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Technical Memo

To:	QLDC Resource Consent Team
From:	Robert Galvin (Growth Areas Programme Manager, P&I)
Date:	Tuesday, 27 October 2026
cc:	
Subject:	**Fast-track Approvals Act 2024** **Remarkables Ski Area Expansion Project: Property & Infrastructure Transport Technical Comment (Section 53)**

1. Executive Summary

1.1. This memorandum provides Property and Infrastructure (P&I) transport input to inform Queenstown Lakes District Council's (QLDC or Council) section 53 comments on the substantive application for the Remarkables Ski Area Upgrade and Doolans Expansion Project (Project) under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (FTAA).

1.2. The Project comprises upgrades to the existing Remarkables Ski Area and expansion into the Doolans Basin Ski Expansion Area, including additional ski area infrastructure, parking facilities, transport infrastructure, visitor facilities and associated operational activities.

1.3. The focus of P&I's memorandum is NZSki's proposal that the SH6 / Remarkables Ski Field Access Road intersection operate under a traffic management plan from 2026 that only permits left turn exit movements unless an alternative management plan is approved by NZTA and otherwise relies on a roundabout or traffic signals proposed in the Te Tapuae Southern Corridor Structure Plan (TTSCSP).

1.4. From a P&I perspective:

- The Project will generate additional traffic demand on State Highway 6 (SH6) and the wider Southern Corridor transport network. Abley *(Appendix 1 Transport Peer Review)* concludes that the most significant transport effects are likely to occur on the SH6 corridor, with the potential to worsen existing congestion and delays both within the corridor and more broadly across the network.
- The SH6 / Remarkables Ski Area Access Road intersection is a key transport constraint for the Project and requires a permanent upgrade rather than the measures proposed by the applicant as summarised above. Traffic signals would be a more suitable infrastructure response to manage the arrival and departure of increased ski traffic, including providing for a safe right turn into (from the south) and out of the Remarkables access at a signalised intersection to safely and efficiently accommodate the anticipated increase in ski season traffic.
- The transport outcomes presented by the applicant are dependent on assumptions regarding travel demand management measures, mode shift initiatives and increased use of bus and shuttle services.
- The Project relies on future works set out in the TTSCSP. The TTSCSP is the outcome of a comprehensive structure planning process for the southern corridor under the Local Government Act, it is not a council funding document and does not provide a firm commitment to any works, in any particular timeframe.

- The Project should be considered alongside existing and anticipated development and growth across the Southern Corridor, including the consented Homestead Bay fast-track development, noting the cumulative transport demands arising from growth within Frankton and the wider Whakatipu Basin.
- Council's transport advisers consider that the Project's effects on SH6, particularly at the Remarkables Access Road intersection and the Coneburn roundabout, are not adequately addressed through the proposed conditions *(Appendix 1 -Transport Peer Review*). In Council's view, a permanent access upgrade is required, together with a cap on peak-hour vehicle movements at the SH6/Remarkables Access Road intersection at no more than existing levels until an appropriate access upgrade is operational, and enforceable travel demand management measures.
- A signalised intersection is likely to be the most suitable form of upgrade, subject to further assessment, as it would improve the management of side-road traffic movements and assist in maintaining the efficient flow of traffic along the state highway during peak periods.

2. Qualifications and Experience

2.1. **Robert Galvin** is the Growth Areas Programme Manager within the Strategy and Infrastructure Planning Team of P&I at QLDC. His role involves coordinating growth-related planning processes and integrating multidisciplinary inputs across Council's strategic planning and infrastructure delivery frameworks. He has extensive experience in infrastructure programme delivery, asset management, and strategic infrastructure planning. His qualifications include a Master of Business Administration, a Postgraduate Certificate in Business and recognition as a Graduate of the City & Guilds of London Institute in Engineering. He is also a Chartered Member of Engineering New Zealand.

2.2. Robert's role has been to coordinate and integrate technical input provided by QLDC subject matter experts and to prepare the P&I assessment.

2.3. The following QLDC transport specialists have contributed to the preparation of this memorandum:

2.3.1. **Jeremy Martin** is the Senior Network Engineer (Transport) in the Strategy and Infrastructure Planning Team within the P&I Department at QLDC. He has 18 years' professional experience in civil engineering, transport and roading infrastructure, working across Central Otago and the Queenstown Lakes District. He holds a New Zealand Diploma in Engineering from the Western Institute of Technology at Taranaki.

2.3.2. **Xinghao Chen** is a Transport Engineer in the P&I Civil Engineering Team at QLDC, with over 8 years' experience across the private and public engineering sectors. She holds a Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Civil Engineering from the University of Auckland.

2.4. While acknowledging this is a substantive application made under the FTAA, we confirm that we have read and agree to comply with the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses contained in the Environment Court Practice Note 2023. This memo has been prepared in accordance with that Code. Unless stated otherwise, the opinions expressed are within the authors' areas of professional expertise, and no material facts have been omitted that might alter or detract from those opinions.

3. Introduction

3.1. This memorandum provides P&I advice to support Council's section 53 comments on the Remarkables Ski Area Upgrade and Doolans Expansion substantive application.

3.2. This memorandum focuses on transport matters within Council's P&I remit and is informed by the substantive application material submitted by the applicant. In particular:

- Remarkables Ski Area Expansion *Integrated Transport Assessment* (prepared for NZSKI Limited) by Stantec NZ 15 May 2026

- Remarkables Expansion Project *Transport Addendum* (prepared for NZSKI Limited) by Stantec NZ 25 June 2026

3.3. The advice is provided in the context of Council's transport planning responsibilities, existing transport network constraints, and wider strategic transport planning considerations across the Whakatipu Basin.

4. Strategic Context

4.1. The Remarkables Ski Area is an established visitor destination and forms an important component of the Queenstown Lakes District's recreation and tourism offering.

4.2. The Project seeks to expand the existing ski area through staged development of infrastructure, facilities and transport-related infrastructure to support increased visitor capacity. While the expansion is into the Doolans which sits within Central Otago District Council boundaries, all access is through the existing access road, which sits within QLDC boundaries.

4.3. The ski area is located within the wider Southern Corridor where significant residential, visitor accommodation and employment growth has occurred and is anticipated to continue.

4.4. Future development within the Southern Corridor, including growth associated with Jack's Point, Hanley's Farm, Homestead Bay (subject to an approved fast-track housing approvals), Coneburn, and other growth areas, has the potential to contribute additional demand to the transport network.

4.5. The transport implications of the Project should therefore be considered in the context of cumulative growth and development occurring throughout the Southern Corridor, including Frankton and the wider Whakatipu Basin, and the resulting demands on the already constrained SH6 transport corridor.

4.6. From a P&I perspective, key considerations for appropriately managing the traffic and transport network effects arising from the proposal include:

- Traffic generation and visitor demand.
- State Highway 6 (SH6) network performance.
- Operation of the SH6 / Remarkables Ski Area Access Road intersection.
- Travel demand management measures.
- Shuttle, bus and public transport services.
- Parking management and transport operations.
- Network resilience and safety.
- Cumulative transport effects.

5. Transport Commentary

Overview and transport assessment

5.1. The Project seeks to facilitate the ongoing development and expansion of the Remarkables Ski Area through staged increases in visitor capacity, from approximately 3,500 visitors per day currently to 4,500 visitors per day at Stage 1 and 6,000 visitors per day at Stage 2[1] (ITA Table 1-1). Access will rely primarily on State Highway 6 (SH6) and the Remarkables Ski Area Access Road.

5.2. Visitor demand is highly seasonal, resulting in significant peak transport demands during the winter ski season, particularly during the morning arrival and afternoon departure periods.

5.3. The substantive application includes transport assessments addressing traffic generation, state highway access, parking facilities, shuttle operations and travel demand management measures. Following Council's comments on the application, the applicant provided supplementary information on the wider transport network context, planned network improvements, existing travel patterns and proposed mitigation measures.

5.4. In preparing these comments, Council has reviewed the following:

- Integrated Transport Assessment, prepared by Stantec NZ, dated 15 May 2026 (the ITA)
- Transport Addendum, prepared by Stantec NZ, dated 25 June 2026 (the Transport Addendum)
- Landscape Effects Assessment, prepared by Boffa Miskell, dated 5 May 2026 (the LEA), as it relates to the SH6 access
- The applicant's proposed conditions of consent (H.02A, updated 3 September 2026)
- Queenstown Strategic Network Plan, published by NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA), 2026 (the QSNP)
- Te Tapuae Southern Corridor Structure Plan, adopted by QLDC in September 2025 (the TTSCSP)

5.5. Having reviewed the applicant's ITA and Transport Addendum, Council considers that further assessment is required of the form, detailed design and operation of a permanent upgrade of the SH6 / Remarkables Ski Area Access Road intersection, with a signalised intersection as the likely preferred option. Further assessment is also required of the effectiveness of the proposed travel demand management measures, and of the effects of the Project's additional traffic in combination with continued growth along the Southern Corridor.

Traffic Generation and Visitor Demand

- The applicant's Integrated Transport Assessment (ITA) anticipates increased visitor numbers associated with future stages of development, from approximately 3,500 visitors per day currently to 4,500 visitors per day at Stage 1 and 6,000 visitors per day at Stage 2 (ITA, Table 1-1).
- Increased visitation can reasonably be expected to generate additional transport demand on both the ski area access road and the wider transport network.
- The transport assessment relies on assumptions regarding increased bus and shuttle patronage, higher vehicle occupancy rates and reduced reliance on private vehicle travel. The ITA assumes bus and shuttle mode share will increase from

[1] Integrated Transport Assessment Remarkables Ski Area Expansion *See Table 1-1 'Expected Population Staging for the Proposed Extension' page 14.*

26% currently to 40% at Stage 1 and 50% at Stage 2, and that average car occupancy will increase from 2.6 to 2.9 persons per vehicle.[2]

- None of these assumptions are currently mandated through any legislation, Council decisions or conditions of consent. While the applicant proposes a Travel Demand and Parking Management Plan (TRANS.9–TRANS.13), Abley notes the mode share targets relied upon by the ITA are not measured or monitored through conditions of consent, and there is no evidence to support the assumed increase in vehicle occupancy. On busy days in 2025, private vehicle mode share already exceeded 70%. Consequently, there is limited certainty that the forecast mode shift and travel behaviour outcomes will be realised. If they are not, vehicle trip generation will be materially higher than assumed in the ITA.[3]

5.6. State Highway 6 Access

- The SH6 / Remarkables Ski Area Access Road intersection is a critical component of the transport network serving the Project.
- Increased visitor numbers associated with the Project will result in additional traffic movements through the SH6 / Remarkables Access Road intersection, particularly during peak winter operating periods.[4]
- Existing congestion and delays are already experienced on parts of the State Highway 6 corridor, particularly during peak periods and winter ski season operations. NZTA's Queenstown Strategic Network Plan (QSNP) identifies that "key parts of the Queenstown network are already operating at or above practical capacity for extended periods", that "congestion is lasting longer, travel time reliability is worsening and small changes in demand or network conditions can create disproportionate delay", and that without intervention the Kawarau Falls Bridge will become an increasingly critical constraint, "with severe congestion emerging by 2035 and worsening over time".[5] For the SH6 Southern Corridor specifically, the QSNP notes that planned growth "will increase pressure on SH6 and the Kawarau Falls Bridge approach", and that "increasing traffic volumes, access points and turning movements will increase safety exposure.[6]"
- The Project should therefore be assessed in the context of both existing transport constraints and anticipated future growth throughout the Southern Corridor. As the SH6 corridor is already operating at or beyond capacity during peak ski season periods, and the Southern Corridor Structure Plan did not account for the additional traffic generated by the Project, its transport effects should be mitigated through measures secured by the applicant rather than relying on future network upgrades that are presently unfunded, unscheduled, or dependent on third-party delivery.
- The applicant proposes to manage transport effects through mode shift (expanded bus services, park-and-ride and carpooling), operational controls (a seasonal left-turn-only traffic management plan and car park occupancy controls), and conditions. It does not propose a physical upgrade of the SH6/Remarkables Access Road intersection.[7] Concerns remain regarding the ability of the existing intersection arrangement to accommodate increased demand associated with the Project.
- From QLDC's transport perspective, the existing SH6 / Remarkables Ski Area Access Road intersection does not have sufficient capacity to accommodate the proposed increase in activity without a permanent upgrade. A signalised

[2] ITA Table 7-4, page 45
[3] Mode share and occupancy figures: ITA Table 7-4, "Not measured or monitored": Abley para 28(a), "No evidence" on occupancy: Abley para 28(c), Over 70% private vehicle share: ITA Table 4-4 and Abley para 28(b), "Materially higher": Abley para 27.
[4] ITA sections 8.2, 8.4 and 8.5, pages 46, 53 and 55.
[5] NZTA, Queenstown Strategic Network Plan (QSNP), page 6.
[6] NZTA, QSNP, page 49.
[7] ITA section 15, Transport Addendum Section 6.

intersection is considered the most appropriate upgrade solution, and peak-hour vehicle movements at the access should be capped at existing levels until the upgraded intersection is fully operational.

- Signalisation would also provide a safety improvement over the existing intersection arrangement as traffic volumes increase. A signalised intersection is better suited to managing the high traffic volumes travelling along the SH6 Southern Corridor, while providing greater control over side-road movements from the Remarkables Ski Area Access Road. Signalisation would assist in regulating vehicle speeds through the intersection, resulting in a lower-speed environment and improved safety outcomes for all road users.
- Therefore, signalisation would provide greater ability to manage the volume and release of traffic exiting the ski area onto SH6, particularly during peak departure periods, reducing the potential for concentrated ski field traffic to enter an already constrained State Highway corridor.
- The detailed design, timing and operation of a signalised intersection should be developed in conjunction with NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi and supported by appropriate traffic modelling that considers peak ski season conditions, projected Project demand and wider growth within the Southern Corridor.
- The applicant should also provide modelling of the upgraded intersection under peak ski season conditions, including anticipated levels of service, delays, and queue lengths, to demonstrate that the proposed mitigation will function effectively in practice and adequately address the traffic effects generated by the Project.

5.7. Wider Network Effects

- Additional traffic associated with the Project will add to existing and anticipated growth-related traffic demands occurring throughout the Southern Corridor and wider Whakatipu Basin.
- In addition, the cumulative effects on the Frankton area, Kawarau (SH6) corridor, Coneburn area, and other key transport nodes are an important consideration.
- Increased travel demand has the potential to contribute to longer travel times, reduced network efficiency and increased pressure on key intersections and transport infrastructure.
- The transport effects of the Project should therefore be considered in the context of wider growth and transport planning initiatives occurring throughout the corridor.

5.8. Travel Demand Management and Alternative Transport Modes

- The applicant proposes a range of travel demand management initiatives intended to reduce reliance on private vehicles and increase the use of alternative transport modes. However, these measures are primarily focused on managing travel demand associated with the ski field access road. While they may reduce the number of vehicles travelling to and from the ski area, it remains important to demonstrate that the resulting traffic effects at the SH6 / Remarkables Ski Area Access Road intersection and on the wider state highway network will be appropriately mitigated.
- These initiatives include enhanced shuttle services, bus services, park-and-ride arrangements and other transport demand management measures. Given the constrained nature of the transport network and the anticipated increase in visitor numbers, reliance solely on private vehicle travel is unlikely to represent a sustainable long-term transport outcome.

- Greater use of public transport, shared transport and other alternative transport modes has the potential to reduce pressure on State Highway 6 and improve overall transport efficiency.
- The effectiveness of these measures will be an important factor in determining the extent of future transport effects associated with the Project.
- The extent to which alternative transport modes can accommodate future growth and reduce the need for additional private vehicle trips during peak winter periods remains a key consideration. The applicant proposes a Travel Demand and Parking Management Plan, but the mode share and vehicle occupancy targets relied upon by the ITA are not measured or monitored through conditions of consent, and the effectiveness of the proposed management measures has not been demonstrated.
- Regardless of the travel demand management measures proposed, ski field users and visitors ultimately need to access the wider road network, which is already operating under significant capacity constraints during peak ski season periods.
- Although the applicant's Transport Addendum responds to Council's request for an assessment of wider network effects, it is a high-level assessment based on annualised traffic volumes, and neither the ITA nor the Addendum models the effect of Stage 1 and Stage 2 traffic on the SH6 access or the Coneburn roundabout.
- The resulting effects on intersection performance, corridor capacity, and network congestion have therefore not been fully addressed in the ITA. QLDC does not consider that these effects are satisfactorily addressed by the conditions alone and considers that further assessment and mitigation are required.
- Given the existing and anticipated constraints on the surrounding transport network, increased reliance on alternative transport modes is likely to form an important component of any long-term transport solution associated with the Project and may assist in reducing pressure on the SH6 / Remarkables Ski Area Access Road intersection.

5.9. Parking and Transport Operations

- The Project includes reconfiguration and expansion of parking facilities together with lower mountain transport hub infrastructure.
- The overall transport strategy relies on the effective integration of parking facilities, shuttle operations and visitor transport management measures.
- Efficient operation of parking facilities is important to maintaining safe vehicle circulation and supporting travel demand management objectives.
- Detailed operational arrangements, management procedures, and monitoring requirements would continue to be refined through future design and implementation processes.
- Notwithstanding this, the proposal should demonstrate how future public transport integration will be enabled. Although shuttle services form part of the proposed transport response, no provision is currently made for public transport infrastructure at the base of the ski field access road.
- A permanent upgrade of the SH6 / Remarkables Ski Area Access Road intersection may create opportunities for such infrastructure in the future, but in QLDC's view the necessary space and enabling works should be secured through the Project itself. Otherwise, there is a risk that future public transport improvements serving the ski area cannot be readily accommodated.

- A key objective should be to maximise the use of shared transport modes before visitors reach the base of the ski field access road.

5.10. Network Resilience and Safety

- Access to the ski area is influenced by seasonal weather conditions and operational demands associated with an alpine environment.
- Safe and reliable access arrangements are important to the operation of the ski area and visitor experience.
- The Panel should carefully consider traffic management, incident management, and emergency access arrangements. The existing access is already subject to operational and safety concerns during peak periods, requiring active traffic management measures to enable vehicles to exit the ski field safely.
- Despite the proposed increase in activity and traffic demand, the Project does not propose a permanent improvement that increases the capacity of the access, and the safety measures referred to in the application are not secured through the proposed conditions. Consideration should therefore be given to measures that improve the safe and efficient egress of vehicles from the ski area.
- Appropriate management of peak demand periods will assist in supporting network safety and resilience outcomes.

6. Other Transport Considerations

6.1. Transport infrastructure delivered as part of the Project should integrate with existing and future transport networks and avoid constraining future transport improvement opportunities.

6.2. Clear ownership, maintenance and operational responsibilities will be required for transport infrastructure associated with the Project.

6.3. The Project should provide and secure the transport upgrades necessary to address its effects on the transport network, particularly at the SH6 / Remarkables Ski Area Access Road intersection where the Project's traffic impacts will be most acutely experienced. Reliance on future third-party transport upgrades is not an appropriate substitute for mitigation required to address the Project's immediate and direct traffic effects.

7. Conclusion

7.1. The principal transport concerns relate to existing constraints on the State Highway 6 corridor, which are already evident during peak winter ski season periods, and the potential for the Project to further increase traffic volumes on the surrounding transport network.

7.2. While the applicant has proposed a range of transport mitigation measures, a key issue is whether the existing SH6 / Remarkables Ski Area Access Road intersection will continue to operate efficiently as ski season traffic volumes increase and wider Southern Corridor growth continues.

7.3. From QLDC's transport perspective, an upgrade of the SH6 / Remarkables Ski Area Access Road intersection to a signalised intersection is required to accommodate the projected increase in traffic associated with the Project and mitigate its transport effects on an already constrained State Highway corridor.

7.4. A further key consideration is the extent to which alternative transport modes, including shuttle and bus services, can reduce reliance on private vehicle travel and assist in managing future transport demand.