

**BEFORE A COMMISSIONER PANEL APPOINTED BY QUEENSTOWN
LAKES DISTRICT COUNCIL**

IN THE MATTER OF the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER OF submission by Robert Grimm on behalf of
Airways Corporation of New Zealand
Limited on the variation to Queenstown
Lakes District Council proposed district
plan: Te Pūtahi Ladies Mile.

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF ROY GORDON MCEWAN
ON BEHALF OF AIRWAYS CORPORATION OF NEW ZEALAND LIMITED**

Dated: 20 October 2023

Applicant

Airways Corporation of
New Zealand Limited
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Legal counsel

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 My name is Roy Gordon McEwan. I am the South Island Maintenance Manager at Airways Corporation of New Zealand Limited (“Airways”) and I have held this position since 2018.
- 1.2 Given my knowledge of Airways’ operations, I have been asked to provide evidence on behalf of Airways on the importance of the Navigational Aid equipment (“Nav Aid”) operated by Airways at Slope Hill, Queenstown (“site”), and the importance of retaining the present access to the site.
- 1.3 I manage a team of twenty-four Technicians and Electricians that install and maintain the operational equipment that supports New Zealand’s air traffic control network across the South Island. This includes communication, surveillance and navigation equipment located across approximately eighty sites in the South Island, including the site.
- 1.4 Airways has submitted on the Te Pūtahi Ladies Mile Plan Variation, specifically in relation to proposed rule 29.5.24.1, which provides that there be “no direct property access for vehicles from collector road type A on the structure plan to land located north of the road.”
- 1.5 Access to Airways’ site is located north of proposed collector road type A. Airways presently accesses the site from (or about) 429 Frankton-Ladies Mile Highway.

2 SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

- 2.1 My evidence covers the following matters:
 - (a) Purpose of the Nav Aid;
 - (b) The importance of the Nav Aid to Airways’ operations, Queenstown International Airport and aircraft safety and navigation nationally; and
 - (c) The importance of a direct and timely access route to the site to support the above ongoing operations.

3 PURPOSE OF THE NAV AID

- 3.1 The site contains critical aeronautical navigation equipment (also referred to as Nav Aid).¹ The site, in conjunction with other sites, is used to triangulate where aircrafts, flying into or over Queenstown, are positioned within the Wakatipu basin. This information is displayed to the Air Traffic Controllers to ensure aircrafts maintain correct separation.

¹ Equipment on site includes: Doppler Very High Frequency Omnidirectional Range, Distance Measuring Equipment, Multilaterate, Non-Directional Beacon Monitoring, Link.

- 3.2 The Nav Aid, also enables aircrafts to calculate their bearings and distance away from the site, thus allowing them to navigate safely and independently to their destination.
- 3.3 Airways' Technicians access the site at least once a month, for the purpose of performing any fault rectifications, preventative maintenance, or flight inspections. However more frequent access may be required in the event of faults occurring, which would require immediate rectification. Direct access is critical to ensure Airways can access the site as quickly as possible.
- 3.4 In addition to this, track and road maintenance, and air conditioning maintenance (of the Nav Aid equipment) is carried out annually on the site, which is undertaken by independent contractors. The track and road maintenance would generally involve truck(s), a digger and excavator accessing the present road to undertake works.

4 IMPORTANCE OF THE NAV AID

- 4.1 Airways infrastructure is designed with layers of resilience. However, the permanent or temporary loss of the site would result in increased airport closures and diverted flights. This would have negative flow on effects on the Queenstown economy. The site also forms part of the National Minimum Operating Network, which ensures air navigation efficacy and air safety across New Zealand.

5 IMPORTANCE OF DIRECT ACCESS

- 5.1 The site is vitally important to the safe and efficient operation of Queenstown International Airport. Any outage or downgrade are time critical and need to be corrected with urgency. Airways Technicians are purposefully based at the Queenstown Airport, so that Airways' Technicians can respond quickly to repair any outages. The present road access provides the quickest, safest, and most reliable method to access the site. It currently takes twenty minutes (approximately) for Airways' Technicians to be able to access the site.
- 5.2 If the present access is lost or diverted, Airways would not be able to respond to faults and outages efficiently, which could have detrimental effects on air safety and aircraft navigation.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Nav Aid is vital to the operation of Queenstown Airport and for all aircrafts navigating across New Zealand. The present road access allows Airways to access the site directly, reliably, and efficiently. If the present road access is not retained, Airways' operations will be jeopardised and as a result, air safety will be compromised.

Roy Gordon McEwan

20 October 2023