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30 September 2026

Central Otago District Council

C/- Louise Taylor
Taylor Planning

By email: [redacted]

Dear Louise,

NZ Ski FTAA Application – Review of noise effects

1.0 Introduction

Styles Group have been engaged by the Central Otago District Council (**CODC**) to provide advice on NZ Ski's application for approvals under the Fast track Approvals Act (**FTAA**).

The Proposal is set out in detail in the reports, plans and related documents supplied to Styles Group and as available on the Fast Track website.[1]

My main focus is a review of the technical construction and operational noise and vibration assessment prepared by EMM (the **EMM Report**).[2]

The Proposal is on land within the jurisdiction of the CODC and the Queenstown Lakes District Council (**QLDC**). This review addresses only the issues arising in the jurisdiction of the CODC.

This review focuses on the main noise and vibration matters only and does not include detail on the large number of matters that are agreed.

Overall, I consider that the EMM Report is comprehensive and addresses the technical noise and vibration issues sufficiently subject to the matters raised in this review.

2.0 Review process

An earlier version of this advice dated 11 August 2026 was provided to the applicant.

I understand that the EMM Report and application has not been updated since my original comments were provided.

[1] https://www.fasttrack.govt.nz/projects/remarkables-ski-area-upgrade-and-doolans-expansion/substantive-application

[2] https://www.fasttrack.govt.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0028/29098/B-25A-Remarkables-Ski-Area-Upgrade-and-Doolans-Expansion-Noise-and-Vibration-Effects-Assessment_Redacted.pdf

I have updated my August advice to include this section (Section 2.0) and to provide a summary of my qualifications and experience (Section 3.0). No changes have been made to the remainder of the document.

The comments contained in this advice therefore remain applicable to the proposal.

3.0 Qualifications and experience

I am and have been the Director and Principal of Styles Group Acoustics and Vibration Consultants for over 21 years. I am a Council Member of the Acoustical Society of New Zealand, and I am on the Board of Directors of the Australasian Association of Acoustical Consultants.

I have over 24 years' experience advising on the management of construction and operational noise and vibration effects. I have extensive experience advising on the management of noise effects between land use activities and the development of controls to achieve ongoing land use compatibility.

Code of conduct for expert witnesses

In the context of this application, which is made under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024, and in relation to which there may be no hearing, I have been asked to confirm that this review has been prepared in accordance with the Environment Court's Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses.

I confirm that I have read the Environment Court's Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses, as contained in section 9 of the Environment Court's Practice Note 2023 and agree to comply with it.

The data, information, facts and assumptions that I have considered in forming my opinions are set out in my advice. The reasons for the opinions expressed are also set out in the advice.

I confirm that the matters addressed in the technical report are within my area of expertise, with the exception of where I confirm that I am relying on information provided by another person.

I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from my opinions expressed. I have specified where my opinion is based on limited or partial information, and I have identified any assumptions I have made in forming my opinion.

4.0 Noise and vibration sources in the CODC jurisdiction

The majority of the project and works is within the jurisdiction of the QLDC. The Doolans Expansion is within the jurisdiction of the CODC. The Doolans Expansion is accessed through the Remarkables Ski Area within the QLDC jurisdiction.

The Proposal involves a significant amount of construction work in the Doolans Basin. This includes rock breaking, drilling and blasting, helicopter work and many more noisy activities.

The operational noise sources in the Doolans Basin will be limited to the noise of skiers using the facilities and the mechanical sources associated with the Gondola, water pumping infrastructure and similar. These sources are expected to be relatively quiet.

5.0 Application of Rules and Standards

The EMM Report correctly identifies the relevant noise and vibration controls from the CODC District Plan for the construction and operational phases of the Proposal.

I agree with the way that the EMM Report applies the standards and rules, except that:

1) The relevant operational and construction noise standards in the CODC District Plan apply at any receiver, including those that physically exist and those that may be present in the future. In contrast, the EMM Report only addresses the effects on receivers that physically exist now. This is an issue in the QLDC and CODC jurisdictions.

2) The EMM Report notes that there is no rule in the CODC District Plan managing helicopter noise, so they have adopted the guidance in NZS6807 to inform their assessment of helicopter noise effects. However, the noise from helicopters used for construction work fits within the definition of construction work in NZS6803P and NZS6803 (the construction noise standards). This is an issue in the QLDC and CODC jurisdictions. The assessment of noise effects includes all noise made by the helicopter from when it arrives at (or over) the construction site ready for work (from its base or airfield) to when it leaves the construction site for the day or to land for refuelling.

I provide an assessment of the noise effects against the correct application of these rules in this review.

6.0 Receivers of noise in the CODC jurisdiction

There are only two landholdings in the CODC jurisdiction that might be affected by operational or construction noise from the Proposal. These are the two large land holdings to the east and south of the Doolans Basin. They are both Conservation Land and part of the Remarkables Conservation Area administered by the Department of Conservation.

The EMM Report doesn't consider any effects on these landholdings as they currently do not have any physically existing dwellings or other noise sensitive activities on them. However, as above the CODC noise standards apply at physically existing receivers as well as any receiver that might come and go over time.

I understand that there is no permitted pathway for establishing dwellings on either of the neighbouring sites and that it is unlikely that other types of noise sensitive activity are anticipated.

Therefore, there are no physically existing receivers and future receivers of noise are unlikely or unanticipated.

The findings of the EMM Report in respect of compliance with relevant noise standards in the CODC jurisdiction therefore remain valid.

7.0 Assessment of helicopter noise

As set out in Section 3, I consider that the noise from helicopters used for construction work has been assessed incorrectly. The EMM Report assesses helicopter noise as if it were an operational noise source and subject to the requirements of NZS6807 (and related rules in

QLDC). The QLDC rules adopted by the EMM Report and the use of NZS6807 in the CODC jurisdiction only take into account the landing and take-off of helicopters. They do not assess or control the noise from helicopters used for construction work such as lifting, transport of people and plant or other construction uses. However, the majority of helicopter noise from the Proposal will come from helicopters hovering, lifting and other operations that are not landing or taking off. As set out in Section 3, the use of helicopters for this work fits within the definition of construction work under the relevant QLDC and CODC District Plan rules.

The assessment of noise helicopter effects and compliance with the relevant construction noise standards includes all noise made by the helicopter from:

1) when it arrives at (or over) the construction site ready for work (from its base or airfield)

2) to when it leaves the construction site for the day or to land for refuelling.

The noise from helicopters would only be assessed against the rules and standards identified in the EMM Report if the helicopter refuels at the construction site itself. The noise assessed would only be the noise generated for the landing and take-off operations.

Any landing or take-off operations from the helicopters normal base or airfield that is not part of the Proposal would be assessed against the rules and standards (or resource consent conditions) applying to those facilities.

Whilst I consider that the EMM Report assesses helicopter noise against the incorrect rules and standards, I consider that the information provided in the EMM Report is sufficient to determine that noise from helicopter usage will comply with the relevant construction noise standards.

8.0 Noise effects on fauna and recreational users

The EMM Report does not deal with the potential effects on fauna and recreational users of the land in any meaningful detail. However I understand that the Recreation Report[3] states that noise effects on users will be "very high but temporary" and the Terrestrial Ecological Impact Assessment[4] assesses construction and operational noise effects on fauna. I consider that these two reports have characterised the likely construction and operational noise effects well. I leave the assessment of these effects to experts in those fields.

9.0 Conditions

The Rules Assessment[5] makes it clear that there are no noise or vibration related reasons for consent in either jurisdiction. In other words, the Proposal is required to comply with all noise and vibration related permitted standards in both District Plans.

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[3] https://www.fasttrack.govt.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0025/29077/B-07A-Remarkables-Ski-Area-Upgrade-and-Doolans-Expansion-Recreation-Assessment-Redacted.pdf

[4] https://www.fasttrack.govt.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0024/29085/B-12A-Remarkables-Ski-Area-Upgrade-and-Doolans-Expansion-Terrestrial-Ecological-Impact-Assessment_Part1_Redacted.pdf

[5] https://www.fasttrack.govt.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0022/29137/G.01-Consolidated-RMA-Rules-Assessment-for-the-Remarkables-Ski-Field-Expansion-Project.pdf

The proposed condition set does not include any specific noise or vibration conditions, other than a requirement for the CEMP to address noise[6].

The application has not sought consent to infringe the noise standards for permitted activities for both the construction and operational phases. I agree with the EMM Report that the proposal can comply with those standards. I agree that the CEMP should be sufficient to ensure that noise emissions comply with the permitted standards.

10.0 Conclusion

Overall I consider that the EMM Report includes a sufficient description of the predicted noise and vibration levels in the CODC jurisdiction. I consider that that the predictions and assessments are sufficient except for the two issues raised in this review.

Those two issues are the absence of any assessment on development that is permitted or anticipated by the District Plan and the assessment of helicopter noise against the wrong standard. My review of these matters is that even if they were assessed correctly, the conclusions in the EMM Report would remain correct.

This is primarily because it is unlikely that any receiver of noise could be established within the CODC jurisdiction that would be close enough to be affected, and because the helicopter operations are so far away from any existing receiver that the noise levels will comply with the correct construction noise rule in the CODC District Plan.

The operational and construction noise and vibration effects will be significantly below the noise standards for permitted activities in the CODC district due to the large separation distances.

The application has not sought consent to infringe the noise standards for permitted activities for both the construction and operational phases. I agree with the EMM Report that the proposal can comply with those standards. I agree that the CEMP should be sufficient to ensure that noise emissions comply with the permitted standards.

I consider that there are no specific conditions or careful management required to manage noise and vibration effects in the CODC district.

I leave the assessment and management of noise and vibration effects on recreational users and fauna to experts in those fields.

Please contact me if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely,



Jon Styles, MASNZ

[6] https://www.fasttrack.govt.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/29140/H.02A-Resource-Consent-Conditions-Redacted.pdf

Director and Principal

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