

FRANKTON COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

PUBLIC MEETING: TO DISCUSS THE PROPOSED AIRPORT NOISE BOUNDARY EXPANSION

VENUE: REMARKABLES PRIMARY SCHOOL HALL, 49 LAKE AVENUE, FRANKTON

DATE: TUESDAY 14 AUGUST 2018

PRESENT: Glyn Lewers, Russell Thoms, Bruce Cunningham, Kirsty Sharpe, Kate Laws, Erin Taylor (COMMITTEE), four QLDC councillors and residents of Frankton and surrounding area (approximately 300 persons)



Photo courtesy CRUX

1. Welcome

Glyn Lewers (Chair of Frankton Community Association) welcomed all everyone to the meeting called to discuss the proposed Airport Noise Boundary Expansion. The format was that three guest speakers would address the meeting:

- ◆ **Jayne MacDonald** – Partner at law firm MacTodd to talk about the planning process that has to occur for the proposed noise boundaries to become part of our District Plan
- ◆ **Graham Budd** – is Chief Executive of Destination Queenstown
- ◆ **Dr. Marion Poore** – Public Health Physician and a Medical Officer of Health with SDHB to speak about Health Issues relating to the proposed noise boundaries

Followed by questions

DOTmocracy – each attendee would have a dot to place on a six question sheet to show their feelings on a range of questions that are appropriate to allow the FCA to make a submission to Queenstown Airport. In addition each attendee was urged to make a personal submission to the Airport Company.

2. The following is a synopsis of what was said.

Jayne MacDonald

The Resource Management Act 1991 (“RMA”)

- ◆ Put simply, the RMA and District Plans formulated under the RMA regulate how people can use land
- ◆ Under the RMA no person can use land in a way that contravenes a rule in a plan

How is Queenstown Airport regulated under the RMA?

- ◆ Queenstown Airport operates under its own Designation. This is a special type of planning tool, similar to the airport having its own zone and rules. The designation applies over the physical land occupied by the airport.

- ◆ Key controls in the designation relate to hours of operation - which are from 6am to 10pm; and noise emissions from aircraft.
- ◆ Under the designation, the airport is required to be managed so that noise from aircraft operations does not exceed the 65 dB Ldn outside the air noise boundary, or 55 dB Ldn outside the Outer Control Boundary. **The Air Noise Boundary and Outer Control Boundaries are shown on the District Planning Maps.**
- ◆ Within these boundaries as shown on the planning maps, certain land uses are further regulated (some are prohibited) – for example restrictions on establishing activities sensitive to aircraft noise (or ASAN's). These include activities such as schools and day care centers.

The nature of the changes proposed

- ◆ QAC are currently consulting and seeking public feedback with respect to the changes they propose. We are not yet in a RMA process.
- ◆ In a nutshell, QAC are looking to increase the number and frequency of flights within the current operating hours of 6am to 10pm. They cannot achieve this within the current Air Noise and Outer Control Boundaries shown on the planning maps. As a consequence of this increase in activity, the Boundaries will need to expand, which means more land is affected by the controls within those boundaries.

How are changes brought about under the RMA?

We are currently part way through a comprehensive review of the District Plan. The Council notified Stage 1 of the proposed plan for submission in 2015. Decisions have been made on Stage 1, and some 100 appeals have been lodged, with over 1000 parties joining various appeals.

- ◆ Council appointed commissioners are currently hearing topics of Stage 2. There are at least another 2 or 3 stages to go.

- ◆ QAC propose that the extended air noise boundaries be introduced somewhat belatedly into the District Plan review by way of a variation to the proposed plan. The Council can only initiate a variation. If the Council does not agree to initiate a variation, QAC will have to wait until the proposed plan is operative (that is all appeals have been resolved), and then lodge its own private plan change. That could be some years away.

Submission process under the RMA

- ◆ Whether by variation or plan change, the process for public participation is the same.
 - Minimum 20 working days (can extend to 40 working days) public notice to file a submission from date of notification
 - Submissions must be in writing and in the prescribed form
 - Council to give public notice of submissions and a 10 working day period to make further submissions in support of or opposition to original submissions
 - Preparation of Council officer and related expert reports
 - Lodgment of Submitter evidence
 - Hearing
 - Decision
 - Environment Court appeal(s)

Consultation and Submission process

- ◆ As above, we are not yet in an RMA process, so it is somewhat premature to talk about what makes a good submission and its content. For present purposes however, submissions will need to focus on the adverse effects of the increase in both noise, and the frequency of aircraft movements. The issue is not just related to those properties within the air noise boundaries, or to noise levels received within houses. Exterior noise levels are also relevant – to those recreating on the lake surface for example, or using our foreshores around the lakes edges.

- ◆ The term “Environment” is widely defined in the RMA to include people and communities, natural and physical resources, amenity values and social and economic conditions. This wide definition of environment brings into play an array of effects.
- ◆ The other thing to bear in mind is that while the projected take-off or landing at a rate of one nearly every 4 minutes will take some time to eventuate, now is the only time to complain of the adverse effects associated with that intensity of use.
- ◆ While its often said that the RMA is not a numbers game, in terms of how many people submit (although in my opinion it does add some weight to the cause), where numbers do count is in this consultation phase. QAC is seeking your feedback via its on line survey. There is nothing to prevent you e-mailing them with your views, independently of the survey.
- ◆ Do not forget QLDC. QLDC is the majority shareholder in QAC – on behalf of the community, it gives QAC direction. That direction needs to occur **before** QAC finalises its proposal for a plan change or variation.
- ◆ **Do not wait until the RMA process.**

Graham Budd

- ◆ Destination Queenstown boss Graham Budd was careful to stress to the audience that his marketing agency sees a social license from the community as being fundamental to their core mission. He told the packed hall of around 300 residents that unlimited growth was not on the agenda and that funding must be found to get vital infrastructure not just up to scratch but ahead of forecast needs.
- ◆ He believes that we can plan for future growth but **ONLY** with significant investment in our public infrastructure and services. In his view this will only be achievable with new funding mechanisms that relieve the inequitable burden on the ratepayers.
- ◆ He said that one third to a half of visitors arrive through the airport; we haven’t always been able to correlate airport growth with visitor numbers due to the wider regional role the

airport now plays. But clearly a substantial number of visitors arrive into Queenstown by land transport of some form.

- ◆ He finished by saying the most important asset any visitor destination can have is a supportive and welcoming host community. We have always been that!

Dr. Marion Poore

Environmental Noise

- Noise = normal sounds that are harmful or unwanted
- Increased risk of negative physiological or psychological health outcomes
- Sources
- Transportation; recreational activities; industry (occupational health regulation)
- Adverse health outcomes
- Auditory – hearing impairment; tinnitus
- Non auditory – cardiovascular; annoyance; poor sleep; cognition and learning; adverse birth outcomes; quality of life; mental health and wellbeing;

Cardiovascular health

- Stress from noise exposure
- Directly via sleep disturbance; indirectly via annoyance
- May cause physiological stress to individuals
- increases risk factors such as blood pressure, blood glucose, blood fats
- May leads to hypertension, arteriosclerosis; May lead to heart attacks
- Air Pollution from Particulate Matter (PM 2.5) may affect cardiovascular health

Annoyance

- Most prevalent community response
- Negative reactions
- Disturbance, irritation, dissatisfaction, nuisance
- May experience stress related symptoms
- Personal and situational factors
- Fear, interference, ability to cope, noise sensitivity, expectations, anger

Sleep disturbance

- Undisturbed sleep - essential for alertness, performance during the day, quality of life, general health
- Aircraft noise disturbs sleep and impairs sleep recuperation
- Physiological reactions to noise include changes in breathing, body

Movements, heart rate which do not adapt over time

- Elderly, shift workers, children those with poor health considered more at risk
- Child sleeping patterns may differ from curfew hours (10pm - 6am)

Effects on cognition and learning

- Exposure to aircraft noise at home / school shown to
- impair reading and memory skills; poorer performance on standardised achievement tests
- Reversible if noise stops (e.g. acoustic insulation)
- Studies on children 8 – 12 years;
- No longitudinal studies or other population groups e.g. adolescents

Lakes District Hospital

- Patients have less ability to cope with stress
- Sleep disturbance
- Annoyance
- Communication interference
- Staff – interference with tasks; meetings
- Potential impacts on future development of the site

Consequences of a busier airport

Consider other public health issues

- Air pollution from aircraft emissions; Soil and water contamination from aircraft and runway operations; Safety and emergency planning; International Health Regulation responsibilities; Occupational health issues; Amenity of airport environment
- More people arriving means more infrastructure will be needed
- Public toilets, freedom camping, capacity of water supply and wastewater, traffic congestion, parking, public amenity, waste minimisation

Moving forward

- Opportunity to consider the future and contribute to shaping it
- How do we balance community well-being with economic development?
- Health impact assessment
- Systematic consideration of the positive and negative effects of this proposal from health, environmental, social and economic impacts.

What's the long game?

- Inland City – with a diverse economy
- Tourismquality and value vs quantity
- Sustainable development
- Environmental; economic; social
- Liveable city

Summary

- Complex problem – requires systematic approach to finding workable solutions
- High prevalence of noise impacts on health because of widespread exposure
- Need to balance community wellbeing with economic development

References

- Aviation Noise Impacts: State of Science Noise Health 2017
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5437751/>
- WHO Noise and Health Evidence Reviews Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health 2018
http://www.mdpi.com/journal/ijerph/special_issues/WHO_reviews
- Development of WHO Environmental Noise Guidelines for the European Region: An Introduction. 2018
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/324679574_Development_of_the_WHO_Environmental_Noise_Gui
delines_for_the_European_Region_An_Introduction
- Aircraft Noise and Health effects: Recent Findings. Civil Aviation Authority 2016.
<https://publicapps.caa.co.uk/docs/33/CAP%201278%20MAR16.pdf>

Questions and **Answers:**

- ◆ Will FCA be making a submission to Council also? – **yes**
- ◆ Did FCQ ask the Airport Company to come to this meeting - **no**
- ◆ Is Mr. Budd aware of the consequences of excess tourism in places like Venice, Barcelona and Amsterdam? – **yes very cognizant but felt these were extreme examples.**
- ◆ Comment on relevant size of Venice. Queenstown proposing huge growth in passenger numbers.—**Not sure what correct number should be. Also not an expert in the dynamics of those areas including Aspen. We should learn from these other places.**
- ◆ Peak noise levels appear to be much higher than the Airport is quoting (this questioner has measured the levels). – **Noise levels will need to be monitored closely**
- ◆ What is the breakdown on airport numbers ie_ Tourists v others. – **5% come from outside the area to use the airport. Member of Audience noted that discussions with Airport suggested 30% who arrive by airport then travel on to the Upper Clutha Region**
- ◆ Are the residents going to see the submission prior to it going in on Monday. – **Once the dots are cast everyone will see (in real time) the feeling of the group. The submission will be posted on line.**
- ◆ Given that the airport is owned 75% by QLDC how has it got to this stage? It appears that QLDC are implicitly supporting the Airport, - **Jayne had viewed the airport statement of Corporate intent and nowhere in that document did it say that the QLDC supported this change.**
- ◆ Question on last council meeting where it appeared that QLDC had signed off the proposed changes to the Airport statement of Corporate intent. – **Answered by Councillor Forbes who said she was under the impression that all that was signed off was for the Airport to research and submit more accurate figures and facts to support their proposed amendment. Jayne endorsed that understanding. A lot of 'talking' and decision making to go on.**
- ◆ Is it appropriate that the Airport gets to decide the region's growth plans acknowledging that the targeted figures are going to be reached about 13 years earlier? – **Graham not here to speak on behalf of the Airport, however he thinks that they have gone through the long term planning process and from what they have established they are giving notice of future growth and consequently a requirement to amend the noise boundaries. He thinks that the Airport itself did not decide what the numbers would be they were provided by**

Global Experts in passenger numbers and trend. These numbers disclose that the noise boundaries will be exceeded within a few years so they are going down this path. Graham says that he does not think the airport is dictating the numbers they are merely putting it out for consultation and discussion so that the community can have a say in what they think is the best way to go. Jayne agrees with this.

- ◆ **Could Jayne explain a bit more about the RMA process? – When you are dealing with technical aspects and intangible things like noise, aircraft effecting noise levels and the quality of life there are wider issues like social effects and health effects there is the opportunity to have every expert to come and speak on your behalf against your opposition. This would probably be the case where it would be heard by the commissioners in the Environment Court. My recommendation would be that the public case should be run by the FCA on behalf and that that body would need a fund to utilize experts to state its case.**
- ◆ **I understand there is a covenant on Shotover Estate residents Can those residents respond to the request for submissions? – Yes they can have a say.**
- ◆ **If we respond to the request for a submission to the Airport does this get shared with the Council? – Yes I believe the Airport does give the Council a view on submissions it has received, however we believe you should send a copy to the QLDC to ensure they get to see your views.**
- ◆ **Can the Airport ensure a plan change? – The QLDC are the only ones who can enact a variation to the district plan which at present has not been passed so the council can refuse the variation to the Draft District Plan.**
- ◆ **The QLDC council members who were at the meeting attempted to reassure the audience that a decision to allow the airport to increase flights was "not a done deal" with Councillor John MacDonald saying that the community meeting was "democracy in action."**

The attendees then moved to the DOTmocracy community discussion where they placed their dots appropriately under the following questions:

1. How do you feel about the proposal to expand the Airport noise boundaries?
2. How well do you understand the impacts of the expanded noise boundaries on your life and community?
3. How do you think expanding the noise boundaries will effect your feelings towards tourism and tourists?
4. What do you think will be the impact on your overall quality of life due to the expanded noise boundaries?
5. If Public Infrastructure outside of the Airport could be built to meet the needs of the noise expansion boundaries would you support the Airport's proposal?
6. What do you think limiting passenger numbers through refusing the expansion of noise boundaries impact the economy of Queenstown?

Preliminary results of this exercise are:

We got 1294 responses (dots)

63% of the responses were from respondents that identified with being part of Frankton

The initial review of the responses are:

Q1: 82% strongly oppose the proposal with no responses in the positive spectrum

Q2: 50% understood the proposal impacts well with 92% from neither to very well.

Q3: 56% would have a more negative view of tourists/tourism if the proposal went ahead. no votes in the positive spectrum (100% either neither or down the scale to more negative)

Q4: 84% more negative on their quality of life. The remaining 16% were between more negative and no different.

Q5: 74% would still oppose the airport proposal even if the infrastructure was in place. with only 2 yes votes out of the 220 responses, the remaining votes were placed between maybe and no.

Q6: 50% thought their would be a positive impact on the economy if the proposal did not go ahead, with a further 37% viewed no economic impact to occur.

The responses will be used to guide our feedback to the Airport as well as QLDC.

Meeting Close: 9:30 PM