

Request for Decision

Temporary Use Permit #58 –
Helicopter Operations,
Britannia Beach South (Area D)

Date of Meeting: Board Meeting – June 27, 2018

Recommendation:

THAT the Board not approve Temporary Use Permit #58 regarding the Sky Helicopters and Taicheng application for helicopter tour operations at Britannia Beach South.

RELEVANT POLICIES:

Electoral Area D Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1135-2013
Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Electoral Area D Zoning Bylaw No. 1350-2016
SLRD Temporary Use Permit Policy

Attachments:

None

Key Information:

The SLRD received a Temporary Use Permit (TUP) application from George Lacny at SKY Helicopters Inc. on behalf of the Taicheng Development Corporation. This TUP application is associated with land that is currently part of the Taicheng Development Corporation Britannia Beach South rezoning application. The application proposes helicopter tourism activities that would be staged out of the property. The application covers portions of three different properties (Lot A, Plan VAP21576, DL 1583, Group 1, NWD; Lot A, Plan VAP20309, DL 2001, Group 1, NWD; Parcel 1, DL 1583, NWD) all of which are currently zoned RR3 (Rural Resource 3) under Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Electoral Area D Zoning Bylaw No. 1350-2016. The proposed TUP site locations are located within the Master Planned Community designation of the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS).

A permission to proceed report was brought to the SLRD Board in April 2018. The applicants hosted a public information meeting in Britannia Beach on the 2 TUP proposals on Wednesday May 2 at 7 pm (the proposed helicopter tours would be related to and operated in association with the proposed market and highway rest stop (applied for under a separate application- TUP application #57). Following the public information meeting, a report on TUP 58 is being brought back to the SLRD Board.

Notification

The neighbouring properties within 150 m were sent a notification on June 14, 2018, and the required newspaper advertisements were placed in the Squamish Chief as per the *Local Government Act* requirements. Any additional responses received from the public will be presented to the Board at the meeting. Issues raised by the public comments are summarized below.

Analysis – TUP #58 (helicopter operations):

Community Input Summary:

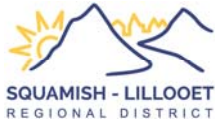
- 28 written responses were submitted to the SLRD regarding the proposed TUP #58. Of those 28 responses, only 1 was conditionally supportive of the helicopter tourism uses. The remaining 27 responses were opposed to TUP #58 in any form.
- Significant concerns were expressed regarding the proposed helicopter tourism based on existing issues with helicopters in the area – logging, etc. as well as past experiences with Black Tusk Helicopters attempting a heli-tourism operation.
- Many concerns were raised regarding noise and flight paths affecting the community and residents despite assurances from SKY Helicopters that the flight path and size of helicopter would mitigate most noise issues and would not be noticeable compared to heli-logging or other helicopter use in the area.
- Residents stated that they moved to the area specifically for peace and quiet and for residential purposes and do not want to be negatively affected by heli-tourism activities.
- Residents stated that they have a sense of growing noise pollution in the community and do not want additional sources to be added to the area.
- Many concerns were noted about noise and disruption during the day and during the summer when people want to be outside and have their windows open and enjoy the outdoors.
- It was commented that the proposal does not fit with the community and the vision of many of the residents.
- Concerns were stated regarding negative effects on wildlife and habitat associated with helicopter noise and air pollution.

Based on the public comments received, SLRD staff do not think there is much support for the application from the community. While there may be some support from residents for a trial period, it is evident that a substantial number of Britannia Beach residents are opposed to any helicopter tourism activities in their area. It may be that the proposed helicopter tourism activities as part of TUP 58 would have a reduced noise impact on the community based on the smaller helicopters used and the flight paths employed as compared to helicopter logging and other unrelated larger helicopters flying over the water. However, based on what the community has stated, it is not recommended to try even a one year TUP with a reduced number of daily and weekly flights.

Options:

- (1) Do not approve or issue TUP #58.
- (2) Other decision, as determined by the Board.

Preferred Option: Option 1 is the preferred option as the proposed TUP has generated a high level of public opposition and lack of support for the proposed helicopter tour operations. While the Board might consider a trial period with a 1 year TUP with a limited number of flights per day and per week, there appears to be little support for any helicopter tours in the area despite the efforts of the applicants to address noise concerns and flight path considerations.



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Regional Considerations: This TUP application is associated with land that is currently part of the Taicheng Development Corporation Britannia Beach South rezoning application. The proposed helicopter tours would be related to and operated in association with the proposed market and highway rest stop (applied for under a separate application- TUP application #57). TUP application #58 is not dependent on or related to the rezoning application or the proposed Britannia Beach South project.

Submitted by: I. Holl, Senior Planner

Reviewed by: K. Needham, Director of Planning & Development Services

Approved by: L. Flynn, Chief Administrative Officer