Road, and at the southern end with Marshland Road. The application indicates that most of the traffic demand is expected to come from the south, where the Marshland/Lower Styx Road intersection is signalised. Given that the proposed event dates fall within the Christmas and New Year public holiday period, overall traffic volumes on the transport network are expected to remain moderate.

Site Frontage:

The site is located on the urban fringe, with a reasonable setback from sensitive residential areas. Parking is situated internally over 200m away from Lower Styx Road. Along the site frontage, the dedicated entrance and exit points are provided directly off Lower Styx Road, with no-parking restrictions along the site frontage and beyond to ensure all vehicle manoeuvring occurs within the site.

Traffic Management Plan

The original TMD 2.0 plan in the TMP proposed left-turn-in only at the main entrance when a long queue start form at the main access to mitigate the impact on the through traffic. Given the site's location, this could encourage unsafe U-turns nearby. While most attendees are expected from the south via State Highway routes, it is preferable to allow controlled right-turn movements at the access to minimise effects. In subsequent RFI discussions, the applicant clarified that TMD 2.0 will be featured with an E-Stop mechanism at the main access to manage flows while still allowing right turn movements.

In relation adverse effects re [public safety](#), Mr Chen reports as follows:

Pedestrian Access:

Given the provided TMP layout plan, the entire site frontage will be coned off with no parking or stopping permitted. There will be no direct pedestrian access points from Lower Styx Road. All attendees, including pick-up and drop-off movements by coaches, taxis, and ride-share services, will be directed into the internal parking area and designated

pick-up/drop-off zone. I agree with the proposed arrangement, as restricting pedestrian movements and informal pick-up/drop-off along Lower Styx Road will minimise conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles while ensuring efficient traffic flow under the TMP. This should be made clear to all attendees, that no pedestrian access is permitted directly off Lower Styx Road.

Parking capacity and layout

The proposed parking layout is based on 2.3 m wide spaces with 4 m aisle widths. While this arrangement could theoretically fit up to 3,600 spaces, it falls below District Plan standards (minimum 2.4 m x 5 m spaces with 6.4–6.6 m aisles). This would make vehicle manoeuvring challenging. However, the effect is likely to be more about internal convenience than safety, given very low operating speeds expected and the assistance of parking wardens. Based on vehicle occupation for previous events the applicant considers that 3047 spaces will be needed to accommodate demand for parking on a daily basis and for campers staying on on-site. I accept there is space to accommodate this number of car parks on site each day. While spaces for 3047 vehicles are available on site, ticketholders and staff demand for these would ideally be managed via pre-sale or pre-allocation given there is no capacity for additional parking on site with the PUDO design proposed. I support a condition that would provide for this, as the applicant has offered. In the absence of pre-allocation, and with unexpected demand for parking not being known until it occurs, both public safety and network efficiency could be compromised by excessive and unexpected vehicle generation during the event.

Internal circulation and network

Parking will be managed via a one-way system guided by wardens. A 10 m wide pedestrian accessway is provided to link Pickup/Drop-Off and parking areas with the main ticketing gate, which supports safe onsite movements. However, only one pedestrian crossing was proposed at the pick-up and drop-off zone and this was considered inadequate considering the high frequency of pickup and drop-off vehicle manoeuvring. An additional crossing was considered necessary to help reduce walking distances and avoid pedestrians sharing narrow aisles with those vehicles. The applicant has amended the application to provide for a second pedestrian crossing accordingly.

In summary, Mr Chen has concluded that overall, the safety effects on all road users and transport network efficiency have been reasonably addressed in the application and assessment thereof, in association with the recommended agreed conditions of consent.

I accept Mr Chen's expert assessment in relation to these matters of discretion. In summary, on road traffic management will be provided in accordance with an approved TMP prepared in accordance with the principles specified in the application. The utilisation of traffic lights at busy periods including on the final day of the event will also see the site departures on January 1st able to be safely managed with departures winding down at about the time the Spencer Park gala is opening. The site size is such that it can accommodate peak traffic arrivals and departures by all modes safely on site. Ticketholders are encouraged to access the site via chartered bus services with tickets being presold and enough buses being chartered to accommodate the presale event demand. The presale demand will also enable RML to gauge take up of charter bus tickets and to communicate accordingly regarding the limited availability of parking on site. The applicant has offered to make onsite parking available via presale only for ticket holders to ensure that parking spaces demand does not outstrip the limited supply given there is also a need to accommodate staff parking in the same area. This would then force the hand of ticketholders to prepurchase bus passes or use taxis, rideshare or drop off/pick up alternatives. I support the need for presale/pre-allocation of parking spaces as this will enable the applicant to manage the provision for car parking on site to meet anticipated parking demand accessed via the single driveway access. This and other modes will then be able to be managed efficiently and safely in accordance with the TMP measures proposed and approved. Pedestrian access to the event compound is via a dedicated pedestrian route that is separated from the vehicle access to the site to provide for safety of ticket holders.

6.2.5.3 Economic recovery and resilience

a. The extent to which the proposed activity will contribute positively to the local economy and create spill-over trade to permanent activities in commercial centres.

Assessment

The event is likely to contribute positively to the local economy insofar as it will attract people to the city and potentially keep people here over this holiday period. This would likely have potential benefits to retail operations in the general area such as fuel stations, food stores etc and to taxi/rideshare operators, though I have no information to quantify any such benefits.

6.2.5.4 Competing requirements for the location

a. The extent to which the proposed activity will limit public access to areas that would otherwise be accessible or restrict other temporary or permanent activities from making use of the location.

Assessment

Festivals and events such as these are often held in public parks, though this one involving overnight campers is less likely to fall into this category. In any case, the event site is privately owned rural land over which there was no lawful access, so the proposed activity will not limit access to the land that is otherwise provided for.

The event proposes to utilise two forestry roads for service access. These roads run through and along the edge of Bottle Lake Forest and are used by walkers and cyclists. As is currently the case, the forestry road gates will remain locked/closed to exclude the public, and that will not change. Pedestrians and cyclists will not be excluded from accessing these roads as they currently do.

6.2.5.5 Site disturbance or alteration

a. The extent to which proposed activities, buildings, associated earthworks, servicing or any additional accesses or parking areas provided⁵ will create an alteration or disturbance to any:

- i. land;*
- ii. water bodies or their margins;*
- iii. vegetation; and/or*
- iv. ecosystems*

that is irreversible or that will last beyond the duration of the activity or event and, where any such effects are reversible, the adequacy of any proposals for restoration.

Assessment

The proposed events may cause some disturbance to the land, but all are temporary and none that are irreversible. The only impacts would relate to site tidy up each year, and the removal of any structures at the end of the consent period. RML have advised they are required to remove all structures at the end of their three-year lease period, and has offered a condition in this regard. Two formed crossings, the track into the site, the PUDO area and exit track will be constructed of compacted AP40 mix to ensure it is suitable for heavy traffic will be laid atop the land up to 300mm thick. One resident has raised a concern this infrastructure will block overland flow paths in an area subject to ponding. Having raised this with the Planning Engineer, Sheryl Keenan, I am advised this is a bylaw matter and Council will ensure no such blocking occurs via enforcement of the bylaw. This will likely require installation of culverts at these locations. The construction will have effects similar to that which permitted rural track construction would cause.

Adverse Effects on the environment summary (beyond those on adjacent sites) – as a temporary activity

For the reasons discussed above, I consider that the adverse effects of the proposal (on the environment beyond the adjacent properties) are less than minor. The application documentation shows the applicant company has wide ranging management provisions in place to minimise disruption off site associated with the event including ensuring safe access and egress; collecting waste and upholding road network efficiency. The site is well screened and the event, in relation to most issues discussed above is well separated from the wider neighbourhood. There are also extensive measures in place to manage services and on-site safety. The experience of running similar events in recent times is well demonstrated in the thoroughness included in all aspects of the event documentation including an overview Event Management Plan, an Alcohol Management Plan, a Waste Management agreement, Fire risk management, and including an Event Safety Plan and a Fire Mitigation Plan; as well as being backed up by testimonials of parties who have seen this event running smoothly on the previous sit. This includes one from the owner of the land who noted the ongoing learning and adaptation leading to an improved event offering year on year. The proposed event I feel assured will benefit from these years of experience. A suite of offered conditions are included in the application, which I support as addressing key matters and commitments.

The main issue with the proposal in terms of its “fit” in this environment, relates to the extended duration of the event and the proposed noise levels associated with it as experienced at sensitive receivers – being residents in Spencerville, rural residents to the southwest of the site and campers at Spencer Beach Top 10 Holiday Park.

⁵ The word “provided” replaced the word “required” in Council’s decision on Plan Change 5G – the change makes little if any difference to this proposal given that the provided parking areas are considered not to create any alteration or disturbance to land that is irreversible.

While the event is considerably longer than a permitted event so elevated noise levels would extend over a three-day period and for extended hours each day, the temporary activity objective and policy in the District Plan does generally support that such events have widespread positive impacts for the district. This will always be somewhat at the short-term expense of those who live nearby and experience disruption to what may well be an otherwise quiet and peaceful environment. The objective is clear that regard shall be had to expected amenity values (as discussed above and including otherwise applicable noise standards in relation to amplified music), while the related policy seeks to “enable temporary activities and buildings and events provided the location, frequency, scale, duration and effects of the temporary activity and building are compatible with the level of amenity anticipated by the surrounding environment or are with a range that can be tolerated given the temporary nature of the activity”. As discussed above, given that the event meets the District Plan noise standards measured at sensitive receivers for all but two hours of the event in the build up to New Years Eve, I am of the view that these elevated levels are reasonably considered as able to be tolerated on one night of the year.

Conclusion – as a ‘temporary activity’

Overall, as discussed above, and for the reasons given in those discussions, in the context of a permissive planning framework for events where short term impacts are considered compatible with an expected level of amenity or tolerable for short periods of time, I consider that any adverse effects on the wider environment will be less than minor and that there will be no affected persons.

Additional effects to consider if the activity is not accepted as a temporary activity – rural zone

If not accepted as a “temporary activity”, then the activity is a non-complying activity in the Rural Urban Fringe zone. For context, the District Plan includes a single rural objective and related policies which can guide assessing the effects of the proposal. In general terms these relevantly provide for use of rural land that supports and maintains the function, character and amenity values of the rural environment and in particular the potential contribution of rural productive activities to the economy and wellbeing of the district. The economic development potential of rural land is provided for by enabling activities that are dependent on the rural resource, have a functional or operational necessity for a rural location or represent an efficient use of natural resources. Policy seeks to “ensure that activities utilising the rural resource avoid significant adverse effects on areas of important natural resources and avoid, remedy or mitigate other adverse effects on rural character and amenity values”.

All of the above assessment is equally relevant for consideration of a non-complying activity, so I will not duplicate discussion of the matters considered above.

As noted above, various residents of the wider area, and the Council as operator of the Spencer Beach Top 10 Holiday Park campground have raised concerns about the event. These include matters wider than those able to be considered under the matters of discretion introduced above relevant to a ‘temporary activity’. A wider range of matters to consider would include the impact of additional traffic in the area, fire risk, disturbance to farm animals, impact on property values, and a lack of fencing around the site, impacts on ecologically sensitive sites in the vicinity; security risks, impacts on rural character, and impacts on highly productive land.

Traffic

As discussed above, the event would attract additional traffic to the area that would otherwise not be on these roads. As discussed above, the additional traffic is considered to be able to be accommodated on Lower Styx Road, a collector road, and the wider area in a safe and efficient manner with event traffic closely controlled during the event including with reduced speed limits and no stopping areas. In the vicinity of the site the road follows the Styx River with a grassed area between the road and the river; and forestry roads are also used as a recreational resource. These will be able to accommodate walkers and cyclists should they feel the additional traffic makes road use feel unsafe.

With the event for campers finishing at midnight on the 29th there will be some staff leaving after the Stage closes, but this will involve relatively small numbers of vehicles. On the 30th and 31st vehicles in the order of 1700 cars parked on site for the day plus buses, taxis and ride share vehicles picking ticketholders up will be arriving on site and then leaving the site toward the south. This will be gradual and not all at one time with main acts finishing by 10pm and food on offer over the whole event period and other acts continuing until 1am on the 30th and 2am on the 31st. The PUDO and car park areas, as well as the road in the vicinity of the site are all managed by festival staff ensuring the exiting of ticketholders happens in an orderly, efficient and safe manner. Once on the road, there may be a noticeable increase in traffic for residents all along Lower Styx Road, and beyond, but that should be similar to the usual traffic noise on the road. While it is a concentration of traffic at a time that likely experiences less intensive traffic generation otherwise, it is for two nights only and is at a time that it is unlikely to impact other road users.

There have been concerns expressed about driver behaviour after a day at the festival, including regarding the risk of drunk drivers being on the road. This is ultimately a matter for the police to monitor, as they will be well aware of the proposed event and will have a presence there if it does proceed. This is not considered a relevant resource management matter.

A concern raised is that public transport is limited in the area. The applicant is aware of this and has planned accordingly by making provision for extensive onsite parking for staff and ticket holders and providing charter buses to meet demand. I am informed by the Applicant that the more demand there is for charter bus tickets, the more they will secure.

One resident expressed concern that there was no evacuation plan for tsunami or other natural disaster, noting that there are limited roads into the area and out of it for residents. There is a specific evacuation plan if fire occurs in the area but otherwise this is not planned for. Residents will be aware of the event operating if it is consented, and will be aware that traffic out of the site is managed to be left turn only towards Marshlands Road, so they will have access to the northern exits from the area in the unlikely event that such a natural disaster will occur on one of the four days of the event.

Fire risk

Residents in the area have raised particular concerns about the proposal to hold a fireworks display at midnight on New Years Eve, and regarding the general fire risks associated with an event of this nature being held adjoining a plantation forest.

I have had some input and advice on the proposal from Fire & Emergency NZ to understand the risks involved, and attach as **Appendix 5** an email from Bruce Irvine, Senior Advisor Risk Reduction with Fire & Emergency NZ. This memo explains FENZ's role in providing advice and services to manage and reduce the risk of fire, including in rural/natural environments such as the application site.

As noted by FENZ, until earlier this year, the site was disused and overgrown. It was not actively managed and showed signs of casual human occupation. It was considered by FENZ in its overgrown state and with unauthorised camping etc to be a significant fire risk. The broom and gorse on the site were widespread and when visited in January by FENZ staff was very dry. The applicant subsequently had some 38 hectares of the site cleared (prior to applying for resource consent for the event), and much of this area is now grassed and the whole site is being actively managed. FENZ is satisfied that the imminent fire risk has been significantly reduced as a result.

Mr Irvine explains that RML have engaged with FENZ regarding this event and has acted on the advice they have given by including appropriate management and measures in a Fire Mitigation Plan which will guide operations on site during the event. Measures include sand fire buckets distributed across the site, extinguishers, a grid layout for camping areas including exit paths, no fires/cooking other than trade food site providers and provision of suitable evacuation areas. He also advises FENZ are aware of the proposed event and will have a predetermined fire response plan given the areas fire season status and based on local fire risk identifiers. The Styx River provides an unlimited water supply, and forestry roads are accessible in the event of a fire.

I note that ticketholders are not roaming the wider area, they are within a fenced compound for the event, so with all these measures in place and FENZ satisfied with the pre-planning and operational measures in place, I consider the risk of fire will be appropriately managed with measures in place to respond with urgency at source should any fire start. At this time, fireworks are not part of the proposal, but this could be revisited via another application. Mr Irvine notes that any fireworks would only be able to proceed under a permit issued by them having considered the relevant regulations.

I accept the expert advice from FENZ. On the face of it having such an event next to a plantation forest seems to be a risky proposition, but the cleared, grassed and managed site is clearly less of a day-to-day risk than the past overgrown site was. The event documentation shows a high level of preparedness incorporated in site management for all aspects of the event including avoiding a number of obvious fire risks eg no campfires or cooking. The event is contained within a carefully managed compound. Trained staff will be knowledgeable about measures that can be taken at source to extinguish any fire that did occur; and FENZ will be on standby to deal with any issue arising.

Impact on property values

This is not considered an impact on the environment, so not relevantly considered under the Resource Management Act. However, if there are adverse environmental effects, these are relevant and can be considered. These are considered elsewhere in this report.

Security

Some residents in the area have expressed concerns about security at their own sites during the event. The information submitted demonstrates that people involved in the event will be arriving by vehicles of some description with ticketholders not able to leave the site on foot. Anyone seeking to hang around the site on foot instead of buying tickets would be moved along by the active management of the event boundary by security teams 24/7 and with support from Police. There is active supervision of vehicles in the vicinity of the site by external security personnel and the Traffic management staff, including extensive no-stopping zones alongside the site. On this basis, it seems likely that the event organisers will manage any unauthorised persons in the area to ensure they move along. With regard to potential for unauthorised persons accessing private land in the vicinity not under the control of the applicant, RML have indicated they are agreeable to posting security during peak times at nearby driveway entrances if requested by residents. In addition, the Event Managers details will be shared with residents in the letter drop notification so they can be contacted directly if any issues arise.

Lack of fencing

I do not consider this to be a relevant resource management issue. While I understand there have been wild pigs on the site that have dispersed into the forest and on rural sites to the southwest of the application site, this was as a result of the earlier land clearance which was completed before this application was made. That clearance could have occurred at any time on a rural site, so these effects do not seem to be relevant to this application. Fencing of shared boundaries is covered by other legislation as I understand it.

Ecological impacts

The southwestern site boundary is in close proximity to Sheppards Stream, a remnant dune-slack wetland and a site of ecological significance as identified in the District Plan (LP31). Andrew Crossland, Council ornithologist advises the wetland reserve is a year-round habitat for waterbirds including being a known habitat (viewed by Park Rangers) of Australasian bittern (threatened- nationally critical) and likely nesting from August to May; and highly likely to be the habitat of both marsh crake (at risk -declining) and spotless crake (at risk -declining) given these two species occur in the area and the reserve is the type of habitat they frequent.

In rejecting an earlier application, it was noted an ecological assessment would be needed to consider the impact of the event on this birdlife. The assessment subsequently submitted focussed its scope on assessing whether breeding habitat existing for such birds and whether there were records of the site using the site for breeding. The assessment recommended surveys in the breeding season to find this out. Mr Crossland has considered this information and advised such surveys would be after the first event had occurred and would be of little value as a result. In the RFI more targeted questions were asked, and answers provided. Mr Crossland accepts that the information now provided demonstrates that with fireworks dropped from the proposal, no human access at the southern end of the site, and all lighting being well separated from the south western corner of the site and therefore the wetland and with timing controls in place that the event should not cause unacceptable day and night-time disturbance to any breeding waterbirds present. In conclusion, Mr Crossland notes that *“the undertakings for the purpose of mitigating adverse effects on protected birdlife are outlined in Appendix 9 (Ecological Mitigation) in the report by Baseline Group. These are brief, but mostly around distance between the main event area and the wetland (stated as 900 m); restrictions on public access; the extent of vegetation buffering in the form of large trees; and the tasking of security workers to keep people away from the wetland. If these measures are followed I am satisfied that disturbance levels at Sheppard’s Stream will be reduced to levels that should be tolerable to birdlife present”*.

I accept this expert advice and conclude that given the manner in which the application site is proposed to be used - with no activity south of the camping area (except if an emergency evacuation is required), then there is ample separation between the event activity and the sensitive site. This in association with the additional details regarding lighting, fireworks, public access and security suggest adverse impacts on the sensitive birdlife in the vicinity will be minimal.

It is noted that rare lizards are known to exist in this local area in overgrown habitats, and habitat and lizard populations were likely destroyed in the site clearance process. If any further site clearance is proposed within the duration of this consent (if granted), this should be discussed with Council beforehand in the context of potential habitat loss, but also in relation to the temporary activity definition and what it enables.

Impact on Styx River

A concerned resident has raised the issue of litter and freedom camping impacting the Styx River. Litter management is proposed throughout the event and beyond the site, as discussed above. If anyone seeks to freedom camp in the area, there are standard responses to this by Council and any such behaviour should be reported to Council.

Impact on farm animals and wildlife

Animals and other creatures in the wider vicinity of the site will potentially be disturbed by the changes on the site each December and January involving site maintenance, gradual pack in, high levels of activity, traffic and noise, the event itself, then the gradual clearance and tidy up of the site. Much of these activities will be readily assimilated with the surrounds noting the site is surrounded mostly by plantation forestry, with adjoining land use to the southwest mostly lifestyle blocks with little in the way of stock, and the nearest site to the SW developed along a portion of the boundary as a commercial vehicle storage operation. The noisy aspect of the event is only for a period of three days and is not dissimilar (and in fact quieter) than a fully permitted four-hour event that could be as disruptive to animals. As with the permitted event, the three-day event is short term in nature and could also be compared to the type of disruption that can typically occur on rural sites or in the forestry block such as when harvesting occurs. As a very short-term event, I do not consider this disruption to be significantly different to what could otherwise be expected in such an area from time to time for short periods.

Impact on highly productive land

While a portion of the site is denoted as such, none of that area is proposed to be utilised by the event. The initially proposed vehicle exit extended over this land, but RML chose to redesign this to avoid this area of land.

Rural character and amenity

The proposed event seeks to utilise a large rural site to benefit from its rural character and amenity which will contribute positively to the event experience though perhaps not obviously support the function of the rural environment. The event itself does not contribute directly to any rural productive activity though it is likely an event of this type and scale will contribute positively to the economy and wellbeing of the district eg through employment opportunities, for service industries involved, and in related spend of ticketholders in the city such as accommodation and hospitality. The landowner I assume will also benefit from having their site tidied up and through the lease arrangement.

I note that an area in the SW corner of the site along the road (bright green on the site plan) is denoted as highly productive land under the National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land, though none of this land is to be utilised for the event. The activity does not appear to negatively impact the economic development potential of the rural land resource and for an event of this nature, including the camping component, a rural site may well be the only practical option to host such an event in the district – this perhaps suggests there being a degree of functional or operational necessity for a rural location. Population in such areas is relatively sparse with rural visual amenity and character a drawcard for such an event with most similar non-camping festivals being held to date on public parks and reserves. Parks and reserves are less likely to be available for a festival such as this including camping though the Two Minds festival is held at the Spencer Beach Top 10 Holiday Park camping ground each year. Activity in rural areas is anticipated to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects on rural character and amenity values. This matter was considered earlier in this report for temporary events and that assessment is equally relevant in relation to Rural policy.

Cumulative effects of temporary events in the wider area

The Two Minds camping and music festival has operated at the Spencer Beach Top 10 Holiday Park in late summer for the last three years and has consent for another year. This runs over two nights with the campground only available to Two Minds ticketholders. This application was processed as non-notified with no affected parties and includes a condition allowing for noise levels at the nearest residential zone of up to 50dBA LAeq from 10pm- midnight with other amplified music after midnight at 40 dB LAeq, and an LMax level of 65dB after 10pm. This consent also includes a condition controlling bass. No other such amplified music events were held at nighttime in the vicinity at the time of processing. This event ran in year one apparently fully within the District Plan rules for a temporary event and appeared to be well received. The following year it ran smoothly, but in 2025 some noise complaints arose both before and after 10pm and after midnight, though these were not numerous.

Some of the people who have written in raising concerns about this current proposal have referred to this event already being disruptive and this being another event on top of the existing one. The events themselves are some six to eight weeks apart and in different locations, though Spencerville is located between the two sites and both will be audible to them. The RML event is also proposed to be run over a holiday period when it is probable some people will be away on holiday or not working or celebrating the incoming New Year themselves. Still others, some 1500 campers come to this area each summer to enjoy the existing character and amenity the area offers. Consenting this event would provide for up to three days and nights of extended duration and audible festival events in the area. Five nights a year is not excessive given the enabling provisions in the District Plan, but subject to the proviso that adverse effects on residents are sufficiently avoided, remedied or mitigated.

Conclusion – as a non-complying activity

Overall, as discussed above, and for the reasons given in those discussions, in the context of a permissive planning framework for events where short term impacts are considered compatible with an expected level of amenity or tolerable for short periods of time, I consider that any adverse effects on the wider environment will be less than minor and that there will be no affected persons.

Step 4: Relevant to all applications that don't already require notification – section 95A(9)

Do special circumstances exist that warrant the application being publicly notified?

No

There is interest in this proposal in the neighbourhood of the site, with 24 residents having written in expressing concerns about the proposal, and one expressing support provided there are no noisy fireworks. This is not an uncommon occurrence with proposals that people do not consider fit in their area. The District Plan does consider the value of such temporary events to the wider community and seeks to enable such events where expected amenity levels can be met or are within a range that can be tolerated given their temporary nature. A framework is provided in the District Plan provisions to consider the impacts of such events, so they are not unexpected or prohibited on such rurally zoned land. I have addressed the relevant matters the concerned residents have raised in my report so do not consider that notification of the application would result in Council receiving further information relevant to the issues for determination of the substantive application. In the media there has been reports of a petition being passed around opposing the event. While there is some public opposition to the event progressing, the District Plan provides for events to be considered anywhere in the district in recognition of the benefits these short-term events can offer. I am not aware of any special circumstances that might exist that would warrant the application being publicly notified.

Conclusion on public notification

Having evaluated the application against the provisions of section 95A, my conclusion is that the application **must not be publicly notified**.

LIMITED NOTIFICATION TESTS [Section 95B]

Where an application does not need to be publicly notified, section 95B sets out the steps that must be followed to determine whether limited notification is required.

Step 1: Certain affected groups/persons must be notified – sections 95B(2) and (3)

Are there any affected protected customary rights groups or customary marine title groups?

No

If the activity will be on, adjacent to, or might affect land subject to a statutory acknowledgement, is there an affected person in this regard?

N/A

Step 2: Preclusions to limited notification – section 95B(6)

Does a rule or NES preclude limited notification for all aspects of the application?

No

Is the application for a land use consent for a controlled activity under the District Plan?

No

There are no preclusions to limited notification under this section.

Step 3: Notification of other persons if not precluded by Step 2 – sections 95B(7) and (8)

For a boundary activity, are there any affected owners of an allotment with an infringed boundary under s95E?

N/A

For other activities, are there any affected persons under s95E, i.e. persons on whom the adverse effects are minor or more than minor, and who have not given written approval?

N/A

The statutory context for assessing the adverse effects of this application on the wider environment (excluding adjoining sites) is outlined earlier. It is equally relevant to the assessment of effects on adjoining sites and in relation to affected persons, which extends to include the owners and occupiers of adjacent properties.

Additional effects on the environment – relevant to the adjoining rural sites at 230 and 234 Lower Styx Road; Sheppards Stream, Bottle Lake Forest; and affected persons

As noted, the matters considered earlier in the report re effects on the environment are relevant also to the adjoining sites, though some of these will be revisited below with specific consideration for these two sites. In addition there are a couple of issues relevant to these sites that are not already discussed above.

The sites at 230 and 234 Lower Styx Road directly adjoin the site's SW boundary. A dwelling is located at 234 Lower Styx Road, and a series of rural and storage buildings and sheds are at 230 Lower Styx, a rear site. These two residential units are the closest to the event activities.

The dwelling at 234 Lower Styx Road (the home closest to the road and adjoining the site) is separated by approximately 325m from the site exit and 250m from the closest part of the exit track and the closest end of the PUDO area, by approximately 360m to the Stage B and C compound, and approximately 470m to the nearest camping sites. Stage A is approximately 675m away. The other property that shares this SW boundary with the site is at 230 Lower Styx Road, and it comprises a vehicle storage area and a former packing shed. The owners obtained resource consent to convert a portion of the southwestern end of the shed (the end furthest away from the festival site) to a residential unit in April 2025. This dwelling is separated from the camping area by approximately 368m, from the Stage B & C compound by approximately 455m, and from the PUDO and vehicle exit track by approximately 645m. Stage A is approximately 850m away from this shed.

The closest house at 234 Lower Styx Road has a driveway within the coned off area of the TMP, but this home is setback some 105m back from the road and the site frontage and garden area screen the home somewhat from the road. The applicant has confirmed the driveway to this home will not be impeded by traffic measures on Lower Styx Road in any way, and the "no stopping" cones along the site frontage should ensure no vehicles associated with the event are stopping along this stretch of the road. It does not appear there will be any loss of privacy at this home as a result.

Although the sites at 230 and 234 Lower Styx share a boundary with the application site, the event will occur within an event compound that uses the opposite northeastern corner of this large site, and ticketholders are not able to roam free in the area outside the fenced compound. Neither is any use of this area outside of the fenced compound proposed day to day during the event, except in the case of emergency where the "emergency location meeting point" is in this area outside the compound directly south of the PUDO area. The residents at 230 Lower Styx Road have expressed concern about security on their site during the event with concerns expressed that people without tickets may be in the vicinity of the site trying to listen to music without tickets. With the agreement of the owners, RML have indicated they will supply a security presence at the roadside gateways of these sites at agreed times if the owners consider it necessary to alleviate their concerns. I note also that these properties all include roadside gates, so admission to these sites would not be readily available.

In relation to potential adverse effects on these sites as a result of the event, I adopt the assessment re the wider neighbourhood above and other than the issues raised above, and consideration of noise issues specific to these sites, I do not consider these residents impacted any differently than those further afield.

The District Planning framework for considering noise is addressed above in some detail. The sites at 230 and 234 Lower Styx Road are noted in Tables 10-12 of the Acoustic report as being the most affected by amplified music noise and that is considered below.

Mr Alps confirms that although the event has an extended duration including three days of amplified music, the event is now configured and proposed to be managed in a manner that District Plan daytime noise levels at sensitive receivers (residents and campers beyond the adjoining sites) will be achieved, **except on these two sites at 230 and 234 Lower Styx Road**. On these two sites to the southwest, District Plan noise standards are met during the daytime on the 29th and exceeded by 2-3 dB during daytime on the 30th and 31st. Of the 43 hours total of amplified music proposed over three days (12hr on the 29th, 15hrs starting on the 30th and finishing at 1am, and 16hrs on the 31st finishing at 2am), 34 hours will be during this period (between 10.05am and 10pm on the 29th, 30th and 31st).

These noise levels occur over an extended duration and on a day-to-day basis are quite out of character with the usual relatively quiet rural environs. However, for a temporary activity once a year, Mr Alps concludes they are acceptable. In this regard, they are occurring at levels that do not conflict with the expected amenity values of the area as represented by the relevant District Plan noise standards and given that exceedances of 1-3dB are inaudibly different (or barely so) to noise levels that meet the standard.

A total of 9 hours of amplified music is proposed during nighttime hours (10pm-7am), with a midnight finish on the 29th, 1am finish after the 30th, and 2am finish after the 31st. During this period, amplified music proposed on the 29th and 30th has been modelled as almost able to achieve the stricter (by 10dB) nighttime noise levels – these being exceeded by 1-

2dB on these two sites. As noted above, exceedances of 1-3dB are inaudibly different (or barely so) to noise levels that meet the standard so are considered acceptable by Mr Alps.

On the 31st from midnight to 2am reduced noise levels at source ensure the same can be achieved (1-2dB over standard). Thus, seven of the nine nighttime hours of amplified music can meet levels that are inaudibly different to the District Plan nighttime noise levels. As concluded above, during these times Mr Alps concludes the event is acceptable as it is able to meet the expected amenity values regarding noise at all these rural residential receivers.

For New Years Eve from 10pm until midnight, the applicant proposes to increase noise levels at source in the build up to celebrating the dawn of the New Year. Table 12 of the Acoustic report shows that for this two-hour period both properties would experience exceedances of the noise standards by +7dB.

Mr Alps notes above that the levels on sites further afield at +4-+5 dB over the District Plan standard will be perceived as noticeable but not extreme, with +4db perceived as a noticeable change and +5dB a clearly noticeable change. He notes a +7dB increase would be quite significant and would be an approximately 62% perceived increase in noise.

Mr Alps notes that Table 12 of the Acoustic report shows that during this period, the District Plan standard L_{Amax} level of 65 dB at these rural zoned sites (highest level modelled of 57 L_{Amax} during this period) will be met by some margin. He also anticipates that noise levels inside residential units (as opposed to at their boundaries or notional boundaries) will be less than those modelled due to mitigation provided by the structures and with the option of having windows closed, sleep disturbance would be limited. In addition I note the residential unit approved in the packing shed at 230 Lower Styx Road is at the opposite end of the structure to the application site. In addition, there will also be a bass condition in place for the whole of the event to manage noise impacts, and the exceedance at these levels is for a short two-hour period on one night of the year, albeit in association with an event of extended duration. This extended duration event he has already noted is otherwise able to meet noise levels inaudibly different or barely so from the District Plan noise standards at these rural residential receivers.

I accept this expert advice. I have carefully considered all the concerns raised by residents on these adjoining sites and understand that from their perspective, this is a quiet rural area, and their expectation is events of this nature should be held elsewhere. They have said that the extended duration of the event and accompanying noise will impact negatively on the normal enjoyment of their neighbourhood. I accept that it will do this to some extent in that noise levels for the duration of the event will be louder than what those living in the area are used to. However, I am not of the view that it is the existing level of amenity that the proposal is reasonably compared to in applying the temporary activity framework of the District Plan, it is the expected level of amenity. With regard to noise, this framework includes upper limits to be achieved, and the proposal is reasonably compared to those noise levels in the District Plan that are permitted day to day. The event is able to meet these standards (or be within 1-3dB of these such that differences are inaudible or barely so) for all but two hours from 10pm to midnight on New Years Eve, so on one night of the year, for the next three years. Despite the extended duration of the event, and it operating beyond 10pm on three consecutive days, I do not see this as unreasonable in the context of the District Plan framework. A framework that has considered the competing demands in such instances and includes provision to enable such events city wide in recognition of their benefits on an infrequent basis, with higher noise levels for a limited period. In the context of the policy and also the framework for the noise rules, the event is largely compatible with expected amenity levels, and the two-hour period where the District Plan standards are not met from 10pm until midnight on New Years Eve, is at a time when many people stay up late and celebrate. For this two-hour period, I also note the more restrictive measure offered in the bass condition will be applicable. Overall, I consider the proposed event will produce noise levels that are in accordance with expected noise levels in this area, and for the two hours building up to New Years Eve, elevated levels are within a range that can be tolerated given their temporary nature once a year.

In coming to this view, I acknowledge that while the applicant initially submitted a proposal that represented close to their ideal event, they have since been proactive in investigating alternatives and possible mitigation to minimise the impact of the festival on the neighbourhood whilst still being able to meet festival objectives. This included them suggesting at one point in their investigations, that an acoustic wall 8m high around the Stage A compound might be able to reduce noise levels significantly. This proved not to be cost effective, and similar outcomes were able to be achieved by reconfiguring stages, reducing use of Stages B & C and a range of other measures as discussed in Mr Alp's report.

I also note there are a suite of offered conditions embodied in the proposal that will provide for monitoring of amplified music near these sites for the duration of the amplified music, with reporting back to the sound desk and commitments to alter noise levels if they are found to be over the committed to noise levels. In addition Council will be monitoring the noise levels at the event independently and has the authority to act to require noise reductions if exceedance of conditions are found or if bass levels are such that they are creating unreasonable disturbances to neighbours – whether they comply or not with the offered bass condition.

The only other adjoining land the Sheppards Stream wetland and Bottle Lake forest. The adverse impacts of the activity on the wetland were considered earlier in the report and found to be less than minor with no affected persons, and I adopt that assessment here. Bottle Lake Forest is used for plantation forestry and for recreation purposes predominantly by walkers and cyclists. I do not consider these properties are adversely affected by the proposal except in perhaps a negligible way. The forestry activity is not sensitive to impacts from such an event there being no one occupying the land day to day. Recreational users have the whole of Bottle Lake to enjoy for their recreational pursuits and numerous path options, so they are readily able to use other areas of the forest for this purpose and avoid the activity altogether. If they choose to walk past the site, they will only be exposed to impacts from it for a very short period unless they choose to linger, so even though they could be exposed to amplified music at levels similar to ticketholders, they would do that by choice.

Conclusion – as a ‘temporary activity’

Overall, as discussed above, and for the reasons given in those discussions, in the context of a permissive planning framework for events where short term impacts are considered compatible with an expected level of amenity or tolerable for short periods of time, I consider that any adverse effects on the localised environment represented by adjoining sites will be less than minor and that there will be no affected persons.

Conclusion – as a non-complying activity

Overall, as discussed above, and for the reasons given in those discussions, in the context of a permissive planning framework for events where short term impacts are considered compatible with an expected level of amenity or tolerable for short periods of time, I consider that any adverse effects on the localised environment represented by adjoining sites will be less than minor and that there will be no affected persons.

Pursuant to Section 95E(1) of the Act a person is not deemed affected by an activity where the adverse effects are less than minor.

Step 4: Relevant to all applications – section 95B(10)	
Do special circumstances exist that warrant notification to any other persons not already identified above (excluding persons assessed under s95E as not being affected)?	No

Duplicated from above, I note there is interest in this proposal in the neighbourhood of the site, with 24 residents have written in expressing concerns about the proposal, and one expressing support provided there are no noisy fireworks. The Richards family of Styx Mill firewood/vehicle storage at 230 Lower Styx Road are one of the 24 residents who have raised concerns about the proposal. This is not an uncommon occurrence with proposals that people do not consider fit in their area. The District Plan does consider the value of such temporary events to the wider community and seeks to enable such events where expected amenity levels can be met or are within a range that can be tolerated given their temporary nature. A framework is provided in the District Plan provisions to consider the impacts of such events, so they are not unexpected or prohibited on such rurally zoned land. I have addressed the relevant matters the concerned residents have raised in my report so do not consider that notification of the application would result in Council receiving further information relevant to the issues for determination of the substantive application. In the media there has been reports of a petition being passed around opposing the event. While there is some public opposition to the event progressing, the District Plan provides for events to be considered anywhere in the District in recognition of the benefits these short-term events can offer. I am not aware of any special circumstances that might exist that would warrant the application being limited notified.

Conclusion on limited notification

Having evaluated the application against the provisions of section 95B, my conclusion is that the application **must not be limited notified**.

RECOMMENDATION

That, for the reasons outlined above, the application **be processed on a non-notified basis** in accordance with sections 95A and 95B of the Resource Management Act 1991.

Reported and recommended by: Melinda Smith, Senior Planner

Date: 1st October 2025

Reviewed by: Kathryn Ross, Team Leader

Date: 23rd September 2025

Decision

- ☒ I have viewed the application and plans.
- ☒ I have read the above report, and the attached Supplementary Officer's Report (dated 16 October 2025) and determine that the application be processed on a non-notified basis in accordance with s95A and 95B of the Resource Management act 1991

Decision maker notes:

I have read the above reports, the revised Earcon Report Version 14, revised Noise Management Plan (version 6), Revised Conditions provided by the applicant dated 16 October 2025 and have undertaken a site visit of the surrounding area. While I initially considered that the properties at 230 and 234 Lower Styx Road would experience noise level exceedances that were not less than minor the applicant has amended the application to bring the predicted noise levels to a satisfactory level. I concur with the further assessment provided in the Supplementary Report and I am able to conclude that the adverse effects on those properties will be less than minor.

Therefore, having considered all the relevant matters, I am now satisfied that there will be no affected persons and the application can be processed on a non-notified basis in accordance with sections 95A and 95B of the Resource Management Act 1991.

Commissioner:

Name: Janice Carter

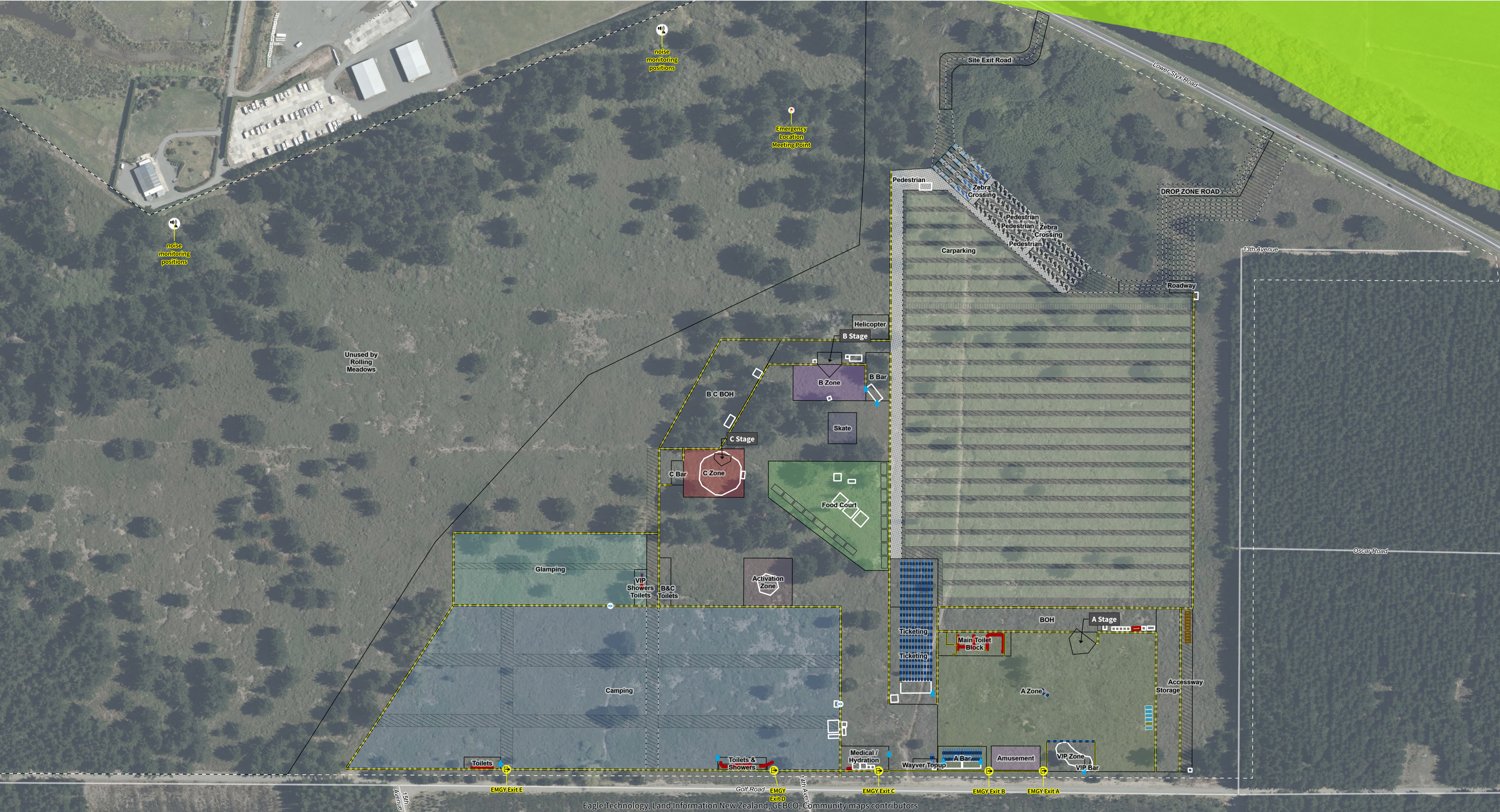
Signature: 

Date: 17 October 2025

Lower Styx Road Site

Site Layout

APPENDIX 1 - SITE PLAN



Context Layers

- LRIS LUC Class 2
- LINZ Property Titles
- Lower Styx Road

Key Locations

- EVAC Point
- Gate
- Water

Site Information

- Accessway
- Car Park
- Bus Stop

Site Zones

- A Zone
- B Zone
- Camping
- Food Court
- Glamping
- Activation Zone
- Amusement
- Skate
- C Zone

Assets

- Bike Rack Fence
- Security Fence
- Security Fence Scrimmed
- Crowd Barrier
- Waratah Fence
- RefuseSkip
- Portacoms
- Marquees
- LuxLoo
- Portaloo
- LuxShower
- Portaloo Disabled

Shower Block

North

0 37.5 75 150 Meters

Information on this map may not be used for the purposes of any legal disputes. The user should independently verify the accuracy of any information before taking any action in reliance upon it. This map was generated for A1 printing on 1/10/2025 at the scale of 1:1,500.

**APPENDIX 2 APPLICANT OFFERED CONDITIONS -
superseded by amended set dated 16 October 2025**

1. The development shall proceed in general accordance with the information and plans submitted with the application, including the further information/amended plans submitted 31/08/2025, 24/09/25, 26/09/25 and 01/10/25 as they relate to the proposed festival, site layout and acoustic mitigation, including the approved site plan labelled RMA/2025/1880 and dated 17/09/25. The final versions of documents submitted are listed below:
 - Event Management Plan (Revision 7, dated 26/09/25)
 - Alcohol Management Plan (Revision 5, dated 26/09/25)
 - Noise Management Plan (Revision 5, dated 01/10/25)
 - Acoustic Assessment (Revision 13, dated 30/09/25)
2. One amplified musical event per calendar year is consented; to occur on the 29th December -1st January each year, for a duration of three years (2025, 2026 and 2027).
Maximum event size for ticketholders as follows:
 - 10,000 total including up to 5,000 camping
3. The operation of each event shall be undertaken in accordance with an event specific Noise Management Plan (NMP). The NMP is created to enable appropriate management of noise created from Rolling Meadows during its 3-year consent at 240 Lower Styx Road. The NMP shall be submitted to Council at least four weeks before the 20th of December each year for certification by the Manager Resource Consents by way be submittedgovt.nz. The NMP shall be first certified by a suitably qualified and experienced acoustic engineer before being submitted to Council. A copy of the approved NMP shall be kept on the site at all times during pack in, the event and pack out. Any amendments to the approach to managing noise in the NMP from year to year, other than those to make it event-specific shall be:
 - for the purposes of improving the measures outlined in the NMP for achieving the NMP purpose;
 - consistent with the conditions of this resource consent; and
 - certified by an appropriately qualified and experienced acoustic engineer.
4. The applicant shall arrange for noise to be monitored and recorded during the sound checks, and through the duration of the event in accordance with the Noise Management Plan, with the purpose of ensuring a compliant event. All monitoring information shall be provided to the Christchurch City Council Environmental Health Team within ten working days of the completion of each event by way of EnvironmentalHealth@ccc.govt.nz and rcmon@ccc.govt.nz and shall include conclusions as to whether or not the various aspects of the event were compliant with conditions.
5. The event must utilise the stage orientation and speaker position as set out in the Site Plan (Figure 3) of the Earcon Acoustic Assessment (dated 30 September 2025, Revision 13) which forms part of the approved consent documentation, unless an alternative arrangement is approved through a Noise Management Plan in accordance with condition [3] above.
6. The following operation times of the stages shall be adhered to:
 - 29 December – Stage A (12:00-00:00 hours)
 - 30 December – Stage A (13:00-01:00 hours), Stage B and C (10:05-22:00 hours)
 - 31 December – Stage A (14:00-02:00 hours), Stage B and C (10:05-22:00 hours)
7. All events authorised by this consent shall comply with the noise limits specified in Rule 6.1.5.2.1 of the Christchurch District Plan except where specific 'dB exceedances' are identified in Tables 10–12 of the Earcon Acoustic Assessment dated 30 September 2025 (Revision 13).

Advice Note: The authorised 'dB exceedances' are contained in the right column of Tables 10-12 of Earcon Acoustic Assessment dated 30 September 2025 (Revision 13). The applicable receiver for the authorised dB exceedance is contained in the far left column of those same tables. The District Plan standards otherwise to be achieved are noted in these same tables under the heading 'Noise Limit, Day / Night'.

The monitoring requirements for this condition are set within the certified Noise Management Plan required by Condition 3.

8. The noise levels and configuration for each stage and speaker positioning shall be as specified below, unless otherwise authorised by a Noise Management Plan in accordance with condition [3] above:

Stage A (at 30m from the stage)

29 December

- 12:00-00:00 hours – 90 dB LAeq15 min

30 December

- 13:00-18:00 hours - 90 dB LAeq15 min

- 18:00-22:00 hours - 95 dB LAeq15 min
- 22:00-01:00 hours - 90 dB LAeq15 min

31 December

- 14:00-18:00 hours - 90 dB LAeq15 min
- 18:00-00:00 hours - 95 dB LAeq15 min
- 00:00-02:00 hours - 90 dB LAeq15 min

Stage B

30 & 31 December

- 10:05-22:00 hours – 84 dB LAeq15 min @ 30m (90 dB LAeq15 min @ 15m – Front of House)

Stage C

30 & 31 December

- 10:05-22:00 hours – 84 dB LAeq15 min @ 30m (93 dB LAeq15 min @ 10m – Front of House)

Speaker Trim Heights (as modelled by Earcon, and measured above ground level (not stage height):

- Stage A - 8m
- Stage B - 7m
- Stage C - 4m

Speaker / Stage Orientation – Compass Bearings:

- Stage A – 130 degrees
- Stage B – 115 degrees
- Stage C – 105 degrees

- The LZeq (10 min) sound pressure level measured in any third octave band is not to exceed 85 dB at any time at any residential unit or at the nearest campground camping sites, except between 10pm and 2am where it shall not exceed 80 dB.

- Compliance recording and daily reporting, shall be documented and sent to Council by 11am the day after each event day via EnvironmentalHealth@ccc.govt.nz and rcmon@ccc.govt.nz.

Any complaints received over the course of the event should be forwarded to the Council on 03 941 8999 (which will divert to Council's after-hours noise control service (Allied) when offices are closed), who will liaise with the Council's Environmental Officer in charge of monitoring at CCC during any event.

- All events shall be carried out in accordance with an approved Traffic Management Plan (TMP). If any changes are proposed to the existing approved TMP Revision 5.3 approved by Keith Smith 22 September 2025 they should first be submitted to Council, by way of dutyplanner@ccc.govt.nz, for certification that they remain appropriate under this consent; at least two weeks before they are submitted to the Temporary Traffic Management team at Council for approval. Activities on any public road should be planned so as to cause as little disruption, peak traffic delay or inconvenience to road users as possible without compromising safety
- The TMP shall make provision for other users to maintain access to their sites during any event.
- STMS certified marshals are required to be in attendance for each event, for managing traffic on street and for directing on-site parking and pedestrian movements.
- No attendees will be permitted to leave the site on foot, which will be monitored by Security throughout the event.
- Parking for staff and ticketholders shall be pre-allocated (or pre-sold) up to 3400 spaces to be accommodated within the designated parking area. All communications with staff and ticketholders shall make it clear that only those with pre-allocated parking passes will be able to utilise the parking available on site and that people will not be admitted to the site unless in a vehicle. Such communications shall be clear that charter buses will be provided to meet demand from those who have requested it prior to the event through ticketing, and that those arriving at or leaving the site shall otherwise have to arrange private pick up, taxi or rideshare on site as arriving on foot or leaving by foot will not be permitted for safety reasons.
- All signage on site and along Lower Styx Mill Road, will be placed as to not obscure or detract from any traffic signs or controls, unless required as part of the approved Traffic Management Plan.

17. At least ten days before each event, a letterbox drop to residents along Lower Styx Road (from 166 Lower Styx Road to Heyders Road) as well as the residents along Nautilus Place, Seabrooke Drive, Hemingway Place, Calypso Place, and Styx River Place, advising of the proposed event date including timings and sound check times shall be completed. The letter shall include the contact details of the Event Manager as a contact should there be any questions or concerns. At the same time, a copy of the letter shall be sent to the Council's monitoring team, by way of rcmon@ccc.govt.nz.
18. Fire and Emergency New Zealand will conduct a pre-event inspection, particularly of the identified at risk areas, and assessment of mitigation measures included within the Fire Mitigation Plan. A copy of any correspondence from FENZ confirming the suitability of mitigation measures, will be sent to the Council's monitoring team, by way of rcmon@ccc.govt.nz at least four weeks before the 20th of December.
19. All structures and festival equipment will be removed from site within 1 month of the festival completion, aside from the permanent structures identified below, which may remain on site for the duration of the consent:
- 2 x 40ft containers
 - 2 x 20ft containers
 - 6 x water tank 30,000L containers
 - 1 x skate ramp
- All of the permanent structures identified above shall be removed from site within 1 month of the 2027/2028 festival completion.
20. Pack-in and pack-out activity shall only occur between 07:00 and 20:00 hours and shall not exceed a noise level of 60 dB LAeq (1 hour), decreasing to 50 dB LAeq (1 hour) after 18:00, at any residential unit or the nearest campground camping site when measured and assessed in accordance with NZS 6801:2008 Acoustics – Measurement of Environmental Sound and NZS 6802:2008 Acoustics – Environmental Noise.
21. Any temporary lighting provided on site – during or proceeding or following the event - should not be directed at residential units or roadways and should not exceed 4 lux at any residential boundary or 10 lux at any rural boundary.
22. If requested by, and with the agreement of the owners, security will be provided at the applicant's cost at the road gates of 230 and 234 Lower Styx Road. Any such security to be provided during times that can be agreed between the parties.
23. Pursuant to Section 128 of the Resource Management Act 1991, the Council may once per year, at any time in the months of April or May, serve notice of its intention to review the conditions of this consent for the purpose of dealing with any adverse effects on the environment which may arise from the exercise of this consent and which it is appropriate to deal with at a later stage; including but not limited to:
- Traffic management off-site and on-site
 - Acoustic considerations and impact on surrounding properties

APPENDIX 3

ROLLING MEADOWS, 240 Lower Styx Road, Bottle Lake, Christchurch

Resource Consent Application RMA/2025/1880 - Review of the Management & Effects of Noise & Lighting

INTRODUCTION

The applicant, Rolling Meadows Limited, seeks to hold a four-day festival with camping on site at 240 Lower Styx Road between 29 December and 1 January for three years from 2025 to 2027. The festival is primarily centred around music and will feature DJ's (Drum'n'Bass, electronic) and bands on three stages.

There is provision in the Christchurch District Plan for such events to be considered as temporary permitted activities, but this event does not meet the criteria specified in section 6.1.6.2.3 for such activities.

Specifically, sound amplified activities will exceed four hours per day including sound checks, and the event will continue after 22:00 hours.

The proposed hours for the amplified music associated with this event are:

- 29 December: 12:00 - 24:00 hours.
- 30 December (to 31 December): 10:05 -01:00 hours
- 31 December (to 1 January): 10:05-02:00 hours

This means the event would either need consent as a restricted discretionary activity under the Temporary Activity Rules or alternatively as a non-complying activity under the Rural Urban Fringe zone rules (if not accepted by the Commissioner as a 'temporary activity').

If the event is not accepted as a temporary activity, this report would be equally relevant to its assessment as a non-complying activity as the matters of discretion (detailed in the planning report in respect of 6.1.8 and 6.2.5 of the Plan rules) have been considered in this assessment and they introduce a wide range of considerations relevant to the assessment of potential noise nuisance.

NOISE

The site is in the Rural Urban Fringe zone and is bordered by Bottle Lake Forest on three sides. Close by on the southwestern boundary are rural residential properties with the residential settlement of Spencerville further to the north. Also, to the northeast is the Spencer Beach Top 10 Holiday Park.

The applicant has supplied an acoustic report by Earcon Acoustics J006777 (Revision 13, dated 30 September 2025) which addresses the levels of noise generated by the event.

The most significant noise source will be amplified music from the PA speaker systems at the three stages with secondary sources of noise from the event, such as crowd noise and plant and equipment, not contributing appreciably to the overall noise levels received at neighbouring sites.

The applicant has made a significant number of revisions to their original proposal in consultation with their acoustic consultant and Council staff to reduce the overall noise levels for the event at sensitive receivers.

The main changes are as follows:

- All stages to be oriented towards the ocean to the east/south-east with the orientation of the main stage, Stage A, being altered significantly.
- More use of Stage A which is sited further away from the closest neighbours, and so Stage B is not being used on the 29 December or after 10pm on any day.
- Finishing music earlier on the 30 and 31 December (originally was 03.00 and 04.00 hours respectively, but now 01:00 and 02:00 hours).
- Scheduling the main acts to finish by 22:00 hours on the 29 and 30 December and by 24:00 hours on the 31.
- Some increase in noise levels during the day but less amplified music overall during the nighttime hours.
- Removal of fireworks display on New Year's Eve.

Correspondingly, the use and timings for the stages have changed and the stage operating times are now as follows:

- 29 December – Stage A (12:00-24:00 hours)
- 30 December – Stage A (13:00-01:00 hours), Stage B and C (10:05-22:00 hours)
- 31 December – Stage A (14:00-02:00 hours), Stage B and C (10:05-22:00 hours)

Sound checks will only occur on Stage A and only for two artists per day between 10:00 and 12:00 hours. All sound checks will be at a lower noise level than the actual performances.

Earcon Acoustics have undertaken modelling of the noise levels from the event and assessed the levels against the permitted levels for the various zones in proximity to the site - residential, rural, specific purpose (Golf) and open space. It should be noted there are two applicable noise limits in the rural zone with the level at the notional boundary being 5 dB lower than the site boundary. This has been taken into account in the most recent revision of the report with compliance measured against the more onerous standard.

Where the sound being assessed has a distinctive character such as tonality, in this case music with a significant bass component, it is said to have a Special Audible Characteristic (SAC). Under NZS 6802:2008 Acoustics – Environmental noise, an adjustment needs to be made to account for this characteristic. However, an adjustment for SAC is specifically excluded from assessment under the Plan rules, but it is appropriate that the potential for disturbance arising from the presence of bass dominant music is both recognised and addressed.

In this regard, Earcon have recommended that no third octave band noise level exceed LZeq 85 dB during the day and 80 dB at night at the neighbouring receivers. I would accept that recommendation, but with the proviso that the levels may need to be adjusted if in practice they do not provide sufficient protection for receivers from the bass frequencies. Such an adjustment might be required in accordance with the applicant's Section 16 duty under the Resource Management Act to avoid unreasonable noise.

The Open Space zone directly adjacent and to the east of the site has not been included in the assessment as it is the location of Bottle Lake Forest. There are no noise sensitive activities there and the event would have a limited effect on the recreational users of the forest who might pass by the activity.

The assessment and modelling are based on the following specified noise levels proposed at source and measured 30m in front of the stage:

Stage A (@ 30m from the stage)

29 December

- 12:00-24:00 hours – 90 dB LAeq_{15 min}

30 December

- 13:00-18:00 hours - 90 dB LAeq_{15 min}
- 18:00-22:00 hours - 95 dB LAeq_{15 min}
- 22:00-01:00 hours - 90 dB LAeq_{15 min}

31 December

- 14:00-18:00 hours - 90 dB LAeq_{15 min}
- 18:00-24:00 hours - 95 dB LAeq_{15 min}
- 00:00-02:00 hours - 90 dB LAeq_{15 min}

Stage B

30 & 31 December

- 10:05-22:00 hours – 84 dB LAeq_{15 min} @ 30m (90 dB LAeq_{15 min} @ 15m – Front of House)

Stage C

30 & 31 December

- 10:05-22:00 hours – 84 dB LAeq_{15 min} @ 30m (93 dB LAeq_{15 min} @ 10m – FoH)

District Plan guidance

The District Plan includes an objective relating to the potential for adverse noise effects on the amenity values and health of people and communities so that they are managed to levels consistent with the anticipated outcomes for the receiving environment. Adverse effects are managed by having limitations on the sound levels, location and duration of noisy activities; and with an expectation that lower noise levels are achieved during night hours to protect sleep and the amenity values of residential and other sensitive environments, so far as is practicable.

The rule framework that is relied upon to achieve these anticipated outcomes for the receiving environment is tied to Table 1: Zone noise limits outside the Central City in rule 6.1.5 of the District Plan. It sets noise limits at various times of the day and night that are to be met at the zone in which any site is located that is receiving noise from other activities. I have considered the proposal in this context with regard to what is considered reasonable noise; noting that this is not the same as what people will necessarily experience on a day-to-day basis.

The modelling indicates that the reconfigured event now proposed will meet the daytime (07:00-22:00 hours) noise level of 50 dB LAeq at the residential and rural (notional) boundaries each day apart from at the closest rural properties at 230 and 234 Lower Styx Road. There the level is exceeded by 2-3 dB and that is generally considered to be a virtually inaudible to barely audible difference from a complying noise level and on that basis, I consider it should be acceptable, even over the extended hours as proposed.

The applicable daytime level of 55 dB LAeq is also met at the Spencer Beach Top 10 Holiday Park (Open Space zone) and at the site boundary of the Specific Purpose (Golf) zone.

Under NZS 6802:2008 Acoustics – Environmental noise, a duration adjustment can be made if sound is not continuously present. This adjustment only applies during daytime hours (07.00-22.00) and for this event the hours of operation allow for a 1 dB adjustment (reduction) in the predicted levels during the day. This has been appropriately applied in the application to the modelled noise level predictions

Nighttime noise levels at residential receivers (10pm-7am)

After 22:00 hours, on the 29 and 30 December the nighttime (22:00-07:00 hours) noise level of 40 dB LAeq is met at the residential and rural (notional) boundaries apart from the rural properties at

230 and 234 Lower Styx Road. The exceedance there is 1-2 dB and that is a negligible difference from a complying level, being either inaudibly different, or virtually inaudible different, and so can be considered acceptable.

The applicable nighttime level of 45 dB LAeq is met at the Spencer Beach Top 10 Holiday Park (Open Space zone) and at the site boundary of the Specific Purpose (Golf) zone.

On the 31 December, the applicant proposes to have higher noise levels between 22:00 hours and midnight leading into the celebration of the New Year. This results in an exceedance ranging from 2 to 7 dB LAeq in all zones. While 1 to 3 dB may be considered as a relatively minor and probably inaudible increase, predicted increases of 4, 5 and 7 dB represent respectively a 32, 41 and 62% perceived increase in the level of sound. Changes of 4 and 5 dB are perceived as a noticeable but not extreme rise in loudness with 5 dB being a clearly noticeable change. However, a 7 dB increase is perceived as a significant increase in loudness.

This mainly effects the closest rural residential properties to the southwest of the site (226, 228, 230 and 234 Lower Styx Road) with the 7 dB exceedance at the directly adjoining sites at 230 and 234 Lower Styx Road.

However, levels in the residential zone in Spencerville are also exceeded by 4 dB but levels in the Holiday Park are only exceeded by 2 dB.

At midnight the noise levels will be reduced so they are complying in all zones apart from a 1-2 dB exceedance at both 230 and 234 Lower Styx Road.

The LAmax levels applicable after 22.00 hours (65 dB and 70 dB) are complying in all zones at all times.

On balance, it is considered that a brief period of two hours when the noise levels (LAeq) are increased to the degree noted above on New Years Eve is acceptable when noise levels (LAeq) are met or only slightly exceeded to the extent discussed above at other times.

Guidance on internal noise levels for residential dwellings is provided by AS/NZS 2107:2016 Acoustics – Recommended design sound levels for building interiors. This standard recommends an internal level for bedrooms at night of 30 to 35 dB LAeq. The World Health Organisation (WHO) Guidelines for Community Noise also advise that noise should not exceed 30 dB LAeq for sleep protection, and if a noise source contains a large proportion of low-frequency noise an even lower level for bedrooms may be appropriate, particularly if the noise is continuous.

Based on the predicted noise levels in the Earcon report some residents may not be able to sleep with windows open, particularly between 22:00 hours and midnight on the 31 December. However, with windows closed and given typical building construction, Earcon consider the recommended internal levels for bedrooms should be met even at the closest receivers. This is accepted but I note that some low frequency noise may still be faintly audible although generally sleep should not be adversely affected.

However, occupants of the camping ground will not be in structures that offer much in the way of acoustic attenuation. Although the predicted noise levels are complying in the campground, apart from on the 31 December between 22:00 and midnight, the bass beat is likely to be far more perceptible and possibly disturbing there.

Consequently, the bass levels will need to be monitored and controlled by an appropriate condition that addresses their impact to ensure such noise is kept to a reasonable level.

Cumulative effects

While Rolling Meadows is scheduled to be held over a four-day period at New Year there are also two other established events that are regularly held in this area. Both are based at Spencer Park with Twominds Music Festival being held next year on the 13-15 March and Southern Eastercamp Youth Festival on 2-6 April.

Twominds features music of a similar genre to Rolling Meadows, so it is possible there could be a cumulative effect in this relatively quiet area with both events occurring during the summer months. However, using Section 6.2.4.1.1 P2 (activity standard a.) of the plan as a guide for acceptability, these events of a temporary nature fall within the anticipated frequency that temporary events are permitted to occur (e.g. not more than four consecutive weeks or six weekends in a year or 12 consecutive days), and providing they adhere to the conditions of their respective consents the impact of both events will be in line with the level of amenity expected in this neighbourhood as determined by the District Plan noise rules.

The acoustic report sets out several measures to mitigate and manage noise from the event as follows:

- Directing speakers optimally towards the east/south-east to minimise the spread of noise to neighbouring receivers.
- Locating, aligning and configuring stages to also minimise the spread of noise.
- Limiting music levels and staggering the use of the stages.
- Operating the subwoofers on the PA systems on each stage in cardioid configuration to minimise the carry of low frequency bass sound. This configuration controls the spill of the sound and produces a heart-shaped coverage pattern from the stage, with louder sound concentrated to the front and less sound particularly to the rear of the stage.
- The use of in-ear monitors for artists to limit noise projected to the rear of the stages from on stage monitors.
- Having an acoustic consultant on site to ensure stages are set up correctly and confirm noise levels are as predicted at source and residential receivers.
- The provision and application of a detailed Noise Management Plan (NMP).

The applicant has expressed clear commitment to meet the appropriate noise limits expressed in the District Plan and can do so after reconfiguring the layout and design numerous times to minimise the noise impacts as much as is possible and with minimal exceedances as noted above and detailed in the Earcon report. While compliance has referenced the measurements taken at the front of house (FoH) position, it has been stated in the report that the management of sound levels will place a greater emphasis on measurements undertaken at neighbouring receiver locations, so any necessary adjustments are made with respect to the actual environmental impact on surrounding residents. Offered conditions provide for monitoring of both, which I support.

This is appropriate as in a rural setting with low background noise levels, music may be audible over significant distances, and meteorology can play an important role in the propagation of the sound resulting in positive or negative influences of 5 to 10 dB.

Earcon conclude that as a temporary event over three days/nights a year, Rolling Meadows does not represent an ongoing source of noise and the effect on neighbouring receivers is intermittent and short-term. In this context, they consider the slight exceedances of the noise limits each day, and the increased exceedance from 22:00 to midnight on New Years Eve, and associated noise effects to be relatively minor.

This is considered an appropriate conclusion provided the noise levels for the event are as stated and the modelling is precise. I note that a suite of offered conditions regarding noise levels which

will be met at both source and sensitive residential neighbours; monitoring, compliance recording and daily reporting, communications and complaint procedures and monitoring of levels of bass together address the key aspects of the activity that need to be carefully managed during the event to achieve the stated outcomes with certainty.

Additionally, an updated Noise Management Plan has been provided with the application that will be adhered to so as to ensure the offered conditions of the consent are met.

If consent is granted, it is noted that Council will be active in monitoring the event independently of the applicant; and has authority to act to require noise reductions if exceedance of conditions are found or if bass levels are such that they are creating unreasonable disturbances to neighbours – whether they comply or not with the offered bass condition.

Pack in and pack out activity is scheduled to occur between 09:00 and 18:00 hours each day leading up to and after the event. That is an appropriate time for such activity and should minimise the possibly of the activity disturbing neighbours.

LIGHTING

The site is well screened from residential and rural neighbours and roadways so it is considered that any temporary lighting should comfortably meet the light spill levels set in the Christchurch District Plan for Residential and Open Space Community Parks zones [both 4.0 lux], and Rural and Specific Purpose (Golf) zones [both 10.0 lux]. However, it will not meet the level of 4.0 lux for the Open Space Natural zone to the east but as this is Bottle Lake Forest there will be minimal effect there.

Additionally, Technical Event Solutions (TES) have advised there will be negligible light spillage into surrounding wetland habitats given the location and directional control of lights and with all the performance lighting turned off each night when the event finishes.

They are confident these measures will also result in a negligible light spill into the Holiday Park and rural and residential zones.

OFFERED CONDITIONS

Appropriate conditions to mitigate adverse effects of the proposal have been discussed with the applicant and the applicant was invited to submit a set of offered conditions to stipulate key commitments being made to mitigate or avoid adverse effects of site. Further conditions were offered in response to prompts from myself and Ms Smith, to draw specific attention to matters that would be actively managed and monitored during the event. I support the package of conditions offered by the applicant and attached to Ms Smith's report as Appendix 2.

John Alps
Principal Advisor Noise Control
Christchurch City Council

Updated 10th
October 2025

Rolling Meadows - Overall

- Property (ReadOnly)
 - LandParcel
- Property (ReadOnly)
 - RoadBoundary

APPENDIX 4 SITE LOCATION AND ADDRESSES PLANS

Sheppards Stream Reserve

Styx River

Lower Styx Road

Christchurch City Council

ph: 03 941 8999 web: ccc.govt.nz

Accuracy not guaranteed. Onsite verification required.
Display of data scale dependant.
Client selected legend.

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Date: 22/09/2025 4:04 PM
Scale: 1: 10,000 on A4

0 0.05 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4
km

Rolling Meadows - North

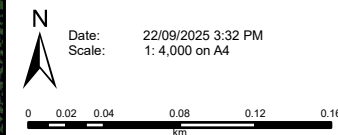
- Property (ReadOnly)
 - LandParcel
- Property (ReadOnly)
 - RoadBoundary

Christchurch
City Council

ph: 03 941 8999 web: ccc.govt.nz

Accuracy not guaranteed. Onsite verification required.
Display of data scale dependant.
Client selected legend.

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Rolling Meadows - South

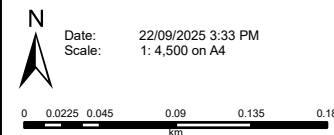
- Property (ReadOnly)
 - LandParcel
- Property (ReadOnly)
 - RoadBoundary

Christchurch City Council

ph: 03 941 8999 web: ccc.govt.nz

Accuracy not guaranteed. Onsite verification required.
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Subject: 20252 08 20 FENZ Response: RMA/2025/1880 Rolling Meadows application for resource consent
Sent: 20/08/2025, 9:27:32 am
From: Irvine, Bruce<Bruce.Irvine@fireandemergency.nz>
To: Smith, Melinda

APPENDIX 5

Melinda Smith
Senior Planner
CCC,

Following our meeting on the 19th August 2025, please find the clarifications and assessment from FENZ as an Advisor to the CCC.

Fire and Emergency NZ is a regulator and emergency response provider for fires and other emergency that occur in our communities across New Zealand. We are a national provider of service under the Fire And Emergency New Zealand Act 2017 [Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017 No 17 \(as at 01 July 2024\)](#), [Public Act Contents – New Zealand Legislation](#) Section 11 outlines the Main Functions of FENZ:

Functions

11 Main functions of FENZ

- (1) FENZ must carry out the main functions specified in subsection (2).
- (2) The main functions are—
 - (a) to promote fire safety, including providing guidance on the safe use of fire as a land management tool; and
 - (b) to provide fire prevention, response, and suppression services; and
 - (c) to stabilise or render safe incidents that involve hazardous substances; and
 - (d) to provide for the safety of persons and property endangered by incidents involving hazardous substances; and
 - (e) to rescue persons who are trapped as a result of transport accidents or other incidents; and
 - (f) to provide urban search and rescue services; and
 - (g) to efficiently administer this Act.
- (3) FENZ must also—
 - (a) perform and exercise the functions, duties, and powers conferred or imposed on FENZ as a main function by or under this Act and any other enactment; and
 - (b) perform any other functions conferred on FENZ as a main function by the Minister in accordance with [section 112 of the Crown Entities Act 2004](#).
- (4) Subsection (3)(a) is subject to section 12.
Compare: 1975 No 42 s 14

We provide advice and services to manage and reduce the risk of fire in both the urban/city and rural/natural environments. To this end we actively engage with property owners, developers and councils at planning and implementation phases of projects to assist with fire risk understanding.

I am a Senior Advisor Risk Reduction working for the Canterbury District. The district covers an area from the Rakaia river in the south to Kaikoura in the north.

I have been approached by Rolling Meadows in 2024 and 2025 seeking advice on a number of sites for a proposed event venue. I have visited the proposed site on at least 2 occasions to assess fire risk and event operations and provide guidance for their consideration in their “Fire Mitigation Plan”

The site at 240 Lower Styx Rd:

On visiting the site in January of 2025, I reviewed the site for the proposed event venue. The site at the time was unmanaged land, resulting in a very high fire load of dry grass, broom, and unmanaged forest trees across a very large natural site. I identified risks of illegal occupation and activity on the boundary of the property at that time.



Photo January 2027

Works have been completed at the site significantly reducing the fire risk by removing significant quantity of vegetation in to burn piles and managed grass area. This work was completed by a contractor whom did not take practical steps in effective burn pile management. This activity resulting in numerous smoke nuisance complaints. However the result is a managed land area with significantly less fire risk present.



Photo July 2025.

Areas of the site contain further vegetation piles that will be addressed going forward by one of a number of methods to remove the drying vegetation present.

The Future Use: Change from farmland to open area event venue.

FENZ position is that the fire risk has been significantly reduced on the site. The activity of a crowd large event can then be managed by a Fire Management Plan as produced by the site operator to effectively understand and respond to emergencies on the site given/ I have reviewed the Rolling Meadows Fire Mitigation Plan July 2025. The operators have listened to our recommendations for the effective management of Fire risk for the event and to ensure they have an effective evacuation strategy in place if the site needs to be evacuated during the event.

Key aspects of the plan include Sand Fire Buckets and other extinguishers present for the risk (Electrical), Grid layout of camping areas access /exit paths, “No fires/cooking” activities other than trade food site providers. (CCC Permitted traders)

FENZ sets the fire season status for this area. FENZ manages all fire permits during Restricted and Prohibited fire seasons. Typically, restrictions are in place in December / January each year.

Pyrotechnic Public Display Outdoor: FENZ reviews and places fire extinguisher conditions on any Permitted activity such as public fire work displays. Landowner approval and display permit as per the [Health and Safety at Work \(Hazardous Substances\) Regulations 2017 \(LI 2017/131\) \(as at 05 April 2025\) Contents – New Zealand Legislation](#) 9.42 and 9.43. FENZ has yet to see any information relating to a pyrotechnic display for this event. We will expect one to be provided as normal prior to the event by the display management company. We have received in the past from other land owners in the area, applications for private and public firework displays.

FENZ operational Response:

This area is directly next to Bottle Lake managed forest, that FENZ operates a predetermined fire response plan based on the fire season status we set each year based on local fire risk identifiers. We manage this in a daily risk-based assessment in support of the fire weather conditions and tactical plan consideration with the forest managers and CCC parks staff.

If this site is to be used as proposed, FENZ will be knowledgeable of the event and plan for an incident response accordingly. Access via Golf Rd and Lower Styx Rd will be available along with other known internal forestry roads.

Fire Fighting water supplies:

The site has no direct firefighting water supplies. There are a number of natural water courses available within close proximity of the site with the primary being Styx River on the north side of Lower Styx Rd. This is an unlimited and permanent water supply usable by FENZ for fire operations. A supporting community reticulated supply is available from Brooklands/Kainga water supply through a hydrant system. This would be considered only a secondary supply option. The site is also having temporary water supplies available for potable human consumption.

Enhanced Site Monitoring: (Security and Fire)

The management have indicated working with a supplier and CCC asset team to utilise a site monitoring system to support early fire detection both on the site and within the neighbouring property/forest. A site on the corner of Golf Rd and 14th Ave has been identified as a primary coverage location.

I hope that the above information will assist the CCC in their resource consent determination.

Regards

Bruce Irvine (MBA, Nat Dip5 (Structural Fire), GI FireE, CATE, MNZAFI, MIAAI)
Senior Advisor Risk Reduction
Mobile: +64 (0)27 839 5262
DDI: +64 (03) 372 8602
Email: Bruce.Irvine@fireandemergency.nz

Canterbury District
248 Lichfield Street, Christchurch
PO Box 13-218, Christchurch 8141

He waka eke noa / Everybody in one canoe with no exception



Supplementary Report regarding amended application – relevant to notification decision of a resource consent application

(Sections 95A / 95B)

Application number:	RMA/2025/1880
Applicant:	Rolling Meadows Limited
Site address:	240 Lower Styx Road
Legal description and site area:	Lot 1 DP 50725 64.985 hectares
Zone:	Rural Urban Fringe zone
Overlays and map notations:	
District Plan:	Liquefaction Management area Fixed minimum floor level overlay within Flood Management Area Flood Ponding management area
Road classification:	Collector
Activity status:	Restricted discretionary (if a temporary activity); or Non-complying activity
Description of application:	To hold the Rolling Meadows festival on the site for a three-year period - from 29 th December to 1 st January (preferably for 2025-2027).

Background

This report is in consideration of a revised proposal submitted by Rolling Meadows Limited on 16th October 2025.

The revised proposal has come about due to the independent Commissioner, having considered the application earlier submitted and Officer reports, advising she was minded to identify affected parties in relation to the proposal. As happens on occasion, Commissioner Carter's preliminary findings below were communicated to the applicant so as to provide an opportunity for the application to be amended if they so chose:

Her preliminary findings as communicated to the applicant were as follows in italics:

Further to our discussions on the matter of Rolling Meadows, on the basis of the information I have before me I am currently of a mind to request the applicants obtain the affected party approval of the owners and occupiers of 230 and [234 Lower Styx Road](#). I currently consider that the predicted night time noise level exceedances shown in Table 12 of the acoustic report by Earcon [version 13] for the residences at 230 and [234 Lower Styx Road](#) to result in noise effects that are not less than minor. The noise level exceedances experienced between 10pm to 12am on New Years Eve at these two properties is considered to be a substantial increase in perceived loudness (see Mr Alps advice below), set within an extended duration of the three days of the event, for three consecutive years. These two properties may also experience additional adverse noise effects (of which the level is uncertain, other than to the limit provided in the offered condition) from sound that has low frequency beat (bass).

As a guide I refer to advice from Mr Alps which states:

“While 1 to 3dB may be considered as a relatively minor and probably inaudible increase, predicted increases of 4, 5 and 7 dB represent respectively a 32, 41 and 62% perceived increase in the level of sound. Changes of 4 and 5 dB are perceived as a noticeable but not extreme rise in loudness with 5dB being a clearly noticeable change. However, a 7dB increase is perceived as a significant increase in loudness.”

If you could forward my concerns to the applicant to ascertain whether they wish to take the opportunity at this stage to address these matters and amend their application, to bring the levels predicted to be experienced by 230 and [234 Lower Styx Road](#) down to exceedances less than 5dB in respect to the noise limits referred to in Table 12 of the Earcon Report [version 13].

Alternatively, I will proceed to issue my decision as per my above current consideration of this application.

The applicant has chosen to amend the application to reduce the exceedances of predicted noise levels experienced at 230 and 234 Lower Styx Road from 10pm to midnight on New Year’s Eve to less than 5dB as sought by the Commissioner. This on the understanding that the Commissioner would then conclude that the effects of noise on the properties at 230 and 234 Lower Styx Road would be found to be less than minor.

If effects are found to be less than minor, then the persons at these properties would not be considered affected persons under the Resource Management Act provisions related to notification.

Assessment

Mr John Alps, Principal Advisor Noise Control with Council has prepared an earlier report, updated on 10th October. His conclusions in that report stand and are not duplicated at all here. I reported on the notification matters in my earlier report dated 1 October and updated on October 14th. I accepted the expert advice of Mr Alps in reporting, and do not duplicate the findings or recommendations here.

The Commissioner has I understand accepted these findings fully except in relation to the period from 10pm until midnight on New Years Eve when Rolling Meadows Limited had hoped to increase noise levels at source building up to the New Year. For this two hour period the properties at 230 and 234 Lower Styx Road would have experienced a 7dB exceedance of noise levels relative to the District Plan standard applicable at that time.

Though acknowledged as a significant increase in perceived loudness, Officers had considered this was a tolerable exceedance for a two hour period three years in a row and on a night when most people tend to be up seeing in the New Year.

Under the amended application, the noise levels at source from 10pm-midnight on Stage A on December 31st have been reduced from 95dB LAeq to 92dB LAeq.

Mr Alps has considered the revised proposal and notes the following:

On the 31st of December, the applicant had proposed to have higher noise levels between 22:00 hours and midnight leading into the celebration of the New Year. That resulted in an exceedance -relative to the District Plan standard - ranging from 2 to 7 dB LAeq in all zones with the highest level of 7 dB at the closest rural residential properties at 230 and 234 Lower Styx Road.

The amended proposal has reduced the levels at source from 95 to 92 dB LAeq (at Stage A), and in doing so has reduced the exceedance to 4 dB at these properties between 22:00 hours and midnight. While a 4 dB increase would be noticeable compared to music that complied with the District Plan standards and represents a 32% perceived increase in the level of sound, it is not an extreme rise in loudness and should be more tolerable than what was previously proposed.

The noise level reduction at these times has also resulted in compliance with the District Plan standard at other sites, except for the rural residential properties at 226 and 228 Lower Styx Road, and in the residential

zone at Spencerville. However, the exceedance at these locations is minimal (1-2 dB) and may well not be an audible increase when compared with if it were complying with the District Plan standards.

It is considered the reduced noise level in this amended proposal will have a positive effect as it will lessen the impact of the event for all sensitive receivers (residents and campers).

I accept his advice. It is clear that if amplified music levels are reduced at source compared to what was proposed, they will have less impact on not just the two properties at 230 and 234 Lower Styx Road, but on all properties in the vicinity. This will provide an outcome that is more readily tolerated than what was previously proposed.

Reported by: Melinda Smith, Senior Planner

Date: 16st October 2025

1. The development shall proceed in general accordance with the information and plans submitted with the application, including the further information/amended plans submitted 31/08/2025, 24/09/25, 26/09/25, 01/10/25 and 16/10/25 as they relate to the proposed festival, site layout and acoustic mitigation, including the approved site plan labelled RMA/2025/1880 and dated 17/09/25. The final versions of documents submitted are listed below:
 - Event Management Plan (Revision 7, dated 26/09/25)
 - Alcohol Management Plan (Revision 5, dated 26/09/25)
 - Noise Management Plan (Revision 6, dated 16/10/25)
 - Acoustic Assessment (Revision 14, dated 16/10/25)
2. One amplified musical event per calendar year is consented; to occur on the 29th December -1st January each year, for a duration of three years (2025, 2026 and 2027).
Maximum event size for ticketholders as follows:
 - 10,000 total including up to 5,000 camping
3. The operation of each event shall be undertaken in accordance with an event specific Noise Management Plan (NMP). The NMP is created to enable appropriate management of noise created from Rolling Meadows during its 3-year consent at 240 Lower Styx Road. The NMP shall be submitted to Council at least four weeks before the 20th of December each year for certification by the Manager Resource Consents by way be submittedgovt.nz. The NMP shall be first certified by a suitably qualified and experienced acoustic engineer before being submitted to Council. A copy of the approved NMP shall be kept on the site at all times during pack in, the event and pack out. Any amendments to the approach to managing noise in the NMP from year to year, other than those to make it event-specific shall be:
 - for the purposes of improving the measures outlined in the NMP for achieving the NMP purpose;
 - consistent with the conditions of this resource consent; and
 - certified by an appropriately qualified and experienced acoustic engineer.
4. The applicant shall arrange for noise to be monitored and recorded during the sound checks, and through the duration of the event in accordance with the Noise Management Plan, with the purpose of ensuring a compliant event. All monitoring information shall be provided to the Christchurch City Council Environmental Health Team within ten working days of the completion of each event by way of EnvironmentalHealth@ccc.govt.nz and rcmon@ccc.govt.nz and shall include conclusions as to whether or not the various aspects of the event were compliant with conditions.
5. The event must utilise the stage orientation and speaker position as set out in the Site Plan (Figure 3) of the Earcon Acoustic Assessment (dated 16 October 2025, Revision 14) which forms part of the approved consent documentation, unless an alternative arrangement is approved through a Noise Management Plan in accordance with condition [3] above.
6. The following operation times of the stages shall be adhered to:
 - 29 December – Stage A (12:00-00:00 hours)
 - 30 December – Stage A (13:00-01:00 hours), Stage B and C (10:05-22:00 hours)
 - 31 December – Stage A (14:00-02:00 hours), Stage B and C (10:05-22:00 hours)
7. All events authorised by this consent shall comply with the noise limits specified in Rule 6.1.5.2.1 of the Christchurch District Plan except where specific 'dB exceedances' are identified in Tables 10–12 of the Earcon Acoustic Assessment dated 16 October 2025 (Revision 14).

Advice Note: The authorised 'dB exceedances' are contained in the right column of Tables 10-12 of Earcon Acoustic Assessment dated 16 October 2025 (Revision 14). The applicable receiver for the authorised dB exceedance is contained in the far left column of those same tables. The District Plan standards otherwise to be achieved are noted in these same tables under the heading 'Noise Limit, Day / Night'.

The monitoring requirements for this condition are set within the certified Noise Management Plan required by Condition 3.

8. The noise levels and configuration for each stage and speaker positioning shall be as specified below, unless otherwise authorised by a Noise Management Plan in accordance with condition [3] above:

Stage A (at 30m from the stage)

29 December

- 12:00-00:00 hours – 90 dB LAeq15 min

30 December

- 13:00-18:00 hours - 90 dB LAeq15 min
- 18:00-22:00 hours - 95 dB LAeq15 min

- 22:00-01:00 hours - 90 dB LAeq15 min

31 December

- 14:00-18:00 hours - 90 dB LAeq15 min
- 18:00-22:00 hours - 95 dB LAeq15 min
- 22:00-00:00 hours - 92 dB LAeq15 min
- 00:00-02:00 hours - 90 dB LAeq15 min

Stage B

30 & 31 December

- 10:05-22:00 hours – 84 dB LAeq15 min @ 30m (90 dB LAeq15 min @ 15m – Front of House)

Stage C

30 & 31 December

- 10:05-22:00 hours – 84 dB LAeq15 min @ 30m (93 dB LAeq15 min @ 10m – Front of House)

Speaker Trim Heights (as modelled by Earcon, and measured above ground level (not stage height):

- Stage A - 8m
- Stage B - 7m
- Stage C - 4m

Speaker / Stage Orientation – Compass Bearings:

- Stage A – 130 degrees
- Stage B – 115 degrees
- Stage C – 105 degrees

9. The LZeq (10 min) sound pressure level measured in any third octave band is not to exceed 85 dB at any time at any residential unit or at the nearest campground camping sites, except between 10pm and 2am where it shall not exceed 80 dB.

10. Compliance recording and daily reporting, shall be documented and sent to Council by 11am the day after each event day via EnvironmentalHealth@ccc.govt.nz and rcmon@ccc.govt.nz.

Any complaints received over the course of the event should be forwarded to the Council on 03 941 8999 (which will divert to Council's after-hours noise control service (Allied) when offices are closed), who will liaise with the Council's Environmental Officer in charge of monitoring at CCC during any event.

11. All events shall be carried out in accordance with an approved Traffic Management Plan (TMP). If any changes are proposed to the existing approved TMP Revision 5.3 approved by Keith Smith 22 September 2025 they should first be submitted to Council, by way of dutyplanner@ccc.govt.nz, for certification that they remain appropriate under this consent; at least two weeks before they are submitted to the Temporary Traffic Management team at Council for approval. Activities on any public road should be planned so as to cause as little disruption, peak traffic delay or inconvenience to road users as possible without compromising safety
12. The TMP shall make provision for other users to maintain access to their sites during any event.
13. STMS certified marshals are required to be in attendance for each event, for managing traffic on street and for directing on-site parking and pedestrian movements.
14. No attendees will be permitted to leave the site on foot, which will be monitored by Security throughout the event.
15. Parking for staff and ticketholders shall be pre-allocated (or pre-sold) up to 3400 spaces to be accommodated within the designated parking area. All communications with staff and ticketholders shall make it clear that only those with pre-allocated parking passes will be able to utilise the parking available on site and that people will not be admitted to the site unless in a vehicle. Such communications shall be clear that charter buses will be provided to meet demand from those who have requested it prior to the event through ticketing, and that those arriving at or leaving the site shall otherwise have to arrange private pick up, taxi or rideshare on site as arriving on foot or leaving by foot will not be permitted for safety reasons.
16. All signage on site and along Lower Styx Mill Road, will be placed as to not obscure or detract from any traffic signs or controls, unless required as part of the approved Traffic Management Plan.

17. At least ten days before each event, a letterbox drop to residents along Lower Styx Road (from 166 Lower Styx Road to Heyders Road) as well as the residents along Nautilus Place, Seabrooke Drive, Hemingway Place, Calypso Place, and Styx River Place, advising of the proposed event date including timings and sound check times shall be completed. The letter shall include the contact details of the Event Manager as a contact should there be any questions or concerns. At the same time, a copy of the letter shall be sent to the Council's monitoring team, by way of rcmon@ccc.govt.nz.
 18. Fire and Emergency New Zealand will conduct a pre-event inspection, particularly of the identified at risk areas, and assessment of mitigation measures included within the Fire Mitigation Plan. A copy of any correspondence from FENZ confirming the suitability of mitigation measures, will be sent to the Council's monitoring team, by way of rcmon@ccc.govt.nz at least four weeks before the 20th of December.
 19. All structures and festival equipment will be removed from site within 1 month of the festival completion, aside from the permanent structures identified below, which may remain on site for the duration of the consent:
 - 2 x 40ft containers
 - 2 x 20ft containers
 - 6 x water tank 30,000L containers
 - 1 x skate ramp
- All of the permanent structures identified above shall be removed from site within 1 month of the 2027/2028 festival completion.
20. Pack-in and pack-out activity shall only occur between 07:00 and 20:00 hours and shall not exceed a noise level of 60 dB LAeq (1 hour), decreasing to 50 dB LAeq (1 hour) after 18:00, at any residential unit or the nearest campground camping site when measured and assessed in accordance with NZS 6801:2008 Acoustics – Measurement of Environmental Sound and NZS 6802:2008 Acoustics – Environmental Noise.
 21. Any temporary lighting provided on site – during or proceeding or following the event - should not be directed at residential units or roadways and should not exceed 4 lux at any residential boundary or 10 lux at any rural boundary.
 22. If requested by, and with the agreement of the owners, security will be provided at the applicant's cost at the road gates of 230 and 234 Lower Styx Road. Any such security to be provided during times that can be agreed between the parties.
 23. Pursuant to Section 128 of the Resource Management Act 1991, the Council may once per year, at any time in the months of April or May, serve notice of its intention to review the conditions of this consent for the purpose of dealing with any adverse effects on the environment which may arise from the exercise of this consent and which it is appropriate to deal with at a later stage; including but not limited to:
 - Traffic management off-site and on-site
 - Acoustic considerations and impact on surrounding properties