

Attachment 1a:D – Testimonials

14 March 2018

Marie Long
Director, Planning Permissions and Land
Operations Group
Department of Conservation
PO Box 10420
Wellington

Email: mlong@doc.govt.nz

Tena koe Marie

Testimonial for Path New Zealand Limited – Proposed development in the Eglinton Valley, Fiordland National Park

Late last year I recharged my walking bug, completing the 800km Camino de Santiago from France to the other side of Spain. It was quite an adventure and left me keen to continue the exploration of our own special places of Aotearoa New Zealand, and to find different models that open these experiences to many more of our own as well as international visitors.

Serendipity! Abbe approached me about providing a testimonial for the model she has been leading the development of and I couldn't be more delighted to do so. What she is proposing gives more people - people like me, for instance! - options that otherwise are too rarely available here at home, pushing us off instead, to walk and celebrate and spend in other countries.

Abbe was aware that people would, quite properly and proudly, I think, link her with her Hutchins Family, who, through Real Journeys, have a strong association with Fiordland, tourism and conservation. This is obviously a reputable and enviable starting point for founding a new business, particularly for establishing values and culture, but she was also keen to reference her Ngai Tahu heritage.

Like me, Abbe is a Parata. Our whanau has strong connections with the Otago and Southland regions. Abbe is descended from Tame Parata, MP, the first southern Maori MP. Tame recognized the importance of land and connection, and his political career was

dominated by his attempt to redress injustices to Ngai Tahu from land purchases earlier in the 19th century.

Abbe's great grandfather, Canon Hoani Parata, served in WWI, and is remembered for his service in parishes and the communities of Riverton, Gore and Queenstown. Her grandfather, Hoani Parata, was a respected Officer in WWII and became the first Maori Brigadier in the New Zealand Army. He went on to have a successful business career.

Abbe's mother, Penelope Parata Hutchins, has also been active within the community. She was appointed as the South Island representative on the Waitangi National Trust Board, has been a member of the Southland Conservation Board and was the Chair of Ka Mate Nga Kiore, responsible for eradicating rats from Taukehepa or Big South Cape Island, one of the titi or muttonbird islands off the coast of Stewart Island.

Our family takes our responsibilities to the community seriously. I have known Abbe, and her parents Penny and Bryan, for many years and she has a strong sense of her heritage and respect for the wider community.

Abbe serves New Zealand's interests in her professional life at national and international levels, where she is highly regarded. I am proud of her quiet work there, on behalf of our whanau. In contrast to these sometimes very rarefied circles she is also a keen tramper, outdoorsman, environmentalist and conservationist.

She has briefed me on this proposal and I am delighted to recommend her as exactly the sort of person that should be starting a new business in such a special area.

Heoi ano ra

Hon Hekia Parata

28 February 2018

Marie Long
Director, Planning Permissions and Land
Operations Group
Department of Conservation
PO Box 10420
Wellington

Email: mlong@doc.govt.nz

Dear Marie

Testimonial for Path New Zealand Limited

Fiordland National Park is a special place for me. I have spent many holidays in and around Manapouri, hunting, fishing and boating. It is a place where I always return and explore.

I have known the Hutchins family for over 30 years. In that time I have been a Director and until February 2016 the Chairman of Real Journeys Limited. I am a trustee of the Leslie Hutchins Conservation Foundation and The Phaben Trust. I have also acted as Board Secretary and Advisor to Milford Sound Tourism Limited, (Milford Sound Development Authority Limited), since that company's inception in the late 80's, and am currently Board Chair. I have both a personal and professional relationship with the family.

Abbe first spoke to me about this project over a year ago. She had just come back from her studies in Boston and was exploring the concept. Since then she has formed an advisory board and has a number of very experienced people supporting her. She has also made significant progress developing new relationships and assembling the inputs required to make this a success.

Personally I think this is an innovative concept that will continue to shift the market away from low value, high impact towards high value, low impact. This is exactly where New Zealand wants to position itself.

Another benefit of the concept that should not be underestimated is that of shifting more people towards Milford Sound, relieving congestion and allowing for the greater utilization of existing assets. This benefits everyone but particularly those visitors that are looking for quieter experience, it also benefits the environment by ensuring that the increasing number of visitors to Milford can be still accommodated in areas of high use, rather than overflowing into areas that have till now been considered more remote. While the concept does not solve the congestion issue, together with other initiatives, it will help.

Abbe is well placed and has the financial backing to make this a success. If you have any questions about this testimonial, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Wilson', written in a cursive style.

Roger Wilson