

**BEFORE THE QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT COUNCIL
INDEPENDENT HEARINGS PANEL**

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act
1991 (**RMA**)

AND

IN THE MATTER of a further submission to the Stage 1
Proposed Queenstown Lakes District
Council Plan by **ZJV (NZ) Limited**
(**Further Submission 1370.1**)

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF TRENT ALAN YEO
ON BEHALF OF ZJV (NZ) LIMITED**

(EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR)

**HEARING TOPIC 013 – QUEENSTOWN MAPPING:
Stream 1A – Queenstown Business and Industrial**

7 July 2017

**BROOKFIELDS
LAWYERS**

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 My full name is Trent Alan Yeo. I live in Queenstown.
- 1.2 I hold a Bachelor of Architecture from Deakin University. I am the Executive Director of ZJV (NZ) Limited, trading as Ziptrek Ecotours (**Ziptrek**).
- 1.3 The purpose of my evidence statement is to provide the Panel with my perspective on the utility and appropriateness of the 'Commercial Tourism and Recreation Sub-Zone' that has been proposed by Skyline Enterprises Limited (**Skyline**) in its submission 574 on the Queenstown Lakes District Council's Proposed District Plan.

2. SKYLINE SUBMISSION 574

- 2.1 Ziptrek filed a further submission (1370.1) opposing Skyline's submission 574.
- 2.2 Submission 574 seeks the rezoning of parts of the Ben Lomond Reserve to a 'Commercial Tourism and Recreation sub-zone' of the Rural zone. The proposed sub-zone introduces a set of considerably more liberal development controls from the Rural zone that currently applies to the reserve. From my understanding of the submission, it essentially requests that the District Plan:
 - (a) provide specific recognition of Skyline's existing and proposed operations on the reserve; and
 - (b) help ensure that Skyline's business can continue to grow and develop in the future with fewer planning hurdles.
- 2.3 I have read the evidence of Sean Dent for Skyline, dated 9 June, which supports amendments to the proposed sub-zone from what was sought in submission 574. Mr Dent now supports slightly stricter controls from those proposed in submission 574 (but still considerably more liberal controls than the current Rural zone). I also understand that Mr Dent

supports broadening the area of land proposed to be included in the sub-zone, including by rezoning Ziptrek's 'top treehouse'.

3. AMENITY VALUES OF BOB'S PEAK

- 3.1 I have considered the implications of rezoning Ziptrek's operations (or part of its operations) to a zone with more liberal controls, as proposed by Mr Dent. Any potential future development that Ziptrek may embark on would be easier under Skyline's proposed provisions, and this could be perceived as being a benefit.
- 3.2 Despite this potential benefit, Ziptrek cannot support the proposed sub-zone. In my view the value of the Ben Lomond Reserve, and the Outstanding Natural Landscape that it sits within, is in its amenity values which include its naturalness and quietness. Aside from the intrinsic value of this amenity, it is a significant contributor to the success of commercial tourism operators in the Ben Lomond Reserve.
- 3.3 The naturalness of Bob's Peak also contributes to the broader amenity of Queenstown, as a landmark visible from many parts of the town centre.
- 3.4 I consider that the provisions of the proposed sub-zone pose a real risk that the amenity of Bob's Peak could be significantly deteriorated. In my view, it is highly likely that this deterioration would have adverse effects for other commercial tourism operators, such as Ziptrek, who rely on the natural amenity values of the reserve.
- 3.5 I understand that the District Plan must balance the need to enable the development of tourism on one hand, while adequately protecting environmental and amenity values, which underpin tourism, on the other hand. In my view the proposed sub-zone goes too far towards enabling development and fails to maintain or enhance amenity values or adequately protect the Outstanding Natural Landscape values.
- 3.6 Ziptrek has demonstrated that it is possible to grow commercially while still protecting the environment. We have sought to respect and maintain the naturalness and quietness of the Ben Lomond Reserve and the Outstanding Natural Landscape classification in developing our

business. We have grown a successful commercial recreation business while not adversely impacting amenity values of the reserve, or operating in a manner that is contrary to the objectives and policies of the Ben Lomond and Queenstown Hill Reserve Management Plan. We have managed this through provisions in the current Rural zoning.

4. CONFLICT OF USES IN BOB'S PEAK

- 4.1 The Environment Court has acknowledged the “frenetic” nature of the Bob’s Peak area.¹ There are a wide range of recreation and tourist activities and increasing integration difficulties between these activities.
- 4.2 Ziptrek is concerned that further proliferation of commercial activity, as would be easily enabled in Skyline’s proposed sub-zone, will increase the potential conflict of uses in the area.

Trent Alan Yeo

7 July 2017

¹ **ZJV (NZ) Ltd v Queenstown Lakes District Council** [2015] NZEnvC 205 at [10].