

S2B63

Submission by the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (NZ) Inc (AOPA)

1. I have been asked by AOPA to present the following information regarding recent proposed changes in the QLDC Proposed District Plan regarding the Wakatipu basin. I was an original founding member of the association many years ago and served as President in the 1990s.
2. My name is Robert Jules Tapper. I hold a professional pilots licence and this November 2018 will have been flying for 57 years. I have owned and operated various aircraft, helicopters and gliders for 56 years and have considerable operational experience within the current QLDC area. I first landed at Queenstown Airport 56 years ago when the airfield was just a square grass paddock with several landing vectors. I have thus had the benefit of observing aircraft use and aeronautical development in the area over a considerable period of time. With my commercial aviation background in the area and involvement as a senior executive with the Mount Cook Group and Air New Zealand Ltd on previous airport planning matters plus my personal aviation experience I wish to make the following comments relating to informal aircraft operations in the Wakatipu Basin.
3. I have hangared various aircraft and a helicopter in three various rural locations within the Wakatipu Basin since 1974 and in that time have never had a complaint regarding aircraft noise or adverse activity. I have always been a strong advocate of the mantra 'fly neighbourly.'
4. AOPA thought that our original submissions made regarding the total rural area covered the entire district. We note that the Lifestyle Precinct has now become bigger.
5. AOPA members are private aviators. We don't want to annoy people or upset neighbours but we do want the opportunity to land our aircraft at our homes etc. This should be possible to achieve.
6. Our activity level and noise level is very, very small when compared to the total local aviation scene and of short and intermittent duration.
7. We think that there can be irrational concern given our level of activity.
8. The nature of the basin zone and precinct means that there is already a good deal of noise from ride on mowers, tractors, chainsaws, traffic, commercial aircraft etc. This noise is usually of considerable duration compared to a light aircraft takeoff or landing.
9. While no s32 report was done (we don't think one sentence in the main report qualifies) we presume that as stated in the original S32 document, QLDC accept the desirability of eliminating unnecessary resource consent hearings for our minor recreational activity.
10. Council has specified a noise limit at the notional boundary of neighbouring properties. We think that is reasonable and private recreational landings should be allowed subject to it.
11. There are a number of noise experts available who can advise aviators or others in this regard and I would refer to earlier reports to council supplied by Dr Chiles and

- Goodwin that showed that at the usually accepted standard of 50db, setbacks of 80 to 100metres can effect compliance. When Southern Planning Group set 500 metres as a setback, Dr Chiles has noted this rationale as being quite conservative.
12. QLDC and most other council districts have usually granted resource consents where compliance with noise standards can be shown, so why not just apply this at least for private operations. In the case of Cedar Lodge at Makarora the consent application was granted when the neighbour was only 70m away from the landing site because the standard was still met. Each site will vary depending on terrain etc, and that is why just relying on the noise standard is sensible as it allows operations while still protecting neighbours from any negative effects of the activity.
 13. Other councils have relied just on the noise standards in their plans. Some e.g. Kaikoura and Mackenzie have chosen to just allow private operations while other allow all types of operations. The Taieri Plain around Mosgiel has a similar density to much of the Wakatipu basin and the DCC proposes to control operations by noise only. (Refer our original submission)
 14. Although we have at this stage been denied the opportunity to submit on proposals regarding the basin Rural Amenity Zone (due to some ambiguity re informal airports not being specifically noted in the public notification to original Stage One submitters) we can't see the rational for either a 500m separation or the need to treat Rural, Rural Amenity and Lifestyle precincts separately. From an aviation perspective the objectives are the same i.e. to provide for our very low level of activity in a way that does not cause annoyance and loss of amenity value.
 15. We reiterate the compliance with the noise standards should provide this.
 16. Private landings have been part of the Wakatipu Basin scene for a long time. There has been irregular activity over many years at 'Strains' and 'Walkers' at Lake Hayes and 'Monks' on McDonnell Road. Activity at these sites has now ceased. There is now only commercial helicopter activity x Nugget Point Lodge, for several years from a private heliport northwest of Arthur Point up the Shotover Canyon, a private strip used for topdressing at 'Greenslades' old property, the private activity airstrip at 'Macaulays', the private helicopter landing zone at the Fairfax property off Malaghans Road, and the Bunn farm airstrip on Morven Ferry Road - from where topdressing and minimal private use activity has been undertaken for over 45 years. If a 500m setback is retained and informal airports remain a discretionary activity in the Precinct there will be little opportunity for new informal airports.
 17. What has happened is that over the last 10 years or so housing has been approved on an incremental basis and now it is planned that we should require resource consent to provide for the reverse sensitivity that has developed as a result. This is unfair and unnecessary.

For AOPA (NZ) Inc



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