

259 Watkins Rd
Wangi Wangi
NSW 2267
AUSTRALIA
[REDACTED]

Mayor and Council

Re: Rezoning Proposal RZ1157

My Partner [REDACTED] and I commenced skiing late in life and had our first ski adventure together in 2001 at Mount Perisher in Australia. We were later kindly invited by some Canadian friends who have a home in Whistler to come and try Whistler in 2003. Since then we have travelled to the Northern Hemisphere, without exception, every year to ski. This has included trips to Europe, US, Japan and other Canadian resorts, all of which are wonderful. But we have travelled to Whistler from our home in Australia nearly every year since our first visit in 2003. In some years we have visited Whistler more than once and on every occasion our visit has lasted at least a week and often 10 days or longer. We have also brought other family members with us on a number of occasions. In the case of [REDACTED] she has accompanied us 3 times and in the process achieved her CSIA Level 1 certification and subsequently returned to be employed by Whistler ski school for 2 years.

We are extremely disappointed that due to Covid travel restrictions we are not able to visit Whistler in the 2020/21 season, as we had a plan in progress to bring a total of 8 children, grandchildren and their partners for a special family holiday. Those plans are currently on hold but may still eventuate in 2022, if the world cooperates.

We first visited Whistler as very novice skiers and have long enjoyed what Whistler/Blackcomb has been able to offer: a first-class skiing experience.

The Natural beauty of the West coast of Canada is simply amazing with views and vistas that are so different to the Australian wilderness experience. Whistler gives us the opportunity to combine these natural wonders with our love of skiing in a town that offers a little bit of everything that one could ask for when on holiday and it is these things that bring us back year after year. The skiing in Whistler is great but not everyone wants to ski every day. Whistler offers other wilderness experiences that you can enjoy, or you can just enjoy the view. These are also the reasons that we encourage our skier and non-skier friends to include Whistler in their travel itineraries.

Over the years, however, we have noticed significant changes to Whistler and an ever-increasing scale of development. We are fortunate to have many friends in Whistler who have helped us to find attractive alternatives to the main village for our stays. Nita Lake Lodge has become our favourite place to stay over the past few years, where we always enjoy the wonderful outlook over lake and trees. Being able to enjoy the views across the lake on one of those non-skiing days, or indeed after skiing, is exquisite.

When we were in Whistler in February 2020, we were told of the proposed development on the west side of Nita Lake. This news was very disappointing and we found it difficult to believe that the municipality could even consider such destruction of this wonderful location. We have visited numerous European countries and in our travels it is our experience that forests and lakes are preserved for all to enjoy. Developers in Whistler, however, appear unconcerned with taking care of the lakes, vistas and green spaces that draw international tourists like ourselves. Nita Lake is very small and will be overwhelmed by over development. I cannot imagine that the development of the Western shore of Nita Lake could be anything short of disastrous for the environment of the lake and I believe that it will severely detract from the ambiance of the location.

If the proposed development were to proceed, and the vista from Nita Lake Lodge became one of cleared land and yet more townhouses, I seriously doubt that Nita Lake Lodge would hold the appeal to us that it currently does. If this environmental destruction were to eventuate, I have to think that we would be forced to consider other ski destinations, and I doubt that we will be alone. It would truly be a shame if Whistler ceased to be the wonderful place we fell in love with all those years ago.

As dedicated fans of Whistler, we urge you in the strongest terms to vote against the proposed rezoning and help preserve the character of Nita Lake.

Yours Sincerely,
Chris Owens