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VC37**KEY INFLUENCES**

Future use and development at Falls Creek Resort requires an appreciation and understanding of the key influences that exist, as well as an identification of the opportunities and constraints that such influences will present over the next 10-15 years.

Significant Flora and Fauna Communities

Significant flora and fauna species and communities need to be protected, preserved and retained under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 and the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999. Significant communities of flora, such as Alpine Bog, can provide important habitat for rare and threatened fauna species. The integrity of flora and fauna and their bio-diversity values may be threatened by Village expansion and inappropriate development. The siting, construction and ongoing management of buildings and activities need to respect the values and contribution of significant flora and fauna to the alpine and broader environment.

Management of Geo technical Hazard

The geo-technical stability of the Resort is an important environmental and safety issue. The location and siting of buildings need to have regard to drainage lines, subterranean water levels and movement to minimise the risk associated with ground stability within the Resort. The alpine environment is susceptible to geological change and will need to be constantly monitored.

Natural Drainage Lines and Moss Beds

Natural drainage lines and moss beds within the Village are an important component of the natural drainage system and contribute to slope stability in the Resort. They also serve as areas of public open space and form part of the Village skier network. It is important, therefore, that these features are sensitively managed and protected from inappropriate development, through the implementation of various environmental strategies and guidelines, including the findings of the Falls Creek Stormwater Management Strategy. Buildings must be sited so that an adequate set back from these natural features is maintained.

Water Catchment

The location of the Resort in the upper catchment of the East Kiewa River creates a number of constraints on the use and development of land. The siting of buildings needs to take into account adequate setbacks from waterways. Sediment control principles should ensure the protection of water quality during construction. The provision of service infrastructure, including the sewerage treatment plant, should not adversely affect the water quality of the catchment. The Resort is located within the Upper Kiewa Special Water Supply Catchment Area, which is recognised under the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994. There is also a Special Water Supply Area downstream of the Resort and future resort planning and development needs to consider catchment management objectives.

Climate

Due to its altitude and location, the Resort is characterised by extreme weather conditions that can change quickly and dramatically. Uses and developments within the Resort need to recognise the influence of these climatic conditions, and be designed and located for the safety and protection of residents and visitors.

There is the potential for climatic change to influence snow depth levels in Victoria within the next 50 years.

Boundary Interfaces

It is important to ensure that an appropriate interface is provided between the Resort and the adjoining Alpine National Park. The impact of land uses, recreational activities and building works in proximity to the Resort boundary must be assessed to ensure that they are compatible with environmental values, and the Management Plan for the Alpine National Park.

Population

Falls Creek's permanent population has remained consistent recently whilst the Village is growing as a year round settlement. The current population is estimated at 80-100 residents. Consideration needs to be given to the appropriate level of facilities and services to meet the needs of the existing and future permanent population. There is a need to provide a range of accommodation that caters for the permanent residents and visitors to the Resort, and in particular ensuring that there is a variety of commercial accommodation available to visitors. In particular there is a need to provide civic and sporting facilities for residents and visitors to the Resort outside the snow season. Seasonal residents and visitors to the Resort vary throughout the year, with implications for servicing and managing impacts on the environment.

All Season Use

The Resorts primary visitation is experienced during the winter season, with key activities focused on snow based activities (downhill skiing, snowboarding, cross-country skiing and snow play).

The Resort is increasingly a focus for events and activities during summer. All season use of the Resort represents a more efficient and effective use of infrastructure. Consideration should be given to uses and developments that will function all year round. Active or passive recreation developments which add value to the year round use of the resort should be facilitated. Geo-tourism experiences (tourism that focuses on the natural features) should also be considered, that feature the region's alpine, social, environmental and heritage strengths.

Containment of Growth

There is potential for limited expansion of the Village within the boundary of the existing Alpine Village Comprehensive Development Zone. Future development areas outside the Comprehensive Development Zone will require significant justification with respect to environmental and infrastructure constraints of the Village. It is important to focus on consolidation of the Village within its existing boundaries to limit intrusion on the ski fields, ensure effective use of infrastructure, maximise accessibility to facilities, maintain a visually cohesive Village and limit environmental impact.

Built Form

Building design has a significant influence on the current and future character of the Resort and its attractiveness to visitors. It is important to ensure that the design, scale, height and materials of new development within both the public and private domain are sympathetic to the surrounding built form and natural setting of the Resort. The use of stone and colours from the natural alpine palette are essential in developing a design image for the Village and are to be encouraged.

Access to the Resort

Vehicular access to the Resort and broader Bogong High Plains is provided via the Bogong High Plains Road. This road becomes congested at times during the peak snow season and

effective management of vehicles is critical to the visitor experience. Siting and location of appropriate transport terminals, including bus and helicopter, are important considerations for visitor attraction, ease of movement and emergencies. Visitation to the Resort in the summer months may be improved by a sealed road from Bairnsdale to Mt Beauty.

Ski Field/Village Interface

The 'ski-in ski-out' feature of Falls Creek offers a unique competitive advantage over other resorts. Allocation of land for public use should aim to protect existing spaces for both skiing and congregation, and enable safe and efficient skier movement. Location, design and siting of developments should protect and promote vistas to the ski field and maintain and develop Village and skier networks.

Aboriginal Heritage

Aboriginal heritage material within and surrounding the Resort has undoubtedly been disturbed by the development of the Falls Creek Village and ski fields. Management of potential finds of heritage material is required under State and Commonwealth legislation. Future siting and design of development should ensure that historic places are preserved through appropriate management techniques.

Native Title

The Commonwealth Native Title Act 1993 is a legislative consideration for leasing matters and the use and development of land. Due consideration is required to be given to the notification requirements of the Native Title Act 1993 in association with the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

Car Parking

Ensuring appropriate provision is made at the Resort for both short-term and long-term car parking for visitors, residents and commercial operators is a major consideration for future development. The provision of car parking at the Resort needs to be carefully linked with intra-village transport to ensure ease of access and reduced congestion on the Bogong High Plains Road.

During the declared snow season vehicular parking needs to be catered for in defined car parking precincts to preserve the 'vehicle free' atmosphere of the village. Visitation to the resort comprises overnight visitors, day-trippers and commercial operators. The location, design and siting of the car parking precincts needs to consider the visitor's purpose and the tourist experience. During summer, considerable congestion is caused by on-street car parking within the narrow streets. Car parking and associated hard stand areas should not detrimentally affect the amenity of the site, adjoining sites, streetscape or the character of the Resort.

Infrastructure

Servicing the Resort with sewerage, water, electricity, gas and refuse disposal is essential to the Resort's ability to operate and may dictate the visitation and population capacity. Infrastructure constraints and opportunities need to be clearly identified to ensure future growth is adequately serviced. The design, siting and construction of infrastructure must ensure that environmental protection requirements are met and applications consider sound environmental practices.