

**BEFORE THE COMMISSIONERS APPOINTED BY
THE MACKENZIE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

UNDER

the Resource Management Act 1991

IN THE MATTER

of RM230149 an application for land use consent to establish and operate a commercial tree-climb ropes course and picnic facilities at Lakeside Drive, Takapō/Lake Tekapo

BETWEEN

**QUEENSTOWN COMMERCIAL
PARAPENTERS LIMITED**

Applicant

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF ROB LACHLAN HAY

Dated: 27 August 2025

Summary Statement of Rob Lachlan Hay

Introduction

- [1] My name is Rob Hay. I prepared evidence for the Queenstown Commercial Parapenters Ltd (**Applicant**) relating to RM230149 an application for land use consent to establish and operate a commercial tree-climb ropes course and picnic facilities at Lakeside Drive, Takapō/Lake Tekapo dated 13 August 2025.
- [2] This summary statement provides a synopsis of the key issues identified in my statement of evidence. These issues include:
- (a) The receiving environment
 - (b) The noise assessment
 - (c) Submissions
 - (d) The s42A report
 - (e) Conditions

Summary statement

- [3] The activity will be undertaken only during the district plan daytime. The intensity of the activity will vary significantly, with peak times primarily during summer school holidays, and other school holidays or long weekends. Lower levels of activity are anticipated at other times, with little or no activity during periods of cold or otherwise inclement weather.
- [4] The existing ambient (residual) noise environment around the site during the late summer has been measured and demonstrates a moderately noisy environment dominated by local and distant traffic noise, informal play, and motorised watercraft. I consider this representative of a busy and dynamic peak activity environment.
- [5] Outside peak periods I expect the residual noise level to drop by up to 6 dB. I expect the activity noise would also drop similarly, meaning the nature of the noise effect will not become greater than the peak activity I have assessed during quieter periods.

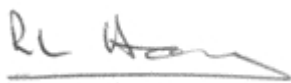
- [6] The predicted noise level from the activity will comply with both the proposed noise conditions and the permitted activity noise limits applying to the activity under PC29 (these are identical).
- [7] The dominant character of noise generated by the activity assessed on a conservative basis is traffic noise and vocalisation. Both of these have character that are identical or very similar to the existing traffic noise, parking, and informal play that occurs in the area. While use of the zip lines does have a character that differs from existing noise levels, this noise is not predicted to be intrusive or dominating and I do not expect it to change the level of amenity for other users of the space.
- [8] The proposed PC29 noise limits are the same as those proposed in the report. I expect that the proposal will comply with those limits, even at peak periods, and would therefore be permitted with respect to noise.
- [9] I have reviewed submissions that relate to noise. These largely refer to an increase in busyness, which amongst other things could be a proxy for noise. My evidence addresses this matter.
- [10] I have reviewed the evidence of Mr Smith (landscape) and Ms Banks (planning) on behalf of Tekapo Landco and Godwit Leisure Ltd. Mr Smith asserts that noise associated with the activity will be prominent to the point of dominating the experience along a 250m section of the pathway (para 46). I disagree with this conclusion based on the predicted activity noise levels based on measurement, the measured existing late summer noise levels at the site, and the expected pattern of activity throughout the year. I note that Mr Smith is not an acoustician and provides no evidence in support of the assertion of either prominence or dominance.
- [11] I agree with Mr Smith that there is a perceptual link between landscape and noise. While in certain circumstances noise can detract from the appreciation of a sense of place (especially highly tranquil or remote environments), there is also strong evidence that attractive landscape environments result in much lower adverse reactions to noise. There is also a developing body of evidence related to soundscape research that demonstrates that additional noise in certain contexts can actually enhance the experience of an environment.

- [12] In my opinion the infrequent and low level of noise from people engaging in the ropes activity may enhance the space for some visitors and users of the space just as it may detract from a sense of quietude for others. This is particularly so during the peak times of year when the area is busy; noting that during off-peak periods the activity is not expected to be as intense or will not be operating at all.
- [13] To the extent that any adverse amenity effect does occur for people walking the pathway, this will be a transitory effect both in the sense of the temporary noise source and the receiver passing through the area. I do not expect any appreciable effect at the waterfront for passive users of that area.
- [14] Ms Banks does not raise any issues not already addressed in my evidence or this summary.
- [15] I agree with Mr Boyes' discussion in paras 122 to 126 of the s42A report, and in particular his opinion that the proposed conditions related to noise are sufficient to avoid, remedy or mitigate noise from the activity.
- [16] I have suggested a minor amendment to the proposed noise limit condition clarifying the parameter and aligning with the PC29 noise limit.

Conclusion

- [17] I consider that the effects are minor at worst and often less than minor. These effects will be acceptable in the receiving environment and will not materially alter or degrade the existing amenity afforded by the ambient environment. Further, I consider that the level and character of noise arising from the proposal will not be unreasonable in terms of s16 of the RMA.

Dated: 27 August 2025



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Rob Lachlan Hay