

ANNEXURE 4 - ALTERNATIVES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

4.1.1 This section of the NOR addresses the alternative sites, routes or methods of providing for expansion of Wanaka Airport to meet projected requirements.

DO NOTHING

4.1.2 The 'do nothing' approach would see no expansion of Wanaka Airport.

4.1.3 The Wanaka Airport master plan (**Appendix D**) and addendum (**Appendix E**) anticipate that there is increasing demand for air travel to and from Wanaka. This reflects the needs of the projected growth in permanent residents and visitors to the Wanaka area.

4.1.4 Wanaka Airport has the potential to expand to meet the air travel needs of the resident, business and tourist travellers. Physically, expansion at the Airport is relatively unencumbered at present and designating the land required for expansion now will safeguard it for the Airport growth needs out to 2036, as anticipated by the master plan.

4.1.5 By doing nothing other activities, such as more residential activity, may occur around the airport. Such activities may give rise to reverse sensitivity effects or result in obstacles in the flight paths, which may compromise the ability of the Airport to expand in the future.

4.1.6 Economically, enabling growth of the Airport is likely to result in the Airport becoming a significant contributor to the local and regional economies. By doing nothing the potential economic input to the community that the Airport could make will not be realised. It is accepted that travellers will visit Wanaka via other modes of transport but direct economic benefits, such as employment at the Airport, will be lost.

4.1.7 In terms of transportation, growth at the Airport will enable travellers to fly direct to Wanaka reducing travel times and the need for car/bus trips between Queenstown or Christchurch and Wanaka.

4.1.8 Wanaka Airport is a valuable existing resource. The 'do nothing' approach would not realise the economic or social importance of the Airport and would not represent sustainable management of the resource.

4.2 ALTERNATIVE METHODS

4.2.1 An alternative to designating the site would be to seek to expand the Airport via resource consents.

4.2.2 This method would require resource consents to be applied for on a case-by-case basis. The Airport is located within the Rural Zone of the District Plan. It is likely that most of the activities required at the Airport would be discretionary

or non-complying within the Rural Zone therefore there is no certainty resource consent would be granted.

- 4.2.3 Designating the required land will also safeguard the land subject to the designation into the future. Applying for a series of resource consents rather than a designation would leave the opportunity for other activities to occur on the land in the interim (albeit this would be unlikely given QLDC owns the land in question).

4.3 ALTERNATIVE SITES

- 4.3.1 Wanaka Airport is ideally located on flat terrace land with few surrounding activities sensitive to aircraft noise, yet it is close enough to the Wanaka township to make it easily accessible.

- 4.3.2 To date significant investment has been made into the Airport. The Council invested heavily in the existing airport and recently spent \$700,000 re-sealing the main runway. In addition it spent in excess of \$1.2M purchasing additional land to provide for the proposed expansion. This purchase has meant that the QLDC can provide for the immediate future need for an expanded public airfield. To purchase and develop a completely new airfield on a 'green fields' site would not be building on the current asset and therefore would be likely to involve significantly greater cost. It would also mean the investment in the current facility would be lost.

- 4.3.3 Further, the potential environmental effects of a green field site could be more significant. Heavy aircraft (C130 and Convair 580 for example) already use Wanaka from time to time. Moving the airport to a site further along SH6 is not feasible because of the proximity of the river terrace. An alternative airport site on the lower river terraces would conflict with existing rural land uses as well as raising the possibility of operational constraints because of obstacles and the greater incidence of fog on the lower terraces.

- 4.3.4 On balance, selection of Wanaka Airport as the preferred site represents a sustainable use of an existing significant physical resource.

4.4 PROVISION OF MONITORING AND ENGINE TESTING BY WAY OF RULES IN THE DISTRICT PLAN

- 4.4.1 This NOR proposes to introduce obligations for aircraft noise monitoring and engine testing through the Aerodrome Designation. The existing designation requires that such provisions are addressed prior to the Airport being used for scheduled commercial aircraft flights.

- 4.4.2 Section 176(1)(a) of the RMA provides that section 9(3) does not apply to a public work or project or work undertaken by the requiring authority. Therefore, under the Aerodrome Designation, QLDC can operate Wanaka Airport without the need to adhere to other rules in the District Plan. For this reason it is important that any conditions pertaining to the operation of the airport, such as monitoring or engine testing, are contained within the Designation rather than

in rules in the District Plan. The QLDC is then directly obligated to comply with those limitations. This is the most appropriate way of providing for monitoring and engine in order to provide certainty to the community that QLDC will comply with the provisions.

- 4.4.3 The approach of providing for monitoring and engine testing through the Designation is therefore the most appropriate.

4.5 PROVIDING FOR AN INTERNATIONAL RUNWAY

- 4.5.1 The possibility of providing for international flights at Wanaka Airport has also been investigated. The Master Plan provided for a runway extension intended for domestic turboprop jets and did not foresee any requirement to provide for international services to 2023.

- 4.5.2 Further investigation work was undertaken to determine the operational requirements for international services. The investigation identified that a 2% approach slope would be required for a Code 4C international runway.

- 4.5.3 Immediately to the northwest of the Wanaka Airport runway there is a significant terrain penetration through a 2% approach slope which, given its proximity to the runway, would need to be removed to allow for the safe approach of aircraft. Survey work determined that 13m in height and a volume of 615,000 cubic metres of cut would need to be removed from the terrain penetration to ensure a clear approach surface.

- 4.5.4 The land penetrating the approach surface is not in QLDC's ownership and would reasonably need to be acquired by QLDC to enable the earth removal. The cost of acquiring this land has been valued at around \$800,000.

- 4.5.5 In addition to the terrain and land ownership difficulties, it is considered unlikely that there would be demand for an international airport in Wanaka given the relative proximity of Queenstown International Airport.