

Marion Read for QLDC – Summary of Evidence, 3 May 2017
Ski Area Sub Zones – Hearing Stream 11

1. I have been engaged by Queenstown Lakes District Council (**QLDC**) to provide evidence in relation to landscape matters regarding proposed extensions to the Ski Area Sub Zones (**SASZ**) in the Proposed District Plan (**PDP**).
2. My evidence addresses proposed extensions to the SASZs at Cardrona, Treble Cone, Coronet Peak and the Remarkables. All but a part of the rezoning requested by NZSki on the lower slopes of the Remarkables are entirely located within Outstanding Natural Landscapes (**ONLs**).

Extensions to SASZ at Cardrona

3. Mount Cardrona Station Limited requests an extension to the notified SASZ which would connect it to the Mount Cardrona Station Special Zone (**MCSSZ**) to provide a corridor for a future gondola development as anticipated by the zone. I understand that the relief sought in the submission has been revised so that the extended sub zone would only make the construction and operation of a passenger lift system (as defined), a controlled activity. Otherwise I understand that the underlying Rural zone provisions would apply to any other activity other than a passenger lift system. I consider that this bespoke extension would not cause any adverse effects on the landscape of the vicinity that are not already anticipated.
4. Soho Creek and Blackmans Creek No 1 LP request an extension of approximately 360ha to the SASZ south of Cardrona township to facilitate the construction of a gondola. I consider that such development in this area would adversely affect the visual amenity and experience of remoteness which is achieved in the southern part of the Cardrona Valley. It would constitute sprawl, taking development south of Meg Creek which acts as a natural southern boundary to Cardrona township. Also the construction of what could be the third gondola in the valley (one consented, one anticipated) would have significant adverse cumulative effects in my opinion. Consequently I do not support the relief requested.
5. Anderson Branch Creek Limited request an extension to the Cardrona SASZ incorporating approximately 490ha of elevated land to the north of Boundary Creek. In my view this area has little ability to absorb development and I note no expert evidence has been filed by the submitter disputing this.

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6. Cardrona Alpine Resort Limited seek to rezone approximately 50ha of land located at the north eastern corner of the existing SASZ and downslope of it. I consider that this extension would potentially create an area of sprawl adjacent to the MCSSZ with cumulative adverse effects on the character and quality of the landscape of the valley. Consequently I do not support the relief requested. Again no expert evidence has been filed in support of the rezoning submission.

Extensions to SASZ at Treble Cone

7. Treble Cone Investments Limited request an extension to the SASZ to the east of the existing SASZ boundary, extending from its lowest margin to the valley floor. This is to facilitate the construction of a gondola for which consent already exists. In my view, the additional development which would be anticipated within the sub zone (ie, Ski Area Activities as defined) would exceed the capacity of the valley landscape to absorb it. Consequently I do not support the relief requested.

Extensions to SASZ at The Remarkables

8. NZSki Limited (**NZSki**) have requested an extension of 29.67ha at the highest reaches of the Remarkables SASZ (referred to as 'Area 1' in my evidence). They sought that a gap between the notified sub zone boundary and the District Boundary be zoned SASZ. Since filing my evidence, I have become aware that the submitter relied on the current district boundary identified on Council's online GIS maps, which is downslope and west of the ridgeline. I now understand this location to be incorrect and that the district boundary and the SASZ boundary coincide in this area and are located downslope and east of the ridgeline. This is shown on the planning maps in both the ODP and PDP but with no other contextual information. I opposed the rezoning of ridgeline to SASZ in my evidence, but now understand this to be within the jurisdiction of the Central Otago District Council.
9. I am also opposed to the component of this submission seeking that the area identified on Mr Dent's Attachment A as "Proposed area subject to policy restricting structures and earthworks" be rezoned SASZ, and consider it should remain zoned Rural as I consider that this area around Lake Alta is an extremely sensitive and important part of the alpine landscape.
10. NZSki have also requested the rezoning of a block of land in the Coneburn Valley which extends to the east from the Kingston Road (referred to as 'Area 2' in my evidence). I am opposed to this extension of the SASZ as I consider that the

development it would facilitate would likely have significant adverse effects on the landscape of the lower Remarkables.

Extensions to SASZ at Coronet Peak

11. In relation to Coronet Peak, NZSki sought two extensions to the SASZ at Dirty Four Creek and into the Back Bowls. Although these two submissions are still 'live', NZSki has chosen not to file any evidence on them and to accept the Panel's findings based on the Council's evidence. As set out in my evidence, I am opposed to the requested rezonings at Coronet Peak because of the risk of significant cumulative adverse effects on the landscape, with regard to the Back Bowls area, and because of the risk of significant adverse effects on the natural character and aesthetic coherence of the Long Gully landscape with regard to the Dirty Four Creek area.

General

11. In general, it is my opinion that the SASZs as they have been applied in the ODP and the PDP are, in the main, incoherent from a landscape perspective. The extensions to the zones which have been proposed would, in most cases, make the zones even more incoherent. The Cardrona, Treble Cone, and Remarkables ski fields are all located in truncated alpine valleys or, and in the case of Snow Farm/Park on the summit of the Pisa Range. From a landscape perspective, there is potential for significantly more development within these land features than that which is currently present. The proposed SASZ does not recognise or facilitate this, however. While these areas of the SASZ could absorb more development, it remains my opinion that the Outstanding Natural Landscapes below the ski fields have high importance and where Rural zoned, should retain the full protection of the Landscape provisions of Chapter 6 of the PDP.