

Environmental Impact Assessment for occupation of existing DoC House 3 Aoraki Mt Cook Village:

Proposed activity

The proposal is to use the existing staff accommodation for visitor accommodation in conjunction with the existing operations of Aoraki Mt Cook Alpine Lodge Ltd.

The accommodation will house a maximum of 8 guests per night and the target market is family groups who typically travel in people movers and small vans and stay one to two nights. This type of self catering accommodation is extremely popular with our Asian guests who prefer to cater to their own special dietary requirements.

This accommodation would be a valuable addition to the Aoraki Mt Cook Village and presents very little change to the existing use.

Physical and social conservation values affected by this proposal

Existing natural environment

Tangata Whenua

Biodiversity

Visitor movements

Vehicle Parking

Water consumption

Sewerage impacts

Visual impacts

Noise

Waste

Identification the potential effects, both positive and adverse of the above and measures to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects

The existing natural environment is one of native bush surrounding the existing residence in a private setting which can not be seen from anywhere else in the area. There are no proposed physical changes to what is there.

Likely environmental issues of concern to Maori e.g. to do with water use, plants and animals of traditional importance (e.g. taonga) are minimal and none of the proposed changes to the use of the building are likely to affect any of these things.

With regard to relating and interpretation of Maori history of the area , all of our guests are encouraged to visit the Department of Conservations visitor centre across the road to gain some insight into Maori and their beliefs and in particular how it relates to Aoraki. We believe this is an effective means of communicating important cultural values.

There is no proposed disturbance to the ground or introduction of soils or materials that could affect vegetation or habitat.

The effect of people "coming and going" from the property does not change from the existing use. Overall the movement of vehicles would be less annually than if a family lived in the house all year round as a private residence.

The recreational motivations of visitors to this site are most like to involve walks within the National Park environment, in particular, in excess of 80% of our guests come to walk the Hooker Valley track. Attitudes of visitors to this location are likely to be respectful of the environment and surrounding area.

Typically there will be one vehicle associated with the activity however we propose to allow a maximum of 2 vehicles which can easily be accommodated in the existing carport/driveway area.

The proposed activity would see no significant increase in water consumption compared to that of a family residing in the house year round based on an annual occupancy rate of 60%. It would be our intention to decommission the bathtub and install a water saving shower head.

The above would also translate into any increase in load on the village sewerage system in that overall the number of loo flushes per annum would be the same or less if the house was occupied by a family.

There would be no change to Visual impacts.

Any issues with noise emanating from the residence would be directly controlled by onsite management at the adjoining Aoraki Mt Cook Alpine Lodge. It is not anticipated to ever be an issue.

With regard to rubbish, this will be streamed through the village 4 bin recycling system. As operators, we pride ourselves on placing emphasis on recycling and reduction of waste to landfill.

Summary

There is zero displacement of people by this proposal and we see no cumulative impact on the environment in changing the use of the property from residential to visitor accommodation. The proposal is highly compatible with surrounding activities and there is no impingement on any existing operation or infrastructure.

