Before the Expert Panel appointed under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

Under	the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024
And	
In the Matter of	an application for approvals by NZSki Limited to upgrade existing infrastructure at the Remarkables Ski Area, including a new passenger transport lift, carparking areas, and expanding the ski field into the adjacent Doolans Basin

Statement of Evidence of **Paul Joseph Anderson** on behalf of NZSki Limited in response to Section 53 Comments

Commercial

Dated: 3 November 2026

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INTRODUCTION

1. My name is Paul Joseph Anderson. I am the Chief Executive Officer of NZSki Limited (**NZSki**), a position I have held since August 2013. NZSki owns and operates Coronet Peak, The Remarkables and Mt Hutt ski areas. I am also a Director of Trojan Holdings Limited, NZSki's parent company, a position I have held since September 2019.

2. I hold a Master of Commerce in Accountancy with First Class Honours from the University of Canterbury and a Bachelor of Commerce in Business Administration and Accountancy, also from the University of Canterbury. I am a Chartered Accountant (CAANZ) and a Chartered Member of the New Zealand Institute of Directors.

3. I have more than 30 years' professional experience across the private sector, central and local government, tourism and commercial operations. My experience encompasses executive leadership, governance, finance and accounting, commercial management, corporate strategy and planning, large-scale operations and stakeholder engagement.

4. I began my professional career in 1994 as a Policy and Financial Analyst at the New Zealand Treasury, where I worked in Commercial and Finance, Budget Strategy and Social Policy. My work included providing advice to Ministers on financial and service performance and the fiscal implications of policy proposals, public sector financial management and aspects of New Zealand's state-sector financial management reforms.

5. From 1997 to 1999 I worked for NatWest Global Financial Markets in London as a Project Accountant, Finance Projects. From 1999 until 2008, I held a series of senior finance, commercial and operational positions with Telecom Corporation of New Zealand Limited, ultimately holding operational responsibility for the delivery of broadband and managed data products to more than 370,000 customers and leading more than 170 staff.

6. From January 2008 until August 2013, I was General Manager, Corporate Services at Christchurch City Council. I was responsible for corporate and business unit finance, business performance and planning, property, procurement, information technology and shared services.

7. During my time at Christchurch City Council I was closely involved in the Council's response to and recovery from the Christchurch earthquakes. This included the development of the Council's post-earthquake financial strategy covering a $4.4

billion infrastructure rebuild programme and a $1.5 billion facilities rebuild programme, as well as maintaining the continuity of key Council operations through three states of emergency and the subsequent recovery period.

8. I have also held a number of governance roles. I was a member of the inaugural board of the Local Government Funding Agency from 2010 to 2015, following my involvement in its design and establishment. I was a director of EcoCentral Limited from 2009 to 2015, including serving as Chair, and a director of Port Hills Leisure Limited, the owner and operator of Christchurch Adventure Park, from 2016 to 2019, serving as Chair from 2017 to 2019. I returned to the board of the Local Government Funding Agency in November 2025 and was appointed Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee.

9. As Chief Executive of NZSki, I am responsible for the leadership of its three ski areas and group functions. My responsibilities include strategy development, marketing, customer experience, staff engagement, regulatory compliance, stakeholder relations, financial performance and shareholder value. The business accommodates more than 700,000 guest visits annually and employs approximately 1,400 staff at the peak of the winter season.

10. During my more than 13 years as Chief Executive I have acquired substantial practical experience in the operation, management and development of large commercial ski areas in New Zealand. This includes the planning and delivery of capital investment operating on public conservation land, infrastructure and operational improvements, customer and visitor operations, commercial and financial matters, regulatory compliance and engagement with communities, government agencies and other stakeholders. My role has involved a continuing focus on investment in people, infrastructure and equipment and improvement of NZSki's ski area offering.

11. I have been directly involved in the development of NZSki's proposal to upgrade The Remarkables and expand its ski area operations into Doolans Basin. In particular, I have personally led NZSki's engagement with Kā Rūnaka and mana whenua in relation to the proposal. That engagement has developed over a number of years and has included:

    (a) direct discussions and correspondence with Kā Rūnaka representatives, Aukaha, Te Ao Mārama Incorporated and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu;

    (b) hui concerning the proposal and its potential cultural and environmental implications; site visits to The Remarkables and Doolans Basin with Kā Rūnaka representatives; and

(c) the provision of project information and technical material to support their consideration of the proposal.

12. I have sought through that engagement to develop an ongoing relationship with mana whenua extending beyond the consenting process, including opportunities for mana whenua to provide guidance on the environmental management of the existing ski area and the proposed expansion, management and monitoring plans, cultural induction, the cultural narrative incorporated into architecture and signage, and the application of appropriate tikanga and kawa.

13. I have remained closely involved in the subsequent development of the proposal and the fast-track application. I am therefore familiar with the existing operation of The Remarkables, NZSki's reasons for pursuing the proposed expansion, the development of the proposal, and its intended future operation.

14. My evidence is given in my capacity as Chief Executive of NZSki and Director of Trojan Holdings Limited and draws on my direct involvement in NZSki's operations and in the development of the Doolans proposal.

15. This statement is given as part of NZSki Limited’s response to comments on the Remarkables Ski Area Upgrade and Doolans Expansion (**Project**) made under Section 53 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (**FTA**). This statement responds to specific comments raised by:

(a) Kā Rūnaka regarding NZSki’s engagement and consultation;

(b) Various parties regarding climate change; and

(c) DOC concession matters raised by a number of parties.

BACKGROUND TO NZSKI LIMITED AND TROJAN HOLDINGS

Trojan Holdings

16. NZSki Limited is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Trojan Holdings Limited. Trojan Holdings is a Queenstown-based, family-owned New Zealand company with investments across tourism, transport, property and other businesses. It remains fully owned by the Davies family.

17. The origins of Trojan Holdings are closely connected with Queenstown and the wider Southern Lakes region. Its founder and Chairman, Sir John Davies, began his working life as a high-country musterer. He subsequently acquired an interest in Wakatipu Transport, which became part of Northern Southland Transport Holdings

in 1968. He progressively acquired the remaining shares in that business, achieving full ownership in 1997.

18. Sir John Davies also has a long history of public service in the Queenstown community. He served as Mayor of Queenstown Borough and subsequently became the first Mayor of the Queenstown-Lakes District following local-government amalgamation. He was later a member of the New Zealand Conservation Authority. In 2013 he was knighted for services to business and tourism, having previously received a Queen's Service Medal for Community Service.

19. During the 1980s, Sir John Davies formed the view that tourism would become increasingly important to the Queenstown region and began investing in tourism businesses. Trojan's early tourism investments included the Routeburn Guided Walk, followed by guided operations on the Greenstone and Milford Tracks. It subsequently acquired The Hermitage at Aoraki/Mount Cook and, in 2002, became the cornerstone shareholder in NZSki when Coronet Peak, The Remarkables and Mt Hutt ski areas were purchased from Air New Zealand. Trojan progressively acquired the other NZSki shareholdings and NZSki is now wholly owned by the Davies family.

20. Trojan's tourism businesses today include NZSki, Ultimate Hikes, The Hermitage at Aoraki/Mount Cook, KJet, Coast to Coast and an interest in Bungy New Zealand. A number of those businesses are located on, or depend upon access to, public conservation land. Trojan has worked with the Department of Conservation (**DOC**) for more than 30 years and has extensive experience operating under conservation concessions.

21. Trojan's businesses therefore have a longstanding and substantial relationship with public conservation land. Trojan's tourism interests host more than 400,000 visitors to public conservation land each year, excluding unmeasured day visitors to The Hermitage, and approximately $7 million per annum in concession activity fees.

22. That relationship is important to the way Trojan approaches its tourism businesses. Sir John Davies has promoted a model in which high-quality tourism experiences can support conservation, visitor infrastructure and regional communities. Trojan cares deeply about our visitors, the conservation estate, our staff and the communities in which we operate. We take pride in sharing New Zealand's environment with manuhiri while protecting it for future generations.

23. The fact that Trojan is a local, multigenerational family business is relevant in my view. We approach investments such as ski areas and other tourism infrastructure with a long-term horizon. Our interests in these places are not limited to the duration

of an individual construction project, consent process or financial year. Our reputation and our businesses depend upon these places continuing to be valued by visitors and communities for generations.

NZSki and The Remarkables

24. NZSki operates Coronet Peak, The Remarkables and Mt Hutt. Collectively the three ski areas accommodate more than 700,000 skier visits each year, making NZSki New Zealand's largest ski area operator. All three ski areas operate on public conservation land and are accordingly subject to concessions administered by DOC. NZSki provides employment to approximately 1,450 staff at the peak of the season.

25. The Remarkables Ski Area itself opened in 1985. Trojan acquired its interest in The Remarkables as part of its acquisition of NZSki in 2002. NZSki has therefore operated The Remarkables under Trojan ownership for approximately 24 years, while organised ski area activity at the ski area now has a history extending for more than four decades.

26. Since 2002 the Davies family has continued to make substantial long-term investments in the ski area. At The Remarkables those investments include the Curvey Basin chairlift and new base building, opened in 2014 and 2015 respectively, the Sugar Bowl chairlift in 2020 and the replacement Shadow Basin chairlift in 2024, together with associated investment in road access, snowmaking, environmental management and supporting infrastructure.

27. That history has given NZSki a deep connection with The Remarkables. The ski area is more than a collection of lifts and buildings to the people who operate it. Many of our staff have spent a significant part of their working lives on the mountain. Our operations depend on an intimate understanding of its terrain, weather, snow, water and natural hazards, and our people see first-hand how that environment evolves over time.

Values and Vision

28. NZSki's vision is to create an alpine destination where people's connections with the maunga run deep, while using sustainability and innovation to help shape the future of snowsports for generations to come.

29. That purpose is underpinned by three values: Manaakitanga, Whanaungatanga and Kaitiakitanga. In NZSki's values framework, Manaakitanga concerns caring for and respecting others; Whanaungatanga concerns relationships, teamwork and a sense of belonging; and Kaitiakitanga encompasses conservation, replenishment and environmental sustainability, with an emphasis on safeguarding the future.

30. These are intended to be operational values rather than simply statements used externally. In particular, Kaitiakitanga is relevant to how I believe NZSki should approach its presence at The Remarkables Ski Area. We accept that operating a major ski area in this environment creates responsibilities. Our objective is not simply to comply with the minimum requirements imposed by our concession. We want the environment to benefit from our long-term presence at The Remarkables Ski Area.

31. That approach is reflected in the environmental and conservation activities I discuss later in my evidence, including indigenous revegetation and propagation, wetland rehabilitation, weed management, predator control, support for kea conservation and NZSki's programme to reduce its greenhouse-gas emissions.

NZSki's environmental record at The Remarkables

32. Given NZSki's longstanding involvement, there is a substantial body of evidence about the ecological condition of the existing ski area after more than four decades of ski area activity.

33. In 2020 independent ecologist and botanist Neill Simpson of Conservation Consultancy Limited completed a detailed ecological survey of the Rastus Burn Basin and Remarkables Ski Area. The work was reviewed by Melissa Jager of e3Scientific. The survey considered the ecosystems, flora and fauna of the Rastus Burn Recreation Reserve, including threatened, rare and notable species and the history and performance of rehabilitation undertaken within the ski area.

34. Neill Simpson's report is particularly relevant because the environmental effects of development at The Remarkables have been monitored from the beginning of the ski area. It records that vegetation transects and photographic monitoring points were established by the Department of Lands and Survey in 1984, prior to completion of the access road and commencement of ski-area construction, specifically to monitor the effects of development and ski-area operations on vegetation.

35. The 2020 survey also evaluates the restoration work undertaken within the existing ski area, including restoration of tussock grassland, cushionfield and wetland vegetation. After reviewing the ski area's history and ecological condition, Neill Simpson concluded that "there is no known loss of rare or threatened plants or animals."

36. I consider that finding important. It does not mean that ski area development has no environmental effects, nor do I suggest that it removes the need to carefully assess and manage the effects of the Project. However, it provides relevant real-world

evidence of what has occurred over several decades immediately adjacent to the proposed expansion area.

37. The same survey identified environmental pressures arising independently of ski area operations. In particular, Neill Simpson recorded deterioration and loss of vegetation associated with increasing numbers of recreational walkers around the Lake Alta track, wetlands and cushion communities, and suggested that improved track surfacing could help keep walkers to defined routes.

38. That is one example of why I believe an appropriately managed ski area can make a positive contribution to both conservation and public recreation. An operator such as NZSki has staff on the mountain, infrastructure, equipment, environmental knowledge and the capability to undertake monitoring, weed and pest control, restoration and visitor management on a sustained basis. It also provides and maintains infrastructure that enables substantially greater public access to this part of the conservation estate than would otherwise be practicable.

39. The presence of the ski area enables a very large number of people to access and experience public conservation land at The Remarkables. NZSki maintains the Remarkables access road and is committed to keeping it open for public access throughout the year, including outside the winter ski season. Importantly, the lower section of the access route crosses land owned privately by NZSki, over which NZSki continues to provide access and egress to the conservation estate. This access supports not only skiers and snowboarders, but walkers, climbers, sightseers and other recreational users, as well as commercial recreation and tourism operators who use The Remarkables and surrounding conservation land. As I have previously noted, maintaining that access has enabled thousands of recreational visitors to reach and enjoy the mountain environment.

40. This is also relevant in the context of the comments invited by the Panel from recreational and commercial users of the area. A number of those users are themselves able to undertake activities at The Remarkables with the benefit of the road access and associated infrastructure maintained by NZSki. In my view, that is an important part of the overall effect of the ski area's presence on public conservation land and the experience of the public who carry out activities on that land. The infrastructure required for our commercial operation also provides a practical means by which a much wider section of the public can safely and conveniently experience the conservation estate.

41. Our conservation work at The Remarkables is therefore based on a simple principle: the maunga should benefit from our presence. As I discuss later in my evidence, over the past decade that philosophy has resulted in substantial non-mandated conservation work in addition to the environmental controls imposed through our

approvals. That work includes restoration and enhancement of indigenous vegetation, propagation and planting of native species, exotic weed control, wetland remediation and an extensive predator-control programme.

Development of the Project

42. The background I describe below is important context for the Panel's consideration of the Project. NZSki is not proposing to establish an entirely new operation in an environment with which it has no previous relationship. The Project is proposed as an extension of a ski area which has operated at The Remarkables since 1985 and which NZSki, under local Davies family ownership, has operated since 2002.

43. Nor is Trojan an investor whose relationship with public conservation land begins and ends with this application. Trojan businesses have operated significant visitor activities on public conservation land for more than 30 years and have a longstanding working relationship with DOC.

44. I recognise that with this history comes responsibility. The fact that we have operated at The Remarkables for many years does not give us an entitlement to expand into Doolans. Rather, in my view, it places a greater obligation on us to demonstrate that we understand the environment, that we take responsibility for the effects of our activities, and that we can be trusted to manage and invest in this place for the long term.

45. We take that responsibility seriously. Our ambition is not merely to minimise adverse environmental effects. We want the conservation and environmental work undertaken alongside our operations to produce enduring benefits for the maunga.

46. That philosophy also connects with the relationship with mana whenua that I address elsewhere in my evidence. Our aspiration is that NZSki's long-term presence, operational capability and conservation resources can increasingly be combined with mana whenua knowledge, values and kaitiakitanga.

47. NZSki’s approach to its operations to leave the The Remarkables Ski Area and wider maunga better than it would otherwise have been. That requires us to protect and restore the environment, reduce the environmental footprint of our operations, deepen our relationship with mana whenua, connect our staff and guests with the values of the maunga, and continue investing in conservation alongside recreation.

48. Benefitting from experience gained through many development proposals on conservation land, our proposal has been shaped with an “avoidance first” philosophy. This has enabled us to propose infrastructure to support the ski area expansion that has the lowest possible impact on the receiving environment. We

also take confidence from our experience and track record in short and long-term enhancement of te taiao.

Proportionality of Project Benefits

49. In considering the appropriate scale of offsetting and compensation, I consider it important to distinguish between the financial return generated for NZSki and the substantially larger economic benefits generated for the regional economy. Ski-area infrastructure has a particularly strong economic multiplier because the ski area is primarily the reason for travel, while much of a skier's expenditure occurs away from the mountain on accommodation, hospitality, air and ground transport, retail and other visitor activities. Based on the economic evidence, I understand that for approximately every $1 spent directly at the ski area, around a further $5 is spent elsewhere in the regional visitor economy. This means that only a relatively small proportion of the economic value enabled by NZSki's investment accrues to NZSki itself.

50. This distinction is illustrated by Benje Patterson's economic assessment. Under the scenarios he has modelled, the Project could increase annual visitor spending across Otago by approximately $112 million to $168 million per annum, from approximately $235 million currently to between $347 million and $402 million. The resulting increase in regional GDP is estimated at approximately $55 million to $82 million per annum. Those benefits accrue widely across the regional economy. Benje Patterson also estimates that employment supported by visitors skiing at The Remarkables could increase from approximately 2,592 seasonal jobs across Otago to between 3,834 and 4,443, illustrating that the majority of the economic activity generated by the ski area occurs beyond NZSki itself.

51. That relationship is important when considering the scale of an offsetting and compensation package that can reasonably be supported by the Project. NZSki must fund the investment required to unlock those wider regional benefits, while receiving only a fraction of the associated visitor expenditure. Ski-area investment also carries a high risk premium because returns are exposed to weather and snow conditions, climate change, seasonality, international tourism demand and the highly specialised nature of ski infrastructure. The result is that a compensation requirement that appears modest when compared with the Project's overall regional economic benefits can be much more significant when measured against the financial returns available to the party actually required to make the investment. If that burden becomes too great, it risks making the underlying investment uneconomic and, in turn, preventing the much larger regional benefits from occurring.

52. I am not suggesting that these economic benefits remove NZSki's responsibility to appropriately address the residual ecological effects of the Project. NZSki accepts that responsibility and has proposed a substantial offsetting and compensation programme, based on its excellent track record in the Rastus Burn. My point is one of proportionality. In determining what constitutes a fair and effective package, I consider it appropriate to recognise the unusual economics of ski-area investment: the private investor incurs the capital cost and investment risk, while a substantial majority of the resulting economic benefit accrues to other businesses, employees and the wider regional economy. In my view, an appropriate outcome is therefore a meaningful and enduring ecological package that is proportionate to the residual effects of the Project and sufficiently financially sustainable that it does not undermine the investment necessary to deliver the Project's much larger regional benefits.

SPECIFIC RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

Engagement with Ngāi Tahu and Kā Rūnaka

53. This part of my evidence addresses NZSki's engagement with Ngāi Tahu representatives concerning Kawarau/The Remarkables and the proposed expansion into Doolans Basin. I have personally led much of that engagement.

54. I provide this evidence in response to the evidence and submissions filed by Kā Rūnaka. In particular, Kā Rūnaka says that, while NZSki's chronology records interactions with Ngāi Tahu representatives over time, those interactions should not be conflated with engagement with Kā Rūnaka representatives specifically mandated to represent mana whenua interests in the Project, which it says commenced in December 2025. The Statement of Evidence of Michael Dreaver goes further and describes NZSki as having failed to engage meaningfully with Kā Rūnaka.

55. I accept that there is a distinction between engagement with different Ngāi Tahu entities and individuals and the formal representation of the seven Papatipu Rūnaka for the purposes of this application. I do not suggest otherwise.

56. However, I consider that focusing only on the period after a formally mandated representative was appointed in relation to the FTA process gives an incomplete picture of NZSki's engagement and, more importantly, of the purpose behind it. Our engagement regarding Doolans began in April 2021, more than three years before the Project entered the FTA process. The record shows that we repeatedly sought advice from Ngāi Tahu about whom we should engage with, followed the pathways we were given, sought cultural input before our plans were developed, hosted hui at

The Remarkables Ski Area, asked for cultural values advice, and continued that engagement as the representatives and processes nominated to us changed.[1]

57. My intention throughout has not simply been to "consult" in order to secure an approval. I have wanted NZSki to build a deeper and enduring relationship with mana whenua that helps us better understand and respect Te Ao Māori and the cultural values of Kawarau, connects our people and our guests more meaningfully with the maunga, and enables our operations and conservation work to contribute positively to the environment.

58. I continue to believe that a strong and enduring relationship between NZSki and mana whenua can strengthen the mana of the maunga, respect the cultural values of Kawarau and enhance te taiao. That aspiration will remain paramount to NZSki regardless of the outcome of this application.

The origins of our engagement

59. My interest in developing a direct relationship with Ngāi Tahu concerning the future of The Remarkables predates the current FTA process.

60. In April 2021 I met Jo Allison of Ngāi Tahu Holdings and discussed NZSki's aspirations for the Project. An email from Jo Allison to Dean Fraser (Ngai Tahu Holdings Manahautū – Te Pākati /General Manager Transformation) following our discussion recorded that my intentions were "genuine", that I wanted to consider how a cultural engagement partnership could work and, importantly, that while engagement was occurring through a DOC concession process, I wanted to build direct relationships as well. She sought advice on who within the rūnaka I should be introduced to in relation to The Remarkables.

61. This is important context for the Panel. In 2021 there was no listed FTA project and there was no substantive application to secure approval for. My interest was in developing the relationship itself and understanding how Ngāi Tahu should be involved in our aspirations for The Remarkables Ski Area.

62. I subsequently met with Dean Fraser and Jo Allison in May 2021 and continued the discussion about the Project.

63. This was not an isolated idea associated only with the Project. By May 2022, advice being developed for NZSki on the future development of the Project expressly identified the objective of developing and nurturing an enduring partnering relationship with local Rūnaka/tangata whenua, with Ngāi Tahu representatives

[1] Substantive Application, Part E, E.01: Summary of Mana Whenua Engagement.

working closely with NZSki not only on the Project but on other aspects of NZSki's activities within The Remarkables Ski Area.

64. During this period, I was also considering how Te Ao Māori concepts should be more genuinely reflected within NZSki itself. For example, in December 2022 I proposed incorporating concepts including whanaungatanga, manaakitanga and kaitiakitanga into the description of our company purpose and values. I described our responsibility as bringing people into mountain environments we care about while seeking to "leave the mountains better than they would be without us".

65. I mention that because it demonstrates that our engagement with Ngāi Tahu regarding the Project did not arise simply because a statutory process later required consultation. It sat within a broader effort to redefine NZSki's relationship with Iwi and the mountains on which we operate, our responsibilities to those environments, and how our people and guests connect with them.

Developing the appropriate engagement pathway, 2023 to early 2024

66. On 4 April 2023 I met Jacqui Caine, then Group Head Strategy & Environment at Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu. We discussed both our Shadow Basin project and our aspirations for the Doolans, including specifically how NZSki should interact with Ngāi Tahu. I was referred to Paulette Tamati-Elliffe.

67. On 24 October 2023, I met Paulette Tamati-Elliffe together with Ross Lawrence. She connected us with Dean Whaanga of Te Ao Mārama and Caron Ward of Aukaha as the appropriate next points of contact. We also discussed holding an in-person hui at Kawarau/The Remarkables.

68. I followed that advice. My purpose was not to present Ngāi Tahu with a completed development and ask for its endorsement. I wanted cultural values to inform our thinking while the proposal was still taking shape.

69. That is particularly clear in an email I sent to Jana Davis on 21 February 2024. I explained that we were wanting to start engagement with iwi about the future of The Remarkables and said:

"We're wanting to engage early and before we have developed plans so that we can develop future plans with some knowledge of the cultural values of Kawarau."

70. I also asked whether Kāi Tahu ki Tuawhenua should be included in the proposed hui.

71. In my view, that statement is important. It records both the timing and purpose of the engagement. We were deliberately seeking engagement before plans were

developed because we wanted our future planning to be informed by the cultural values of Kawarau.

The April 2024 Kawarau hui

72. On 10 April 2024 NZSki hosted a substantial hui at The Remarkables Ski Area with representatives and whānau associated with Te Ao Mārama, Aukaha and Ngāi Tahu. Attendees included Dean Whaanga, Paulette Tamati-Elliffe, Caron Ward, Jana Davis and a number of other representatives. NZSki attendees included me, Sir John Davies, Louise McQuillan and Ross Lawrence.

73. The hui was consciously framed around relationship, values and aspirations. The agenda included karakia, whakawhanaungatanga, discussion of the values of Trojan Holdings and NZSki, our environmental and conservation work, the future of The Remarkables and, in particular, understanding the cultural values of Rastus Burn and Doolans. It included an opportunity for mana whenua to explain their aspirations and a helicopter visit over Doolans.

74. An important outcome of that hui was confirmation that NZSki should engage with Papatipu Rūnaka through Te Ao Mārama and Aukaha. Again, we followed the pathway we were advised was appropriate.

75. On 4 May 2024 we asked Caron Ward of Aukaha and Dean Whaanga of Te Ao Mārama for a cultural values report and sought advice on the appropriate contacts through whom engagement should proceed. On 27 May Aukaha asked us for further project information so it could develop a scope of work.

76. On 21 June 2024 we provided the Project overview and preliminary plans to Aukaha and Te Ao Mārama and expressly asked whether a cultural values report or cultural impact assessment was the appropriate mechanism at that stage of project development.

77. On 10 September 2024 I met representatives of Aukaha again and requested a cultural values report for the Project.

78. I consider these steps demonstrate a genuine attempt to obtain cultural guidance during the formative stages of the project. They also demonstrate that NZSki did not determine for itself which Ngāi Tahu entity spoke for mana whenua. We repeatedly asked Ngāi Tahu representatives for guidance and engaged through the pathways that were recommended to us.

The relationship beyond the Project

79. At the same time, NZSki's relationship-building with mana whenua was developing beyond the Project's consenting process. This is relevant because the relationship I have sought has always been wider than obtaining an approval for one project.

80. In 2025, NZSki and Te Tapu o Tāne developed a Memorandum of Understanding encompassing shared knowledge, communication, environmental initiatives, the Doolans extension, work within the Waiwhakaata catchment and opportunities to collaborate on sustainability and mahika kai-related initiatives. The material recorded an intention to develop "a mutually beneficial product" and identify initiatives through which NZSki and Te Tapu o Tāne could support shared aspirations and sustainability goals.

81. I regard that as consistent with the relationship we have been attempting to establish at Kawarau. Our objective is broader and seeks to achieve objectives that extend beyond any particular consultation process.

Formalising engagement as the project developed

82. On 14 March 2025 I met Pam Walker of Aukaha, talked her through the Project and agreed that we should convene another hui at The Remarkables Ski Area before the 2025 ski season. I subsequently sought to arrange that hui and was advised that Papatipu Rūnaka were considering the matter.

83. In April 2025, Kahoki Mikaere and Jana Davis contacted NZSki on behalf of the seven Papatipu Rūnaka to initiate a more formal engagement process concerning the Project. I responded that we looked forward to further meaningful engagement, made myself available to meet and stated explicitly that, although Louise McQuillan was NZSki's overall project lead, I would personally lead engagement with Rūnaka.

84. When a process agreement was proposed, I suggested that it contain a "no surprises" approach and an obligation on both parties to use best endeavours to respond to one another in a timely way. I also sought wording that would allow the engagement relationship to continue even if agreement could not be reached on every issue. I signed the process agreement on NZSki's behalf in July 2025.

85. In May 2025 I met Jana Davis, who advised me that Ngāi Tahu had established a fast-track consultation process and that he would act as liaison between NZSki and Papatipu Rūnaka. We followed that process.

86. In August 2025 I circulated a project briefing to Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, Papatipu Rūnaka, Aukaha and Te Ao Mārama setting out the proposed substantive

application and seeking further engagement. The accompanying engagement chronology went back to the discussions in 2021.

87. Our engagement contacts then changed. In October 2025 we were advised that Jana Davis was no longer leading the process. On 27 November we were advised that Shane Ellison would become the Kā Rūnaka lead. NZSki contacted Mr Ellison immediately, and we met on 3 December 2025.

88. This changing representation is important context. Since 2021 I have engaged with the people and entities to whom Ngāi Tahu representatives directed us. The identity and structure of that representation evolved over time. In my view, that should not be interpreted as an absence of engagement by NZSki.

Engagement with Kā Rūnaka in 2026

89. On 23 January 2026, NZSki hosted a full-day visit to Kawarau/The Remarkables Ski Area and the Doolans. Shane Ellison, Alayna Rā and Matt Dale participated alongside NZSki and its advisers.

90. Following that hui, information supplied to Kā Rūnaka included the earlier Ngāi Tahu briefing, the register of technical reports and scopes covering aquatic ecology, hydrology, landscape and visual effects, lizards, wastewater and terrestrial ecology. The follow-up actions also contemplated Kā Rūnaka providing guidance on matters and expectations relevant to the Treaty Impact Assessment and technical assessments.

91. We sought to use that feedback in the development of our technical work. For example, in February 2026 I forwarded observations of Kā Rūnaka about economic assessments to our consultants and asked them to identify which matters could be incorporated into the assessment.

92. That approach is consistent with what I had sought from the outset: not simply consultation after our analysis was complete, but an opportunity for mana whenua perspectives to influence the development of that analysis.

Resourcing disagreement and termination of the process agreement

93. A disagreement subsequently arose over the cost and scope of the proposed resourcing for the FTA process by Kā Rūnaka. NZSki did not agree to fund all components of that package and agreement was not reached with Ka Rūnaka on the scope of the package.

94. On 7 April 2026 Kā Rūnaka terminated the process agreement. They subsequently characterised NZSki's position on resourcing as demonstrating insufficient commitment to meaningful engagement.

95. I continue to disagree with that characterisation. In my response of 13 April 2026 I said expressly that our attempt to negotiate a more efficient and cost-effective engagement process should not be characterised as a lack of commitment to meaningful engagement. I referenced the engagement dating back to 2021 and confirmed that NZSki would remain committed to engagement with Ngāi Tahu concerning all aspects of our operations and plans at The Remarkables.

96. Importantly, termination of the process agreement did not cause NZSki to withdraw from its relationship with Kā Rūnaka. We continued to engage, continued to provide technical material and continued to seek cultural input.

97. On 16 April 2026 draft terrestrial ecology, hydrology, freshwater and economic assessments were provided to Kā Rūnaka. Subsequent material included the substantive application, RFI responses, updated ecology information and invitations to relevant technical workshops.

NZSki proposal for an enduring mana whenua relationship

98. On 14 May 2026 I took a deliberate step to separate our long-term relationship aspirations from the immediate disagreement over the process agreement. I wrote directly to Shane Ellison and the Rūnaka chairs.

99. In that letter I acknowledged the immense cultural value of Kawarau to Ngāi Tahu whānui and reiterated that, despite termination of the process agreement, NZSki remained committed to a long-term partnership with Ngāi Tahu. I said that we wanted our mahi at The Remarkables Ski Area to support the role of Ngāi Tahu as kaitiaki and to respect the mana of the maunga.

100. I also explained the opportunity as I saw it. NZSki has approximately 1,400 staff at the peak of its season and has an established conservation programme on the at The Remarkables Ski Area. My view was, and remains, that combining that workforce, capability and conservation commitment with the guidance and kaitiakitanga of mana whenua creates a considerable opportunity to benefit both the community and the maunga.

101. I proposed establishing a mana whenua advisory group involving Kā Rūnaka and NZSki. I proposed that the group would extend beyond the Project and provide guidance over NZSki's longer-term conservation activities at The Remarkables Ski Area. I identified the following potential functions of the mana whenua advisory group as including:

    (a) developing management and monitoring plans;

    (b) developing cultural induction processes;

(c) advising on incorporation of cultural narrative into architecture and signage;

(d) ensuring appropriate tikanga and kawa are applied; and

(e) identifying other areas of involvement determined by Kā Rūnaka.

102. Crucially, I described this as a long-term kaupapa for our partnership, not as a device confined to obtaining the present approval.

103. That concept was subsequently incorporated into the proposed conditions for the Project. The intended role of the mana whenua advisory group includes ongoing engagement with Papatipu Rūnaka, mana whenua involvement in project delivery, feedback on management plans and the biodiversity compensation project, and mechanisms for engagement extending into NZSki's wider operation of the ski field and related infrastructure.

Continuing engagement after lodgement

104. I met Shane Ellison again on 2 June 2026. I explained that the substantive application had been lodged, discussed the proposed mana whenua advisory group and reiterated our interest in a long-term relationship. I asked for the views of Kā Rūnaka on the project. I was advised that Kā Rūnaka had not yet reached a position and intended to undertake a cultural assessment.

105. I immediately followed that conversation in writing. I offered to meet the cost of the Cultural Impact Assessment on the same basis as the Treaty Impact Assessment previously discussed because we believed that assessment would assist future discussions.

106. On 3 July I provided Shane Ellison with NZSki's response to the EPA's request for further information and again asked to discuss the preparation of the Cultural Impact Assessment.

107. Kā Rūnaka advisers were also invited into technical engagement. Matt Dale (giving evidence on behalf of Kā Rūnaka) was provided updated terrestrial ecology material and invited to (and attended) relevant terrestrial and freshwater ecology workshops relating to wetlands, streams and crossings, lizards and terrestrial ecology workshops. Alayna Rā was invited to a landscape workshop.

108. In September 2026 we continued to seek opportunities for dialogue over the developing cultural assessment. When Kā Rūnaka supplied material for fact checking, I returned suggested amendments and expressly asked for an opportunity to meet and discuss the assessment once it had been prepared.

109. Ultimately the final Treaty Rights and Interests Statement was provided to us on 27 October 2026. Shane Ellison advised at that time that Kā Rūnaka did not consider themselves in a position to complete an assessment of effects of the project.

Response to the proposition that NZSki failed to engage meaningfully

110. I have carefully considered the concern of Kā Rūnaka that the interactions before December 2025 should not be treated as equivalent to engagement with persons formally mandated by the seven Papatipu Rūnaka for the substantive FTA application. I accept that distinction. Shane Ellison's evidence records that he was nominated in October 2025 and that engagement specifically focused on the FTA process developed from mid-2025.

111. However, I do not accept that the consequence of that distinction is that NZSki failed to engage meaningfully with Ngāi Tahu or mana whenua before that time. The documentary record shows otherwise.[2]

112. In my view engagement started in April 2021, when there was no FTA application. At that point I was already seeking advice about how to build a direct cultural engagement partnership concerning The Remarkables.

113. In 2023 I approached Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu for guidance on engagement and followed the referrals provided to me. In February 2024 I expressly said that we wanted to engage before plans were developed so our plans could be informed by the cultural values of Kawarau. In April 2024 we hosted mana whenua and advisers at The Remarkables Ski Area. We then subsequently sought input through a cultural values report or cultural assessment and supplied preliminary information to enable that work.

114. When a formal Papatipu Rūnaka process was established, I personally led NZSki's participation in it. As representatives and processes evolved over time, engagement continued with the new representatives identified to NZSki. We also sought to support proposed Treaty and Cultural Impact Assessment processes, provided technical information as it became available and welcomed opportunities for Kā Rūnaka advisors to participate in technical workshops.

115. I acknowledge that the engagement has not achieved everything either party would have hoped for. There were delays and changes in representation. There was a genuine disagreement over the scope and cost of resourcing Kā Rūnaka participation in the FTA process. Discussions on important aspects of the project remain ongoing.

[2] Substantive Application, Part E, E.01: Summary of Mana Whenua Engagement.

116. But in my view, a disagreement about the project, or about the appropriate resourcing of a statutory process, should not be equated with an absence of commitment to the relationship. For the reasons outlined in my evidence I consider that NZSki has made every effort to engagement meaningfully and constructively.

Our continuing commitment

117. I want to be clear that NZSki's commitment to this relationship does not depend on the Panel granting this application.

118. Kawarau is of profound cultural importance to Ngāi Tahu. I recognise that NZSki operates a substantial commercial and recreational activity within that environment and that we need to continue improving our understanding of what that means from a mana whenua perspective. NZSki's own application material recognises mana whenua responsibilities and associations with Kawarau and proposes an ongoing mechanism through which those relationships can influence project delivery and management.

119. I also believe NZSki brings something meaningful to that partnership. We have a long-term presence at The Remarkables Ski Area, a large workforce, considerable operational capability and an established commitment to conservation. We have the ability to undertake practical work over many years.

120. My aspiration is that mana whenua guidance increasingly informs that work. I want people who work at and visit our ski area to better understand the history, values and cultural significance of Kawarau and to develop a deeper connection with the maunga. I want our environmental management and conservation work to be informed by mana whenua perspectives and kaitiakitanga alongside ecological science and our practical experience managing an alpine environment.

121. That is why I see the proposed mana whenua advisory relationship as much more than a consent condition. The opportunity is to bring together mana whenua knowledge, values and kaitiakitanga with NZSki's people, resources and long-term presence at The Remarkables Ski Area.

122. In my view, if we do that well, the result should be more than mitigation of the effects of a development. It should help strengthen the mana of the maunga, uphold and make more visible the cultural values of Kawarau, enhance te taiao through our operations and conservation work, and help the many thousands of people who work at or visit The Remarkables Ski Area develop a deeper understanding of and connection with the place they are experiencing.

123. I recognise from the evidence now provided to the Panel that there remains a material gap between the view of Kā Rūnaka on the project and NZSki's. Kā Rūnaka

seeks that the application be declined and considers that further genuine engagement, assessment and changes would be required if the Panel were otherwise minded to grant it. I do not minimise those differences.

124. But those differences make the relationship more important, not less.

125. NZSki remains committed to continuing that relationship in good faith. Our intention is to continue listening, learning and working with Kā Rūnaka and Ngāi Tahu representatives, both in relation to the Project and across our wider activities at The Remarkables Ski Area.

126. That commitment started before the FTA process, has continued despite disagreement during that process, and is intended to endure long after this Panel has completed its work.

Concession Terms from the Department of Conservation

127. NZSki has reviewed the amendments proposed by DOC to the concession conditions. We are generally comfortable with the amendments proposed by DOC. A significant proportion of the proposed conditions are consistent with, or draw directly from, the conditions applying to NZSki's recently granted concession for the existing Remarkables Ski Area at Rastus Burn. NZSki considers that this consistency is appropriate and will also assist with the practical administration of the two concessions. This is consistent with the approach adopted during development of the Doolans concession, where the intention was to align the new resource management and concession conditions with the Rastus Burn conditions where practicable.

128. In particular, NZSki has confirmed that matters raised by DOC such as the three-yearly rent review and end-of-term valuation provisions are consistent with the recently granted Rastus Burn concession. The proposed Doolans conditions also expressly recognise the relationship between the new concession and Concession 96118-SKI for the existing ski area.

Term

129. NZSki also accepts that the proposed 37-year term is suitable and pragmatic. The effect of that term is to align the expiry of the Doolans concession with the existing Rastus Burn concession on 30 November 2063, thereby providing a common end date for NZSki's activities across the existing and proposed ski area.

130. That alignment is pragmatic given that the Doolans development would operate as an integrated expansion of The Remarkables rather than as an independent ski area. Having the concessions expire together avoids creating unnecessarily

different tenure horizons for infrastructure and operations that will, in practice, form part of one integrated ski area.

131. There is also important context to the duration of the existing concession. DOC granted the existing Remarkables Ski Area concession in December 2025 for a 38-year term, expiring on 30 November 2063. That term followed an extended assessment and negotiation process between NZSki and DOC. A central matter considered through that process was the tenure required to support the significant long-term capital investment necessary to operate and continue developing a major commercial ski area.

132. NZSki consistently emphasised during those discussions that substantial investment in ski area infrastructure requires a sufficiently long tenure to enable capital to be recovered and a reasonable commercial return to be earned over the life of the investment. By way of comparison, NZSki noted during those negotiations that conventional commercial ground leases supporting investments of this scale would commonly provide materially longer tenure, and that investment certainty was therefore an important consideration in determining an appropriate concession term. NZSki's broader position in discussions on conservation concessions has similarly been that significant investments on public conservation land require concession periods capable of supporting the underlying investment.

133. Against that background, NZSki considers the proposed 37-year Doolans term to be both reasonable and commercially pragmatic. It recognises the long-term nature of the infrastructure investment required for Doolans while, importantly, aligning the concession with the expiry date already determined by DOC as appropriate for the existing Remarkables Ski Area.

134. NZSki therefore does not seek a longer concession term for Doolans and accepts DOC's proposed expiry date of 30 November 2063.

135. We accept that Kā Rūnaka has a preference for a shorter concession duration. Submissions on behalf of Kā Rūnaka note that “long-term commercial occupation of conservation land can constrain mana whenua's ability to exercise rakatirataka and Kaitiakitanga”. However, the concession agreement does not provide NZSki with exclusive occupation rights to the land. NZSki will have responsibilities (and a desire) to ensure ongoing public access to the land. We are also proposing the establishment of a mana whenua advisory group to provide direction for conservation activities at The Remarkables Ski Area. We recognise that we cannot be Kaitiaki as we are not mana whenua. However, we aspire to the principles of Kaitiakitanga and seek mana whenua direction on how we might support them in their responsibilities.

Parent Company Guarantee

136. Some submitters have suggested that a bond should be payable, to ensure that NZSki adheres to the end-of-term rehabilitation provisions outlined in the concession. Over many years, NZSki has negotiated concession agreements with DOC. We have mutually agreed, most recently in The Remarkables concession, that the preferable mechanism is to impose a parent company guarantee to ensure the end-of-term obligations are met. NZSki and Trojan agreed with the imposition of a parent-company guarantee. A bond is not an effective mechanism because it absorbs significant short-term capital and is highly unlikely to be sufficient to cover long-term obligations due to inflationary erosion over time.

Decommissioning and end-of-term rehabilitation

137. I acknowledge the concerns raised by a number of parties regarding responsibility for decommissioning and rehabilitation at the end of the life of the Doolans operation. NZSki agrees with the fundamental proposition that responsibility for removing redundant ski area infrastructure and appropriately rehabilitating the affected conservation land should rest with NZSki, rather than with the Crown. That principle is consistent with the end-of-term arrangements NZSki has recently agreed with DOC for the existing Remarkables Ski Area concession.

138. Under that recently-granted concession, NZSki must, if required by DOC at expiry or termination, remove specified structures and improvements, with all specified above-ground structures and improvements to be removed to ground level unless otherwise agreed. NZSki must make good any damage, leave the affected conservation land in a clean and tidy condition, and replant affected land with indigenous vegetation of similar abundance and diversity to that which existed generally in the vicinity before the infrastructure was installed. The concession sensibly excludes from mandatory removal the access road, internal accessways, carparks, ski trails and terrain, and specified underground infrastructure, reflecting the potentially greater disturbance that removing those features could cause.

139. Those obligations are also backed by financial security. As part of the recently concluded concession arrangements, Trojan Holdings Limited provides a parent company guarantee supporting NZSki's obligations under the concession. The agreed commercial terms expressly identify Trojan Holdings as guarantor, alongside the end-of-term make-good obligations. In my view, that is relevant when assessing concern about a future liability falling to the Crown. NZSki is part of a substantial, longstanding and locally-based group, and the parent company stands behind NZSki's concession obligations.

140. I see no reason why the same fundamental approach should not apply to the concession sought for Doolans. If infrastructure constructed by NZSki ultimately becomes redundant, NZSki should bear responsibility for its appropriate removal and for rehabilitation of the affected conservation land, rather than transferring that liability to the Crown. The existing Remarkables concession provides a practical and very recently-agreed model for achieving that outcome, including removal of above-ground infrastructure, making good disturbance and indigenous revegetation, backed by the Trojan Holdings parent company guarantee.

Climate Change and Conservation Commitments

NZSki's commitment to reducing carbon emissions

141. I acknowledge the concerns raised by a number of parties regarding climate change and the long-term resilience of skiing at The Remarkables. We have provided other evidence from Professor Nicolas Cullen, which supports our rationale for progressively shifting ski-area capacity towards higher-elevation terrain at Doolans as an appropriate adaptation response to a warming climate and a logical means of improving the long-term resilience of skiing at The Remarkables.

142. In my view, that discussion should also recognise that NZSki itself accepts the need to respond to climate change. NZSki has committed to achieving net zero Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions by 2030. That commitment was formalised by the NZSki Board in 2023 and forms part of an established emissions-reduction strategy, rather than being a commitment developed in response to the Project.

143. NZSki has also expressly identified its commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030 in the information it has provided concerning the Project.

144. NZSki recognises that climate change is a significant issue for the long-term future of alpine environments and the ski industry. For that reason, reducing the greenhouse gas emissions associated with our operations has become an important part of NZSki's sustainability strategy.

145. NZSki has made a public commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030. Our approach is to prioritise genuine reductions in operational emissions, rather than relying solely on carbon offsets. Our current target is to reduce emissions by at least 5% each year, while progressively addressing those emissions that are more difficult to eliminate.

146. This commitment has developed over a number of years. NZSki began investigating formal measurement of its carbon footprint and the pathway to carbon neutrality in 2020. In May 2022 the NZSki Board agreed that management should investigate the steps required to become carbon neutral, and in May 2023 approved a strategy

to initially reduce net Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions by 50%, before progressing towards carbon neutrality by 2030.

147. NZSki established FY2021/22 as a baseline against which to measure progress. Net emissions in that period were approximately 3,090 tonnes of CO_2 equivalent. By FY2023/24 they had reduced to approximately 1,396 tonnes, a reduction of approximately 55.5% from the baseline.

148. Progress has continued. For the January to July 2026 reporting period, NZSki recorded approximately 810 tonnes of CO_2 equivalent, approximately 34% below the comparable FY2021/22 position. Diesel remained by far the largest operational emissions source, contributing approximately 644 tonnes, or around 80% of emissions for that reporting period.

149. NZSki's emissions-reduction programme includes purchasing certified renewable electricity, increasing the efficiency of grooming and vehicle operations, progressively introducing hybrid and plug-in hybrid vehicles, investigating lower-emissions fuels including HVO and biodiesel, examining battery storage and other energy-management opportunities, and encouraging greater use of bus transport and higher vehicle occupancy by guests.

150. Grooming is a particular focus because it is a significant source of diesel consumption. NZSki has used SnowSat data and changes to grooming practices to identify opportunities to reduce machine hours and diesel use. One initiative identified at Mt Hutt, for example, was forecast to save approximately 25,000 litres of diesel and 66 tonnes of CO_2 equivalent annually.

151. NZSki purchases Meridian's Certified Renewable Energy product for electricity used on the mountains. NZSki has also purchased carbon credits while we work towards further reductions in gross emissions. However, our strategy is not to regard offsets as a substitute for reducing the underlying emissions from our operations.

152. In my view, this progress demonstrates that NZSki's commitment to carbon neutrality is supported by practical action. We have already substantially reduced our net operational emissions, and our focus is increasingly on the more difficult sources, particularly diesel consumption associated with grooming, transport and other mountain operations.

Conservation work at The Remarkables

153. NZSki's environmental commitment at The Remarkables extends beyond reducing carbon emissions. Over the past decade NZSki has undertaken and supported a range of conservation activities on and around the ski area, including indigenous

revegetation, rehabilitation of disturbed areas, weed control, wetland protection, predator control and programmes supporting native species.

154. Importantly, much of this work predates the current Project and the FTA process. It reflects an established approach to environmental management associated with NZSki's long-term presence at The Remarkables Ski Area.

Indigenous vegetation and restoration

155. NZSki has undertaken a long-running programme of native vegetation restoration at The Remarkables. Aspects of this are not required by existing approvals, we carry it out because we consider it is the right thing to do. This has included collecting native seed, propagating plants off-site and returning those plants to the mountain, as well as trialling methods for transplanting and rehabilitating alpine vegetation. Records associated with the Sugar Bowl area demonstrate restoration and monitoring work extending over approximately 15 years.

156. NZSki has also undertaken rehabilitation associated with construction activities. An example is the rehabilitation undertaken following installation of the Lake Alta pipeline between 2013 and 2015 and the subsequent monitoring of restored vegetation.

157. More recently, approximately two hectares along The Remarkables access road have been the subject of native restoration. During the 2025/26 summer alone, 1,325 native plants comprising 17 species were planted in that area.

158. Monitoring of that planting undertaken in June 2025 estimated survival of approximately 88%. Ongoing management has included manual and targeted weed control, vegetation management, removal of old plant guards, fertilising and consideration of additional infill planting.

Predator control and biodiversity

159. Predator control has become another significant component of NZSki's conservation activity at The Remarkables. Current records identify more than 100 traps, 17 bait stations and five monitoring stations associated with the programme.

160. Since formal recording commenced, more than 1,000 pests have been removed through the programme. These include possums, stoats, ferrets and rats, together with other predators. For the May 2025 to May 2026 reporting period alone, approximately 400 pests were trapped at The Remarkables, taking the recorded cumulative total to approximately 1,240.

161. NZSki has progressively sought to improve the effectiveness and geographic reach of this programme. Through its relationship with Southern Lakes Sanctuary, NZSki

has been trialling Smart Node and AI-enabled monitoring technology. That technology can provide remote information and images relating to pest activity and is helping extend understanding of predator activity higher into The Remarkables alpine environment.

162. NZSki has also had a longstanding relationship with the Kea Conservation Trust and has provided support for research and conservation activities relating to kea. More recently our relationship with Southern Lakes Sanctuary has broadened the biodiversity work being undertaken in and around The Remarkables.

163. Six previously unbanded kea were recorded at The Remarkables in 2026 following a period in which sightings had been relatively infrequent. I regard those sightings as encouraging, although I do not suggest that the sightings can be attributed specifically to NZSki's conservation programme.

Wetlands and alpine ecosystems

164. NZSki has also undertaken work to better understand and protect sensitive alpine environments. By 2018, NZSki had mapped more than 123,500 square metres of wetlands within the Ski Area Subzone at The Remarkables and had identified the protection and enhancement of wetlands, tussock grasslands and cushionfields as important environmental considerations.

165. That accumulated experience has influenced the way NZSki has approached the design of the proposed Doolans development. The planning and design process has included micro-siting infrastructure to avoid or minimise effects on wetlands, cushionfields, snowbanks and other sensitive habitats where practicable.

Relevance to the Project

166. I consider that the history outlined above provides important context for NZSki's proposed expansion into Doolans Basin. NZSki's commitment to environmental improvement at The Remarkables was not created for the purpose of obtaining approval for the Project. It predates this application by many years and has progressively developed as our understanding of the alpine environment and our capability to contribute to its protection have increased.

167. Over the past decade that work has included indigenous revegetation and restoration, rehabilitation following infrastructure development, weed management, wetland identification and protection, predator control, support for kea conservation and increasingly sophisticated biodiversity monitoring. In parallel, NZSki has established a formal pathway towards carbon neutrality by 2030 and has already achieved a substantial reduction in its net operational emissions.

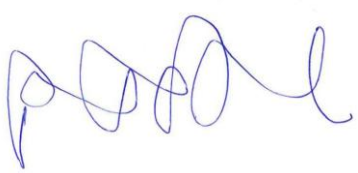
168. I believe this history demonstrates that NZSki has both the commitment and practical capability to undertake environmental initiatives over long periods. We have people working on the mountain throughout the year, operational equipment and capability, established relationships with conservation organisations, and a financial commitment to conservation.

169. In my view, the Project therefore presents an opportunity to do more than mitigate the effects of the proposed development. It provides an opportunity to extend and deepen the conservation work that NZSki is already undertaking across the wider Remarkables environment.

170. As I have addressed elsewhere in my evidence, I would particularly like that future conservation work to be developed in partnership with mana whenua. My aspiration is to bring together mana whenua knowledge, values and kaitiakitanga with NZSki's people, resources, conservation partners and long-term presence at The Remarkables Ski Area.

171. The outcome I would like to see is that NZSki's presence at The Remarkables Ski Area contributes positively to the long-term health of the maunga: by progressively reducing the carbon footprint of our operations, restoring indigenous vegetation, protecting sensitive alpine ecosystems, reducing introduced predators and supporting the recovery and resilience of indigenous biodiversity.

172. I see that as part of NZSki's wider responsibility as a long-term operator at Kawarau/The Remarkables Ski Area. Our objective should not simply be to minimise the environmental effects of our activities. We should use our presence, people and resources to leave the maunga in a better environmental condition and to contribute to the enhancement of te taiao over the long term.



Paul Joseph Anderson

3 November 2026