

**SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE OF GEOFF DEAVOLL
FOR THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF CONSERVATION**

Planning

Submitter number 373 / 1080

23 May 2016

1. My name is Geoffrey Edward Deavoll. I am a resource management planner employed by the Department of Conservation. I have pre-circulated planning evidence on the Director-General of Conservations submissions on the proposed district plan in relation to the rural topics.
2. The Director-Generals submission on Chapter 21 Rural was focused on the rule for the control of informal airports located on Public Conservation Lands or on Crown Pastoral Lands. The submission was generally in support but seeking an exemption for Department of Conservation operational activities. The officers accept the relief sought and I agree with the Officer's recommendation on this rule.
3. The Director-General sought a significant amount of changes to the provisions of Chapter 33 Indigenous Biodiversity and Ecosystems. This was generally to incorporate amendments sought such as the removing the permitted activity for clearance of significant natural areas (SNA's), better provision for protection of areas identified as significant through development proposals, providing for clearance of SNA's as a non-complying activity, and providing for biodiversity offsetting. These changes are largely not accepted by the Council Officer's recommendation.
4. Regarding identification of SNA's I consider the schedule of SNA's is a significant step in providing for the protection of these sites in the district plan. I do though consider it to be important to provide for the protection of areas determined to be significant through development proposals.
5. The Director-Generals submission sought some amendments policies of Chapter 33 regarding enabling the use of biodiversity offsetting. The relief sought in the submission has largely been accepted by the Officers recommendations, with the exception of definitions of both biodiversity offsets and non net loss. I consider the inclusion of these definitions is required to provide clarity in the PDP over what both these concepts involve.

6. In my evidence I have discussed a number of submission points around the permitted activities standards and exemptions provided for in the rules of Chapter 33. I am generally in agreement with the Officers recommendations on this aspect of the Chapter.
7. The submission has also sought that the clearance of vegetation considered to be significant in terms of section 6(c) of the RMA, be addressed through application of a non-complying activity rule. Separating significant indigenous vegetation out from clearance of indigenous vegetation of lesser value reflects both the policy direction provided by the PDP Chapter 33, and reflects the national importance of providing for the protection of significant indigenous vegetation under the RMA.
8. Finally, the Director-Generals submission is generally supportive of the provisions of Chapter 34 which places controls on the new planting of a number of tree species with wilding potential. The Department of Conservation has a particular interest in controlling the spread of wilding trees within the Queenstown Lakes District. I support the Officers recommend amendments to this chapter as being appropriate, including the proposed non-complying activity status for radiata pine plantings.

ENDS