

Meeting Minutes #6



Glenorchy Airstrip Consultative Governance Committee Minutes of Meeting	
Where:	QLDC Shotover Street Offices, Queenstown
Time:	12:30pm
Date:	Thursday 17 June 2021
Who:	Mike Clay (QAC), Peter Campbell (Wyuna/BB), Jeannie Galavazi (QLDC), Nick Nicholson (Operators), John Glover (GCA) Christine Lister (GCA), Councillor Niki Gladding (QLDC)
Apologies:	

Meeting opened at 12.30pm

New Committee member: Christine Lister from the Glenorchy Community Association, replacing Robert Bakhius who has stood down from the GCA

ITEM 1: Actions from last meeting/Review of previous minutes

Action from previous meeting - JG to circulate a reviewed ToR and summary report.
GACGC agreed a review of ToR should occur after Environment Court Decision is issued

ITEM 2: District Plan Designation Appeal Update.

It was noted that most Committee members had given evidence at the Environment Court Hearing: John Glover, Niki Gladding and Pete Campbell for Wyuna Preserve, and Nick Nicholson as a 274 party with QLDC.

Jeannie provided an update on (confidential) proceedings post-mediation and outlined the matters that had been resolved, as well as others still to be decided. The Court's interest in skydiving and in potentially limiting the activity was noted.

ITEM 3: Reserve Licences and Resource Consent updates

The Agenda noted council's intention to licence the majority of operators and outlined the reasons why that is important, namely so that all operators understand that there are restrictions that apply when using Glenorchy Aerodrome, and to enable landing fees to be collected.

The Agenda also noted that any licences issued will be subject to a condition that requires them to be reconsidered and renewed if appropriate when the Designation Appeal Decision is issued, and that QLDC's intention is to issue month by month interim licences to operators who regularly use the airstrip (namely, the Helicopter Line, Glacier Southern Lakes, The Alpine Group, Glenorchy Air, Milford Sound Flights Limited). QLDC's suggestion was that in the short term the licences may not specify flight numbers but future licences will and there would be conditions of use preventing excess use. This was QLDC's proposal for the Committee's consideration.

Discussion

It was noted that technically all commercial operators undertaking a landing at the airstrip require a licence under the Reserves Act.

The Committee discussed the question about whether and how to licence the currently unlicensed operators (all operators except HeliGY and Skydive), given the uncertainty about the outcome and timing of the Environment Court Decision.

The committee considered the AIMMS data and Jeannie noted some of the challenges with licensing operators including that:

- o Many operators will do only 1 or 2 flights a month.
- o There is no interaction between QLDC and any itinerant craft/pilots/operators prior to landing
- o There's difficulty in determining what is a commercial flight and what's not
- o It's a lot of admin to determine what some planes/helis are doing at the Airstrip when they may only ever undertake one landing
- o No month looks the same
- o Assumptions were made in the 2016 RMP about who the original operators were and therefore what their original level of use was

In terms of additional (including interim) licencing, the Committee would not like to see QLDC create expectations that a certain level of use would continue after the Environment Court Decision is issued.

It was suggested by Mike Clay and agreed by the Committee that there was an opportunity to use a tiered landing fee regime (i.e. a greater fee for itinerant users and a lesser one for licence holders), to incentivise regular users to seek licences and also to manage demand in line with any aircraft movement limits that might be included as conditions of the Designation. It was pointed out that this approach is not aligned with the Glenorchy Airstrip Reserve Management Plan (RMP), but that this could be changed via a review of the RMP.

It was noted that there would be limited impact from aircraft noise on the Wyuna Preserve over Winter 2021, due to the vast majority of homes being vacant most of the time. Therefore, the consensus was that the GACGC advise QLDC commence charging landing fees for all users (via AIMMS) until the Environment Court Decision is released – and not to issue any other interim licences. Once the management framework is established via that decision, QLDC will assess allocation, with domiciled users having priority and itinerants possibly charged a higher fee.

Motion: That the GACGC agree to advise QLDC to start charging all users landing fees from 1 July 2021, and to withhold issuing licences to other commercial operators under after the Environment Court Decision is released.

Moved by Niki Gladding, seconded by Mike Clay; motion passed unanimously

There was also some discussion about what to do when a licence holder is not using their allocation. It was discussed that council should investigate a system that would allow 'the bucket' of unused movements to be allocated to other users if they could prove they had already used their quota.

ITEM 4: Reserve Management Plan Review Update

There was limited discussion on this item. There was agreement that the review would need to be informed by the outcome of the Environment Court Decision. The point was made that RMP may need to guide the allocation of the 'pot' of landings to ensure the best outcomes for the community.

ITEM 5: Airstrip Operations Update

Complaints:

There has been one complaint since the last update. One itinerant operator had a very busy day resulting in a lot of noise, with 10 machines sitting on the landing strip with engines running. The operator was contacted by QLDC. Further Action is to include sending a 'Fly Neighbourly' reminder to the operator.

AIP Update:

One action point: The QAC team will update the information on the Glenorchy Airstrip to include the landing fee.

ITEM 6: General Business

1. GACGC membership:

It was agreed that the Committee should discuss any changes to its membership following the Environment Court's decision on the designation appeal.

2. Glenorchy community meeting:

Niki summarised the reasons for a recent community meeting (15 June 2021) to some discuss the Environment Court case, the GCA's involvement and options available for those who felt concerned that their voices had not been heard. About 50 members of the community attended. Niki Gladding and Nick Nicholson were in attendance. The vast majority of the meeting attendees were concerned that:

- a. Many people did not know about the GCA's decision to give evidence on behalf of Wyuna Preserve, despite it being in the published agenda, and that the GCA should have done a better job of consulting the community, given it was/is a contentious issue.
- b. Heli Glenorchy's operation (that employs a number of community members and that is relied on by local businesses) might leave Glenorchy if it is required to operate under caps that compromise its financial and operational viability.
- c. Wyuna Preserve residents may be able to limit operations at the Airstrip. There was a general sense that this was unfair.

One action informally agreed at that meeting was that it be put to the GACGC to consider whether it could/should devise a survey to better understand the community's position regarding the Airstrip.

This was discussed briefly by the Committee and it was agreed the matter should be revisited after the decision of the Environment Court and that it may be sufficient to undertake a review of the Reserve Management Plan.

Next Meeting - tbc

This meeting closed at 1.45pm.