

**BEFORE THE QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT COUNCIL PROPOSED DISTRICT  
PLAN HEARINGS PANEL**

**UNDER**                                **the Resource Management Act 1991**

**IN THE MATTER OF**                **the Proposed Queenstown Lakes District Plan**

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**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF FIONA BLACK ON PROPOSED CHAPTERS 26 & 32**

**FOR**

**Real Journeys Limited (621/1341)**

**And**

**Te Anau Developments Limited (607/1342)**

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**Dated: 17 June 2016**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 My full name is Katherine FIONA Black. I work for Real Journeys Limited managing Real Journeys and its subsidiary companies Department of Conservation Concessions; Resource Consents and other regulatory authorisations, along with other operational related duties. I am authorised by these companies to give this evidence on their behalf.

1.2 I have worked in the New Zealand Tourism industry for 28 years; the last 12 years, for Real Journeys; in the first instance as the Milford Sound Branch Manager and for the last nine years in my current role. Consequently I have gained a considerable knowledge of the tourism industry, including the evolving challenges faced by this industry. Also since 2011, I have been a member of the Southland Conservation Board.

1.3 In preparing this evidence I have reviewed the following documents:

- a) Section 42A Report prepared by Ms Jones in relation to Proposed Chapter 26 Historic Heritage; inclusive of the attached s32 reports and various background reports referred to in these documents;
- b) Section 42A Report prepared by Ms Law in relation to Proposed Chapter 32 Protected Trees; inclusive of the attached s32 reports and various background reports referred to in these documents.

**2. SCOPE OF EVIDENCE**

2.1 For simplicity sake I will only refer to Real Journeys Limited, not Te Anau Developments Limited. Nevertheless the points made are relevant to either or both entities.

**3. CHAPTER 26 HISTORIC HERITAGE**

3.1 In the section 42A report Ms. Jones states:

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3.2 I agree with this position and for the same reasons I recommend the "TSS Earnslaw" should also be removed from the PDP inventory of protected features.

- 3.3 This may seem at odds with our previous statements regarding ensuring the “#” fi%304%8 is protected”; however the PDP heritage chapter is focused on a regime that protects the heritage values of static places, structures and buildings. In this case, the “TSS Earnslaw” is a mobile structure with multiple moving parts which require significant ongoing repairs and maintenance to ensure the vessel remains compliant within Maritime New Zealand’s regularity framework and operates safely and optimally.
- 3.4 Maintenance and operations on the “TSS Earnslaw” is unlike a fixed structure. For safety, practicality and commercial viability the ship is taken out of service and maintained once a year. Biennially she must be slipped to inspect and service her through hull fittings at a minimum. Many of the repairs are far from straight forward. Because of the age of the vessel replacement parts cannot be purchased “off the shelf” and must be fabricated to order or appropriate “work arounds” developed.
- 3.5 As the “TSS Earnslaw” continues to age, significant repairs and maintenance will be required to keep her operating and compliant with the appropriate and evolving safety standards.
- 3.6 The need for significant repairs is not always apparent prior to the annual vessel survey. It is often only when floor boards are lifted, engines dismantled, or similar work carried out that it becomes obvious that significant remedial works need to be undertaken.
- 3.7 Real Journey’s cannot support such works triggering a resource consent process because resource consent processes create unnecessary and undue delays, which would give rise to additional costs to the company. Each day the “TSS Earnslaw” is out of service, the higher the cost to Real Journeys and the Queenstown economy; and the higher the risk to our reputation (by not being able to provide visitors the experience they are seeking). Having the “TSS Earnslaw” unavailable for extended periods is also a significant disadvantage to the Queenstown tourism industry.
- 3.8 During the annual “TSS Earnslaw” survey we substitute her with two Fiordland Class vessels. A Lake Wakatipu cruise on the Fiordland Class vessel is not such an attractive proposition to visitors compared to a cruise on the unique “TSS Earnslaw”.
- 3.9 Real Journeys has a primary goal and business model of maintaining the “TSS Earnslaw” working economically under her own steam, to ensure that she does not become a museum piece. That is, the layout of “TSS Earnslaw” needs to be able to continue to evolve to ensure she remains a relevant operating tourism proposition.

- 3.10 Undertaking significant repairs and alterations to the ship have historically been undertaken to meet the changing demands of evolving markets. For example:
- in 1936 the promenade deck was covered in and canvas curtains fitted around the sides as protection from the elements and the electric generator in the engine room was transferred to the galley space once the coal range and galley fittings had been removed;
  - in 1960 some of the hull plates were replaced for the first time;
  - in 1982 the promenade deck and the bridge were enclosed and engine room skylights were replaced with a balustrade so that passengers can see the workings of triple expansion steam engines; and
  - in 1986 a 4,800 litre sullage tank was fitted in the original cargo hold to enable sewerage to be held on board and discharged ashore into Queenstown's sewerage system.
- 3.11 It is in Real Journeys commercial interests to maintain the heritage values of the "TSS Earnslaw" and the company does not intend to manage her operation without control over her heritage values.
- 3.12 Real Journeys is considering development of a conservation plan for the "TSS Earnslaw" and her slipway on the Kelvin Peninsula to manage any proposed structural changes or layout modifications. Such a plan will be managed by an appointed group of stakeholders or a committee including external Maritime Heritage expert(s), a naval architect and suitably qualified Real Journeys personnel.
- 3.13 This conservation plan is not something Real Journeys has just thought up in response to the PDP. Dr Peter Petchey of Southern Archaeology Limited recommended Real Journeys develop conservation plan for the Kelvin Peninsula slipway and we have taken this recommendation on board. We are likely to take this recommendation further, and develop a wider conservation plan which includes the "TSS Earnslaw".
- 3.14 The conservation plan would identify the original heritage fabric of the structures and the "TSS Earnslaw"; identify what has been changed over time; provide guidance on what should be protected by identifying the key elements that should be preserved; and place these elements in a hierarchy.
- 3.15 Real Journeys envisage this conservation plan could include flow charts to ensure it is clear what types of changes or scales of changes would and would not require the input of the stakeholder group.
- 3.16 Real Journeys would seek Heritage New Zealand's input into the draft conservation plan. Upon completion Real Journeys could provide a copy of this plan to QLDC.

- 3.17 Vis-à-vis the Kevin Peninsula slipway, I also contend that the “TSS Earnslaw” slipway at Kelvin Peninsula is not appropriately accommodated within the PDP framework. The slipway is not a static “feature” or a building but a complex operational structure with multiple moving parts which will require significant ongoing repairs and maintenance to ensure the slipway continues to operate safely. The focus of the PDP is on heritage buildings and sites, not working machinery as reflected in such wording of the PDP repairs and maintenance definitions.
- 3.18 Providing for the safe ongoing operation of this structure is paramount because of the significant risks involved in operating a pressurised vessel with a working pressure of 110 lb. per square inch. Plus the “Antrim” steam engine and winch which pulls the 271 gross tonne “TSS Earnslaw” out of the lake. Consequently to keep the slipway operating safely, significant repairs must be undertaken on an ongoing basis, especially because these slipway components continue to age and engineering and safety standards become more stringent.
- 3.19 Real Journeys acknowledges the historical significance of the paddle steamship “Antrim’s” former engine and boiler. However, most of the slipway timbers and sleepers have been replaced with concrete and steel and an additional section of rack has been installed down the centre of the slipway, to more effectively brake the cradle. Consequently, I contend that this part of the slipway, the bed and rails, should no longer be considered a category 2 protected feature within the PDP.
- 3.20 With respect to the paddle steam ship “Antrim’s” former engine and boiler within the winding house; Real Journeys wishes to retain the ability to relocate this machinery within the Kelvin Peninsula site. So that if it proves necessary to replace the engine or winch with more modern infrastructure this can be done readily and the current winch, engine and boiler moved on site to accommodate this change.
- 3.21 Concerning, the Kevin Peninsula Slipway description listing in the protected feature inventory; the proposed amended description is now muddled and it is contrary to the international convention of denoting vessel names by either italicising them or placing them in quotation marks. If the slipway is retained in the inventory of protected features in its current category, I recommend this description be amended as follows:
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- 3.22 With respect to the assessment of structures other than buildings; a qualified “Conservation Architect” is not necessarily the appropriate person to undertake all such an assessments for instance for a vessel. In its submission Real Journeys sought that “suitably qualified” be more fully defined in the PDP rather than restrict the range of “experts” who could undertake such assessments to such a limited scope. The fact that the s42A Report recommends a conservation architect as the appropriate expert supports our position that the PDP is focused on static buildings and structures and should not be interfering with the management of an operating vessel.

#### 4. CHAPTER 32 PROTECTED TREES

- 4.1 This part of my evidence is in respect to protected trees, 193 Sycamore /' )3 246) (12%8/064 located on the Crown owned esplanade strip between the lake and the front of the section 15 Blk III 26 Mid Wakatipu SD, owned by Te Anau Developments Limited.
- 4.4 Firstly, I do not believe this tree is the largest Sycamore in New Zealand. Trees typically grow taller in a forest where they need to compete with other trees for light. At Walter Peak there is only one other tree in close proximity to this Sycamore. Hence this sycamore is not a particularly large tree. Accordingly, we contend this tree does not merit protection in the PDP on the basis that it is the largest.



Figure 1 Photo of protected Sycamore

- 4.2 More importantly, Te Anau Developments wish to have this sycamore removed because it is a wilding species; is a significant seed source; and it's seedlings will readily invade disturbed, regenerating vegetation, short tussock land, and roadsides at Walter Peak. Because of the recent clearance of other wilding trees and the Beach Bay Recreation Reserve, the environment at this site favours the invasion of weed species such Sycamores. Refer the before and after wilding tree clearance photos on p8 below (Figures 2 & 3).
- 4.3 Te Anau Developments is already facing significant issues with weed invasion on the recently denuded areas at Walter Peak and we do not want another weed present that will contribute to further weed invasions. Refer photo on p8 (Figure 4) for an example of the current weed spread.
- 4.5 Te Anau Developments is working with the Department of Conservation to obtain resource consent approval to authorise the removal of this Sycamore in the next six to nine months. The Department of Conservation supports the removal of this sycamore (refer copy of email from Chris Hankin, Figure 5 on p8 below).
- 4.6 Accordingly, including this tree in the PDP protected trees inventory will be redundant if and when resource consent is granted.





**Figure 2** Photo showing Walter Peak before wilding tree clearance



**Figure 3** Photo showing Walter Peak after wilding tree clearance



**Figure 4** Photo showing example of current weed spread (post wilding tree clearance)

**From:** Chris Hankin [mailto:chankin@doc.govt.nz]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 9 June 2016 8:48 a.m.  
**To:** Fiona Black; Geoff Deavoll  
**Cc:** Ben.Farrell (Ben.Farrell@jea.co.nz)  
**Subject:** RE: QLDC PDP - Protected Trees

The Queenstown District Office would readily support the removal of the mature sycamore from the marginal strip at Walter Peak. Sycamore is a known problem species in the South Island. Of particular importance here is that sycamore readily invades disturbed and regenerating forest, short tussock land, scrubland, waste sites, road-sides and near waterways – the exact environment around the Walter Peak homestead. Should the mature specimen be left on the marginal strip its seeds will be spreading across the reinstated indigenous vegetation that Real Journeys has invested so heavily in setting up. It should also be noted that Real Journeys recently obtained resource consent for removal of a large Douglas Fir as part of its wilding tree eradication programme at the site.

If the sycamore tree could be removed from the district plan it would relieve both the company and the council from some consenting work when processing timeframes are already under pressure.

Let me know if you need further information

Regards

Chris Hankin

Ranger, Partnerships - Kaitiaki Manutātaki  
Department of Conservation - Te Papa Atawhai  
Wakatipu Office; PO Box 811 Queenstown, 9348  
Ph 03 442 6902

Figure 5 Text from email from Chris Hankin to Fiona Black, 9 June 2016



Signed: 17 June 2016