

Our Community Plan Christchurch O-Tautahi 2004/14 SUBMISSION

Submissions close on 6 May 2004

I wish to talk to the main points in my written submission at the hearings.

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Your Submission: Issue - Christchurch Flat Water Sports Facility (Lake Isaac)

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I would like to submit to the CCC my support of Lake Isaac as a flat water sports facility.

As a coxswain who has represented New Zealand at Junior, under 23 and elite level, I feel that Kerrs Reach has become too unsafe due to major congestion problems. I began rowing 13 years ago and although I have a lot of experience, I feel unsafe on the river that I row on.

For the past six seasons I have coxed the national champion Avon men's premier eight. In an eight I am steering from the stern of the boat (the back end) with 8 large bodies in front of me, reducing my line of vision so that I can't see what is directly in front of the boat. At the speed that we do a lot of our training pieces at (20 - 25 km/h), there is not a lot of time to stop when a collision becomes imminent.

With the congestion on the river at it's current levels, these collisions are becoming more and more frequent, not only with other rowing shells but also with an increasing number of kayaks, dragon boats and wakas. Some of which have differing ideas of the rules of the river.

It worries me to see so many young coxswains, both novice and with a couple of years experience behind them, in control of large boats with limited steering, going at a very fast pace in congested conditions. To date, injuries have consisted of strains and broken bones at the very worst, but it won't be long before someone is seriously injured on our stretch of water.

The width of the proposed facility at Lake Isaac would reduce this congestion and risk factor, making water sports in Christchurch safer for all.