

BEFORE THE QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT COUNCIL HEARINGS PANEL

UNDER the Resource Management Act 1991

IN THE MATTER of the review of parts of the Queenstown Lakes District Council's District Plan under the First Schedule of the Act

AND

IN THE MATTER of submissions and further submissions by **REMARKABLES PARK LIMITED AND QUEENSTOWN PARK LIMITED**

**SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE OF STEPHEN HUGH STAPLES HAMILTON ON BEHALF OF
REMARKABLES PARK LIMITED AND QUEENSTOWN PARK LIMITED**

(TOURISM AND ACCOMMODATION INDUSTRY EXPERTISE)

STREAM 13 REZONING HEARINGS

4 September 2017

**BROOKFIELDS
LAWYERS**

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1. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- 1.1 My full name is Stephen Hugh Staples Hamilton. I am a director of Horwath HTL Limited, a specialist consulting firm established in April 2002, which specialises in consulting to the hotel, tourism and leisure industries. My experience and qualifications are set out in my evidence in chief dated 9 June 2017.

2. TOURISM OVERVIEW

- 2.1 The growth in visitor numbers in Queenstown is clearly evident. Data available from Statistics New Zealand, Tourism Industry Aotearoa (TIA), and Queenstown Airport all point to strong visitor growth over several years.
- 2.2 MBIE's latest forecast of international visitor arrivals and visitor expenditure to New Zealand is positive for the New Zealand tourism industry and indicates continued growth from all main visitor markets. New Zealand needs to significantly increase and improve the public infrastructure and private investment in visitor accommodation and facilities to support this growth, especially in major tourism areas and "arrival gateways" such as Queenstown.

3. ADVANTAGES OF THE QUEENSTOWN GONDOLA DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 There is a need to expand the number and range of visitor experiences available in Queenstown, and in particular more passive or 'soft adventure' activities and attractions which have the capability of handling significant visitor numbers and which are not weather dependent. The proposed QPL gondola will be an excellent example of such a visitor experience – it has scale, it will operate all year, it will be suitable for all ages, it will not be weather dependent, and it will offer an outstanding visitor experience. The gondola and village will offer a significant new dimension to the overall Queenstown visitor experience, accessible to all.
- 3.2 The proposal provides significant large scale additions to Queenstown's infrastructure in the form of (a) one of the world's longest gondolas, enabling large numbers of visitors to enjoy exceptional landscapes and views without the need to walk over those landscapes, and (b) the establishment of a unique high country village. The village will provide a base for visitors to not only enjoy the outstanding natural high country environment but also be educated about how New Zealand respects and manages the environment, including agricultural production.

- 3.3 Development of the proposed high capacity gondola from Remarkables Park to the Remarkables Ski Area will also open up parts of the QPL land for limited commercial accommodation development.
- 3.4 QPL's range of accommodation styles and its relative distance from the centre of Queenstown will help distribute visitor numbers and ease the concentration of visitors in Queenstown's highest growth areas. It will also support other commercial activities developed in the area and add to the range of accommodation experiences visitors can experience in Queenstown because of its unique location and unique travel experience. A range of more boutique forms of accommodation and privately owned residential accommodation available through organisations such as AirBNB will enhance the appeal of the region.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 QPL provides a strong location and visitor experience differentiation where guests will be able to enjoy a unique New Zealand high country experience. Accommodation located at QPL will therefore have a marketing advantage over competitors, and this will assist in making the overall development financially viable.
- 4.2 The rural farm-based development zones in an alpine setting planned at Queenstown Park, accessed by way of a spectacular gondola ride, are consistent with the national Tourism 2025 strategy developed by the TIA with wide industry support (including from Tourism New Zealand) to develop and enhance New Zealand as an appealing four seasons international visitor destination.
- 4.3 Enabling high quality rural residences also supports and improves the desirability of Queenstown as a vibrant high value international visitor destination.

Stephen Hamilton

4 September 2017