

Before an Independent Hearing Commissioner at Hurunui District Council

*under:* the Resource Management Act 1991

*in the matter of:* application RC210098 for land use consent to install  
and operate a Gravity-Based Recreation Activity within  
the Conical Hill Reserve, Hanmer Springs

*between:* **Hanmer Springs Thermal Pools & Spa**  
*Applicant*

*and:* **Hurunui District Council**  
*Consent Authority*

Summary of evidence of Nathan Broerse

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Dated: 7 October 2021

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REFERENCE: J M Appleyard (Jo.Appleyard@chapmantripp.com)

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## **SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE OF NATHAN BROERSE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- 1 My full name is Nathan Derek Broerse and I am a large animal veterinarian at North Canterbury Veterinary Clinics Ltd.
- 2 I have considerable experience with horses and perform the bulk of the horse work seen by my practice. I have undertaken a site visit to the activity site and have assessed the effects of the proposed Flyride on existing horse riders using the Lucas Lane track.
- 3 Overall, I consider the operation of the Flyride attraction will not compromise horse welfare and will not create an unsafe riding environment. However, I believe that installing signage on the Lucas Lane track notifying riders of the Flyride's operation would be appropriate.

### **HORSE BEHAVIOUR AND PHYSIOLOGY**

- 4 Horses have extremely well developed senses and corresponding fight or flight response. In most situations flight is the dominant response. Horses can be easily spooked by new sights or sounds suddenly occurring which can stimulate a flight reaction. Slow, steady movements or low noises are a lot less likely to frighten a horse.
- 5 Not all horses react with the same magnitude of fear. This means that horses' severity of flight response when exposed to the same stimulus differs.
- 6 Vision is considered the primary danger detector for horses. They also have a well-developed sense of hearing and use it to detect threats. However, horses do not react to all sounds in their environment.

### **VISIBILITY OF THE FLYRIDE**

- 7 I have walked the section of the Lucas Lane track in proximity to the proposed Flyride and the Applicant has provided me with satellite and on-the-ground imagery.
- 8 Due to the nature of the horses' visual field's, the topography of the terrain and dense vegetation providing a visual blockade, it is reasonable to conclude that a horse on the track will be unable to see the attraction. I therefore consider it is unlikely that any horse would react to any sudden movement associated with the Flyride.

### **NOISE EFFECTS OF THE FLYRIDE**

- 9 I have consulted the noise assessment performed by Acoustic Engineering and the review by Marshall Day Acoustics. My understanding is that noise generated by the attraction itself will be low and that the main noise will be from participants' vocal reactions.
- 10 I consider that horses are unlikely to perceive these types of noise as a threat due to the distance between the track and the proposed Flyride route. In my view, distant shouts and screams from users of the Flyride would be no more confronting to a horse than the existing noises (e.g. vehicles, mountain bikers) already experienced in the area. Therefore, I consider it is reasonable to conclude that a horse on the track is unlikely to be spooked by sounds emanating from the Flyride.

### **RESPONSE TO HANMER SPRINGS HORSE RIDERS INC. (HSHR)**

- 11 I agree with HSHR that horses can be easily spooked by new sights or sounds and may react adversely to any aspect of the environment.
- 12 However, I consider noise from users of the Flyride to be no more confronting to a horse than that which may be experienced by encountering other users of the "mixed-use" track. Further, as discussed above, I consider it unlikely that a horse would be able to see the attraction and react to sudden movement.
- 13 Accordingly, I disagree that the operation of the Flyride attraction will create an unsafe riding environment over and above the current risks inherent within the existing environment or horse riding more generally. I consider that installing an alternative 'cross-town' horse riding track as suggested by HSHR is not the most suitable mitigation method and that establishing an alternative track is not necessary to ensure safety.
- 14 Rather, I consider that alerting horse riders to the Flyride attraction would be a good mitigation measure. This could be through appropriate signage installed on the track.

### **CONCLUSION**

- 15 I consider the operation of the Flyride attraction will not compromise horse welfare whilst using the Lucas Lane track and will not create an unsafe riding environment rendering the current track unusable during operation of the Flyride.
- 16 I am happy to answer any questions.

Dated: 7 October 2021

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Nathan Broerse