

A copy of Quiet Sky Waiheke's submission on the 15 Cremorne Street, Herne Bay, application

We note that the applicant is claiming that twice as many flights would have a lower impact. This is nonsense and demonstrates how the averaging calculations and acoustical models are routinely used to disguise the real impacts and bamboozle processing planners. The real impact is best determined by considering the actual volume of the helicopter, as will be experienced by nearby residents (expressed as L_{max} or L_{AFmax}), the public (including users of the reserve), and threatened native fauna, and multiplying that by the frequency of flight movements applied for. National Planning Standard 15 (to which Auckland Council must give effect) specifically disallows the use of averaging of helicopter noise, as it has recognised the inappropriateness of taking a long period of quiet and a short period of intense noise, and claiming the impact on average (expressed as L_{dn}) is not so bad. Note that the High Court (CIV-2018-404-152) has stated that temporary noise effects (expressed as L_{max} or L_{AFmax}) must be considered. The L_{max} for nearby sites is incredibly loud, at levels between 87dBA and 93dBA, according to the applicant's own submission.

That same High Court judgement (CIV-2018-404-152) also made points of relevance relating to the requirement for council to assess the safety risks of helicopter movements during take-off and landing below a height of (in this case) 1000ft. We could not find, in the application documents, any evidence provided by an aviation safety expert on the safety of the helipad design, or of the proposed approach and departure flightpaths, or of how feasible they are to use in different weather conditions (especially different wind directions), or how they comply with various Civil Aviation Authority rules and guidelines. If council does not possess the relevant aviation safety expertise and has not been provided with an aviation safety expert's report, it cannot adequately judge whether the proposal is safe and meets s5 of the RMA, nor whether the proposed mitigation of noise by the flightpath is realistically achievable.

We also note that Council's Helicopter Practice and Guidance Note states (in section 4.3) that Policy 11 of the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS) requires protection of indigenous biological diversity; with no adverse effects, of any significance, being acceptable. It further notes that "The noise and aural impact of a helicopter can affect biology in different ways...As such, resource consent applications for helicopter landing areas within a coastal environment should be supported by an assessment against the NZCPS, and supporting expert reporting, including on biodiversity." We could not find any evidence that such an assessment or report had been conducted. The proposal appears to use arrival and departure by sea as a way of mitigating effects on surrounding dwellings, but that will necessarily increase effects on any protected native fauna in the coastal environment.

In summary, we believe that granting the consent would likely result in significant adverse effects of the kind prohibited by Policy 11 of the NZCPS; in a doubling of events where noise of 90dBA (plus or minus 3 dBA) is experienced at a host of neighbouring sites; and potentially a doubling of safety risks (as each movement represents a risk). As such, we seek that council does not grant the consent.

Read the application and supporting documents and make your own submission here:

<https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/have-your-say/have-your-say-notified-resource-consent/notified-resource-consent-applications-open-submissions/Pages/ResourceConsentApplication.aspx?itemId=522&applNum=LUC60134603-A>