

In the matter of The Resource Management Act 1991

and

In the matter of A submission of the Ministry of Education Proposed Queenstown Lakes District Council (Chapters 21: Rural)

to Queenstown Lakes District Council

1 STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF JULIE MCMINN

2 QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- 1 My name is Julie McMinn
- 2 I hold the degrees of Bachelor of Science and a Diploma of Regional and Resource Planning from Canterbury and Otago Universities.
- 3 I have over twenty years of professional experience in the field of Resource Management Planning.
- 4 I currently work for Opus International Consultants in Dunedin as the Principal Resource Management Planner having have been employed by Opus as a planner since 1994. I am responsible for the provision of consulting services in resource management and planning to a range of public and private clients including government departments and regional and territorial authorities.

3 SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

- 5 I have been engaged by the Ministry of Education (The Ministry) to prepare this written evidence on the Proposed Queenstown Lakes District Plan (Chapter 21).

6 In my evidence I discuss the following matters:

- The Role of the Ministry of Education;
- Background to the submission;
- The Planner's Report;
- Conclusion.

4 THE ROLE OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

7 The Ministry of Education (the Ministry) is the Government's lead advisor on the New Zealand education system, shaping direction for education agencies and providers and contributing to the Government's goals for education. The Ministry has responsibility for all education property owned by the Crown. This involves managing the existing property portfolio, upgrading and improving the portfolio, purchasing and constructing new property to meet increased demand, identifying and disposing of surplus state school sector property and managing teacher and caretaker housing. The Ministry is therefore a considerable stakeholder in terms of education facilities and assets in the Queenstown Lakes District, and has a strong interest in the provision for educational activities and facilities and their continued operation within the Queenstown Lakes District generally.

8 The Minister of Education is also a Requiring Authority as defined in Section 166 of the Resource Management Act (RMA). Designation of existing and proposed school sites is a technique used nationally by the Minister. It is the most effective way of ensuring the Minister's interest in a site are protected. Certainty is important since the Minister traditionally makes a long term commitment to any particular site selected for such uses.

9 In facilitating the operation of any state school, the Ministry has the function of working alongside school boards of trustees, who have the responsibility to provide a safe physical and emotional environment for students and staff.

10 Specifically, the Ministry is interested in the provisions of Chapter 21 as it provides the policy framework for managing land use activities in the Rural Zone. The Ministry provides educational activities in and has at least two schools located within the Rural Zone.

5 BACKGROUND

- 11 For the Queenstown Lakes District, the Ministry is specifically interested in the policy approach the Council is taking for land development as the Ministry has had difficulties in the past acquiring land to develop school sites to meet public demand close to where the schools are required.
- 12 The Ministry of Education submission seeks a flexible policy framework to recognise the importance of educational activities and facilities. The Ministry is also seeking that this framework supports the establishment of educational activities and facilities throughout the district and in this instance in the Rural Zone to meet community aspirations when identified.

6 PLANNERS REPORT

Chapter 21 Rural Zone

- 13 The Ministry has submitted to the provisions of the Rural Zone to include objectives and policies and rules for community activities and facilities added to the zone. In particular the Ministry the Ministry submitted that Education facilities are located in the Rural Zone along with other community activities and the zone provisions should provide for these.
- 14 The planners report notes in Appendix 2 that this submission is rejected as the provisions of the plan are appropriate.
- 15 The Ministry disagrees with this recommendation as the plan provisions as notified do not recognise the existing diversity of land use in the Rural Zone. In particular, rural activities include people and families that are supported by existing education and other community activities. The plan as drafted classes these activities as non-complying activities requiring resource consents with no policy support within the zone. This lack of policy support ignores the importance of these activities and could make it more onerous to establish or expand sites to meet community aspirations.

- 16 There are two existing Ministry of Education Primary Schools located within the Rural Zone, are Hawea and Remarkables Primary Schools. Both schools are located and operated to meet the surrounding community's requirement for local primary school education. Both sites are designated within the Operative and Proposed District Plans and are considered to be essential services for their local communities. However their ongoing operation or future growth in the Rural Zone will not be supported by the policy framework in the proposed plan if the provisions of the zone are not changed.
- 17 Although the Ministry relies on the designation requirements of Part 8 of the RMA to establish school sites the Ministry also relies on policy support to enable education and community activities. As a result the Ministry has also submitted to have education facilities recognised directly in the Proposed Otago Regional Policy Statement as part of the definition of an essential service (decisions pending).
- 18 Therefore to ensure consistency with the Proposed Regional Policy Statement process the Ministry are seeking to have objectives, policies and rules added to the Rural Zone provisions that support education and community activities.

19 **CONCLUSIONS**

- 20 The Ministry seeks to have objectives, policies and rules added to the Rural Zone provisions that will provide policy support to education and other community activities and facilities in the Rural Zone. This is consistent with the Ministry's approach taken when submitting to the Proposed Otago Regional Plan to have education facilities recognised in the definition of an essential service.
- 21 The rural zone includes a diversity of existing land uses including existing education and community activities. In particular the Ministry of Education schools Hawea and Remarkables Primary Schools are located and designated within the Rural Zone.
- 22 The Ministry considers that Council should have appropriate regard to the matters raised in its submission and in this Brief of Evidence.

Dated at Dunedin this 21 day of April 2016



Stephen Palfrey
Asset Team Manager
Southern



Simon Cruikshank
Regional Property Manager, Southern Region
Ministry of Education

Name and address for correspondence:

Opus International Consultants Limited
Attn: Julie McMinn
Private Bag 1913
Dunedin 9054

Ph: (03) 471 5591
Fax No: (03) 474 8995
Email: julie.mcminn@opus.co.nz

