

IN THE MATTER	of an application for resource consents for establishment of a commercial composting facility.
BETWEEN	Von Ah Contracting Ltd
	Applicant
AND	AJR & JM Austin
	Submitters
AND	West Coast Regional Council
	Consent Authority

Submission of Andrew John Raeburn Austin & Julie Margaret Austin

Dated 13 November 2025

**Submission on application concerning resource consent that is
subject to limited notification by consent authority**

Section [95B](#) Resource Management Act 1991

To: West Coast Regional Council

Name of submitter: Andrew John Raeburn Austin and Julie Margaret Austin

This is a submission on an application by Von Ah Contracting Ltd for resource consents at Kokatahi.

Consent No	Consent Type	Activity / Location
RC-2024-0136-01	Discharge to land	To discharge contaminants to land associated with the composting operation.
RC-2024-0136-02	Discharge to land	To discharge compost leachate to land where contaminants may enter water.
RC-2024-0136-03	Discharge to air	To discharge contaminants (including dust and odour) to air from the composting facility.

We are not a trade competitor for the purposes of [section 308B](#) of the Resource Management Act 1991.

The specific parts of the application that my submission relates to are—

All parts of the application.

My submission is—

We **oppose** the application

The application is contrary to the purpose of the Resource Management Act.

The application is inconsistent with and contrary to the Regional Policy Statement, Regional Land and Water Plan, and Regional Discharge to Land Plan.

The application is inconsistent with and contrary to the NPS on Freshwater Management and the NPS on Highly Productive Lands.

The application is inconsistent with and contrary to the operative Westland District Plan and proposed Te Tai Poutini Plan.

The application will have adverse effects on the environment that are more than minor.

The proposed conditions do not avoid, remedy or mitigate the adverse effects of the proposal.

The applicant has failed to consider suitable alternative locations and methods for the activity proposed.

Further Reasons for Opposition

Inappropriate siting of industrial waste processing facility The application would inappropriately establish an industrial waste processing facility at what is currently a rural site surrounded by waterways, residential homes, tourist accommodation, a school, a church, and an eating establishment.

Nature of the Feedstock Much of the feedstock for the proposed composting facility is industrial waste to be sourced from other industrial premises or facilities. This includes waste derived from burning coal, and abattoir effluent and proteins transported from off-site sources. Concerns about being open to increasing volume and adding new feedstock types in the future.

Risks from Coal/Fly Ash and Abattoir Waste Coal ash - Fly Ash is known to contain heavy metals and toxic elements. The mixing of fly ash with abattoir effluent, and wood chip soaked in animal waste creates a hazardous and odorous combination. The proposal does not clearly define what additional materials may be added in future. The applicant does not have the scientific or technical expertise to manage the pathogenic and pest risks associated with this proposed activity.

As many residents collect their drinking water from rainfall on their roofs, there is no reticulated water supply system in this area. Therefore, these heavy metals could easily contaminate water supply and severely affect our health.

Pests: We are concerned that this composting facility could attract pests such as rodents and flies. Once these pests are established in this area it is hard to mitigate or control.

Odour and Amenity Effects The proposed activity will generate significant adverse odour effects, and will adversely impact on the rural and rural residential amenity values of the location. Open windrow composting has a well-documented record throughout New Zealand of producing persistent odour and nuisance effects. Councils across the country have struggled to manage public complaints and compliance issues arising from such facilities.

Contamination of Surface and Ground Water, and Land And water ways- The proposed activity is included in the Hazardous Activities and Industries List (HAIL) and will potentially lead to contamination of ground and surface waters, and productive lands. Affecting fish and breeding birds, recreational activities. Duck Creek and Kokatahi River are close to the proposed site.

We are concerned about the risk of leachate flooding during high rainfall events, which could breach the pond and carry contaminants into Duck Creek and the Kokatahi River. The application relies on pumping out the pond before heavy rain, but it does not clearly define:

- What constitutes a “high rainfall event”
- How forecasts are monitored and acted upon

Inadequate Mitigation The proposed mitigation—establishing boundary plantings—is insufficient. Trees will take years to mature, and no existing hedges or wetlands currently provide containment of odour, dust, or pests. Experience from other regions shows that effective mitigation of windrow composting odour requires engineered solutions such as: • Enclosed bunkers with mechanical aeration, • Biofilters • Fully enclosed composting systems. None of these are proposed here.

Unsuitable Location The proposed site is immediately upwind of a school. Also a small settlement zone containing homes, a church, a restaurant, a pony club, and a fire station—all within approximately 800–900 metres. The cumulative impact on health, amenity, and well-being will be significant. The odour impact zone includes part of the route to the Hokitika Gorge, which is one of Westland’s premier and iconic tourist attractions.

Land and Soil Quality

There should be efforts to maintain the productive potential of soils and the quality of water resources. The compost facility does not make the best use of high-quality soils. The facility also will not maintain or enhance the quality of the land as leachate and overland flows from high rainfall are a risk. Using land that has these valuable soils for non-agricultural activities is not the best use of an important non-renewable resource. The storing and processing of compost could happen in areas with less valuable, or less productive soil. We need to protect these rare soil types. A precedent effect will be set for even more development of this type within the rural zone on these high-quality soils.

Visual impact

Visual amenity and rural outlook & character on existing land uses nearby would be affected.

Property Value

The effect of the resource consent being granted would be that we and other residents in or around Kokatahi settlement would have our property value reduced.

Work already started

We are concerned that significant works have already been undertaken on the site—such as construction of the base, placement of a large pile of coal/fly ash, and formation of a pond—prior to resource consent being granted. This raises serious doubts about the applicant’s willingness to comply with council processes and conditions in the future.

Furthermore, there is no assurance that the pad and pond have been constructed to the standards set out in the application. Without independent verification, the integrity of these structures and their ability to prevent environmental contamination cannot be guaranteed.

We seek the following decisions from the consent authority:

We **OPPOSE** the application, in full. And request that the council **DECLINE** the application for resource consent.

If consent is granted, we would want conditions.

We wish to be heard in support of our submission at any council hearing

If others make a similar submission, we will consider presenting a joint case with them at the hearing.



Andrew Austin
Andrew Austin (Nov 14, 2025 10:04:01 GMT+13)

Signature of submitter

13 November 2025.

Electronic address for service of submitter: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

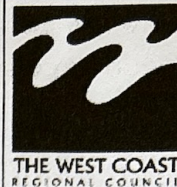
Contact person: Julie Austin

Postal address: [REDACTED]

CC to Von Ah Contracting Ltd, nicky@vonahcontracting.co.nz

**SUBMISSION
ON AN APPLICATION FOR RESOURCE CONSENT
UNDER SECTION 96
OF THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT 1991**

Office Use Only



PART A: DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION

CONSENT NUMBER: 02 APPLICANT:

RC 20240136 01 Van Ah contracting

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTIVITY:

Composting facility

LOCATION:

1047 Kariera - Kowhtrangi Road Hekikeri

PART B: SUBMITTER DETAILS

Full name/s	<u>Julie Margaret Austin</u> <u>Andrew John Raeburn Austin</u>			
Postal address				
I am the owner/ occupier (delete one) of the following property:				
Primary contact person/s	<u>Julie Austin</u>			
Email address				
Phone number/s	Home: Mobile:		Business: Fax:	

Signature:	Date:
<u>Julie Austin</u> <u>Andrew Austin</u>	<u>13 Nov 25</u>
Name (BLOCK CAPITALS):	
<u>JULIE AUSTIN,</u> <u>ANDREW AUSTIN</u>	

*If this is a joint submission by 2 or more individuals, each individual's signature is required
A signature is not required if you make your submission by electronic means.*

I/we **support** the application numbers indicated by a tick on the back of this form
I/we **oppose** the application
I/we **neither support nor oppose** the application

(tick one)

☐
☒
☐

(tick one)

I/we **wish to be heard** in support of my/our submission.



I/we **DO NOT wish to be heard** and hereby make my/our submission in writing only.



If you wish to be heard, and others make a similar submission would you consider making a joint case with them at any hearing

☒ Yes

☐ No

If you indicated you wish to be heard, you will be sent a copy of the S.42A Officer's Report and a copy of the Decision once it is released. Please indicate below which format you would like to receive these documents in:

☐ Electronic (CD) copy

☒ Hard (paper) copy

email if an option

I/we **have** served a copy of my/our submission on the Applicant as per Section 96(6)(b) of the RMA

☒ Yes

My/our submission is that: (state in summary the nature of your submission. Clearly indicate whether you support or oppose the specific proposal, or wish to have amendments made, giving reasons)

refer attached submission

I/we seek the following decision from the Local Authority:(give precise details)

Decline the application for resource consent

Important information – please read carefully

Public information

The information you provide is public information. It is used to help process a resource consent application and assess the impact of an activity on the environment and other people. Your information is held and administered by the West Coast Regional Council in accordance with the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the Privacy Act 1993. This means that your information may be disclosed to other people who request it in accordance with the terms of these Acts. It is therefore important you let us know if your form includes any information you consider should not be disclosed.



THE WEST COAST
REGIONAL COUNCIL

388 Main South Road, Paroa, Greymouth 7805
PO Box 66, Greymouth 7840
Telephone (03) 768 0466
Toll Free 0508 800 118
Facsimile (03) 768 7133
Email info@wcrc.govt.nz
Website www.wcrc.govt.nz