

Jerome Wyeth for QLDC – Hearing Stream 15 – Earthworks

1. My evidence considers and makes recommendations on the submissions and further submissions on Chapter 25 Earthworks and the Stage 1 submissions transferred to Stage 2 that are relevant to Chapter 25.
2. Chapter 25 recognises the unique set of adverse effects from earthworks that need to be managed while also recognising that earthworks are an essential part of enabling new development and to enable existing activities to operate effectively and efficiently. I consider the Chapter 25 provisions appropriately manage the adverse effects of earthworks in the District, while enabling earthworks to provide benefits to people and communities.
3. In my evidence I consider the proposed earthworks volume and area thresholds (Table 25.2 and Standard 25.5.11). The purpose of these thresholds is to define a level where adverse effects are likely to be minor using standard controls, and act as a trigger to require resource consent when the acceptable threshold is exceeded and there is a consequent risk of significant adverse effects. These thresholds allow the risks associated with earthworks to be proactively managed through the resource consent process and allow suitable consent conditions to be imposed that are specific to the site and the scale and nature of the works. I consider that the thresholds in Table 25.2 and Standard 25.5.11 are fit for purpose and appropriate in terms of defining the scale of earthworks that can be undertaken as a permitted activity in each zone.
4. I recommend that the proposed earthworks volume and area thresholds are retained with the exception of an increase in the earthworks volume threshold in the Millbrook Resort Zone from 300m³ to 500m³, and some consequential amendments relating to Jacks Point Zone and the Airport Zone.
5. I consider that my revised version of Chapter 25, attached to my rebuttal evidence, provides the following benefits in terms of efficiency and effectiveness:
 - (a) The objectives and supporting policies provide greater clarity and ensure there is clear direction for the management of the adverse effects of earthworks and to enable earthworks to provide for the social, cultural and economic well-being of people and communities.
 - (b) The standards relating to sediment run-off, deposition of material on roads, and dust are more certain, workable and clear to plan users. A restricted discretionary activity consent process will provide a more appropriate, efficient and certain consenting pathway when these standards are not complied with.
 - (c) Providing for minor earthworks (less than 5m³) to be undertaken near waterbodies to avoid unnecessary consent requirements.
6. A key objective of the earthworks area thresholds and Standard 25.5.12 (sediment control) is to help improve earthworks management practices in the District. I understand that Council will develop earthworks erosion and sediment control guidance. In my opinion, such guidance is critical to provide certainty to developers and improve earthworks management practices and associated environmental outcomes throughout the District.
7. The key outstanding matters of disagreement between myself and submitters who have filed evidence are:
 - (a) the exemptions for earthworks with the Ski Area Sub Zones;
 - (b) the management of sediment from earthworks in the Proposed District Plan and duplication of controls with Otago Regional Council; and
 - (c) setbacks to waterbodies (Standard 25.5.20).