

**Before the Commissioners
For the Queenstown Lakes Proposed District Plan**

Under The Resource Management Act 1991 ('**RMA**')

In the matter of Stage 3B of the Queenstown Lakes Proposed District Plan

Legal Submissions for Airbnb Australia Pty Limited

Dated 29 May 2020

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Introduction

- 1 These legal submissions relate to the activity status of Residential Visitor Accommodation ('RVA') in the Rural Visitor Zone in Stage 3b of the proposed Queenstown Lakes District Plan ('QLDP'). Airbnb Australia Pty Limited ('Airbnb') lodged a further submission dated 18 February 2020 seeking that RVA is permitted in the Rural Visitor Zone.
- 2 Airbnb is concerned about aligning the RVA provisions with the outcome of the current appeal in relation to RVA activity status in all zones of the proposed QLDP.

Airbnb's operations

- 3 Airbnb entered the New Zealand market in 2015 and (prior to the COVID-19 pandemic) had approximately 37,500 listings across the country. The Airbnb platform enables hosts to list rooms and spaces, homes, holiday homes and boutique hotels for short term rentals.
- 4 Airbnb's contribution to the Queenstown Lakes District economy, and tourism in the District, is significant. For example, In 2017, the total economic contribution associated with expenditure of Airbnb guests in New Zealand was approximately \$660 million to the New Zealand economy in value added, supporting 6,006 full-time equivalents.¹ During the same period for the Queenstown economy (which includes the Otago regional as a whole) Airbnb contributed approximately \$89 million in value added, supporting 713 full time equivalents.²

Stage 3b of the proposed Queenstown Lakes District Plan

- 5 As outlined above, Airbnb made a further submission dated 18 February 2020 on Stage 3b of the proposed QLDP (further submission number 31050/31061). Airbnb's further submission was in support of Wayfare Group Limited ('Wayfare') submission number 31024.1. Wayfare's submission relates to the Rural Visitor Zone, and requested the redrafting of the rules to permit RVA in the Rural Visitor Zone. Airbnb supports Wayfare's submission to provide for RVA as a permitted activity in the Rural Visitor Zone. Airbnb's concerns relate solely to the RVA rules and Airbnb does not have a position on the zoning of Wayfare's site.

¹ Deloitte, *Economic Effects of Airbnb in Queenstown*, 2018, page 4.

² Ibid.

- 6 The section 42A report dated 18 March 2020 recommends declining Wayfare's submission number 31024.1, and concludes that it is appropriate for residential activity (which includes RVA) to be a non-complying activity in the Rural Visitor Zone. Airbnb supports Wayfare's submission that RVA should be a permitted activity in the Rural Visitor Zone, for the reasons outlined in paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 below.

RVA provisions in the Queenstown Lakes District Plan

- 7 The rules relating to RVA in all QLDP zones are currently subject to an appeal by Airbnb dated 7 May 2019, under the Stage 2 Visitor Accommodation Variation section of the QLDP.
- 8 In the appeal at paragraph 13, Airbnb requested that RVA should be provided for as a permitted activity in all zones, subject to compliance with appropriate development standards that address any potential effects on amenity values. RVA's that do not comply with the permitted activity standards should then default to a controlled activity (paragraph 15 of Airbnb's appeal).
- 9 The RVA provisions in the Rural Visitor Zone will need to be brought into line with the outcome of the Airbnb appeal in order to provide for the consistent treatment of RVAs across the zones of the proposed QLDP.
- 10 Airbnb does not wish to be heard at the hearing. It is respectfully requested that these legal submissions are tabled at the hearing.

Dated 29 May 2020



Christina Sheard
Counsel for Airbnb