

Dr Stephen Chiles for QLDC – Summary of Evidence, 2 May 2016

Hearing Stream 2

1. I have been engaged by Queenstown Lakes District Council (**QLDC**) to provide acoustics evidence on Chapter 21 of the Proposed District Plan (**PDP**). My evidence relates specifically to controls to manage noise from informal airports in rural zones.
2. I have previously been involved in reviewing numerous resource consent applications relating to informal airports in the rural zone under the Operative District Plan (**ODP**). In my opinion the assessment of noise effects for those applications under the ODP has not been efficient or consistent. I consider that revised rules 21.5.25 and 21.5.26 in the PDP appropriately address these issues.
3. The PDP controls noise from informal airports in the rural zone with two sets of rules:
 - (a) Specific rules 21.5.25 and 21.5.26 impose controls based on the distance of informal airports to houses and:
 - (i) The requirement to have a concession or recreation permit for airports on public conservation land or crown pastoral land (rule 21.5.25); or
 - (ii) A limitation on the number of flights each day for airports on other rural land (rule 21.5.26).
 - (b) District-wide rules 36.5.13 and 36.5.14 set noise limits for fixed wing and helicopter airports based on New Zealand Standards NZS 6805 and NZS 6807. These latter rules are not within the scope of the current hearing.
4. I have set out in my evidence how compliance with the controls in rules 21.5.25 and 21.5.26 will generally result in compliance with the noise limits in rules 36.5.13 and 36.5.14. However, by explicitly limiting the number of flights, rule 21.5.26 provides an additional control on noise effects that is not achieved through the noise limits in rules 36.5.13 and 36.5.14. Furthermore, an advantage with rules 21.5.25 and 21.5.26 is that compliance can be determined by a planner without needing a specialist acoustics assessment.

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5. Submissions have sought for rules 21.5.25 and 21.5.26 to be made more lenient or more stringent. In my opinion, Mr Barr has set out appropriate recommendations in his report. These include:
- (a) Requiring 500 metre separation from the boundary of other zones;
 - (b) Increasing the permitted number of flights from three flights a week to two per day; and
 - (c) Removing the notified 500 metre separation requirement from formed legal roads.
6. Having read the evidence of Christopher Day, for Skydive Queenstown Limited and also the planning evidence of Sean Dent for Totally Tourism Ltd, NZ Ski Ltd, and Skyline Enterprises Ltd:
- (a) I agree with paragraphs 23 to 63 of Mr Dent's evidence in relation to rules for informal airports in the rural zone, where his comments address issues within my area of expertise.
 - (b) I agree with the overall premise of Mr Day's evidence that rules 21.5.25 and 21.5.26 provide a conservative permitted activity standard, and informal airports that do not meet that standard should be subject to specific assessment by an acoustics engineer.
 - (c) I have read the amended relief sought by Skydive Queenstown Limited, which includes a controlled activity status in some circumstances for informal airports (controls being related to flight paths, runway orientation, and aircraft idling positions). However, for some sites it might not be practicable to implement such controls. For example, if wind conditions or site geometry restrict the runway orientation and consequently restrict the flight paths, which in turn impacts noise effects. In my opinion it is important that any rules package provides adequate control of noise effects, and I consider that the Skydive Queenstown Limited package may not.
 - (d) In paragraph 14 of his evidence Mr Day discusses the conservatism of rules 21.5.25 and 21.5.26. While I agree with the general point he is making that the rules are conservative in most instances, I have detailed possible scenarios in my evidence where there would not be any conservatism.