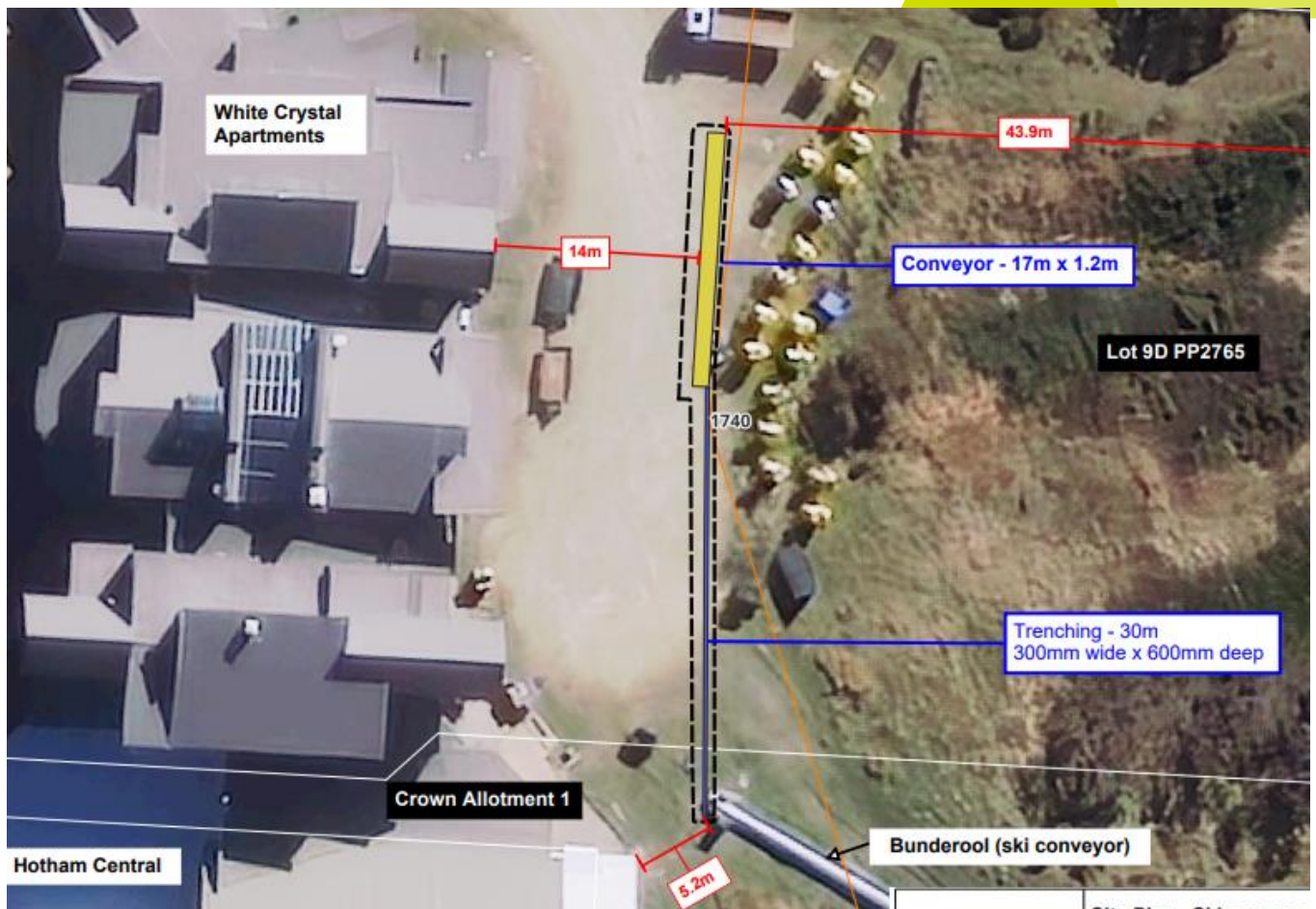


27 Great Alpine Road and part of Crown Allotment 1, Parish of Hotham, Hotham Heights



Officer Assessment Report Development Assessment

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Department
of Transport
and Planning

Executive Summary

Key information	Details		
Application No.:	PA2503626		
Received:	28 March 2025		
Statutory Days:	30 (as of 7 May 2025)		
Applicant:	Mount Hotham Skiing Company c/ - Sophie Ballinger		
Planning Scheme:	Alpine Resorts		
Land Address:	27 Great Alpine Road and part of Crown Allotment 1, Parish of Hotham, Hotham Heights		
Proposal:	Buildings and works for the installation of a ski conveyor lift and associated electrical trenching		
Development value:	\$15,250		
Why is the Minister responsible?	In accordance with the schedule to Clause 72.01 of the Alpine Resorts Planning Scheme (the Scheme), the Minister for Planning is the Responsible Authority for administering and enforcing the Alpine Resorts Planning Scheme.		
Why is a permit required?	Control	Clause	Trigger
Zone:	Comprehensive Development Zone Schedule 1 (CDZ)	Clause 37.02-4	Construct a building or construct or carry out works
Overlays:	Bushfire Management Overlay Schedule 1 (BMO)	Clause 44.06-2	Construct a building or construct or carry out works associated with 'Leisure and recreation'
Particular Provisions:	Native vegetation	Clause 52.17-1	Remove, destroy or lop native vegetation, including dead native vegetation
Cultural Heritage	The activity will be carried out by manual excavation and is therefore not considered a high impact activity under the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018. Therefore, as the activity will not cause significant ground disturbance, it does not trigger the preparation of a mandatory Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP).		
Referral authorities/Not	Alpine Resorts Victoria, Mount Hotham Alpine Resort (ARV) (s.55 – determining) Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) (s.55 – determining) AusNet Services (s.55 - determining) Country Fire Authority (CFA) (s.55 – determining) ARV (s.52 notice) Alpine Shire Council (s.52 notice).		
Public Notice	Notice of the application under section 52 of the Act was not required because it is exempt. (Refer to Advertising Memo signed 8 April 2025). It should also be noted that notice of the application was given to the Mt Hotham Alpine Resort and the Alpine Shire Council as required pursuant to Clause 8.0 of Schedules 1 to the CDZ.		
Delegates List	Approval to determine under delegation received on 6 May 2025 by Manager.		



1. The key milestones in the process of the application were as follows:

Milestone	Date
Application lodgement	28 March 2025
Further information requested	7 April 2025
Further information received	7 April 2025
Further plans submitted (formally under section 50 of the Act)	N/A
Further informally substituted sketch plans submitted (date)	N/A
Decision Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 'Conveyor installation site plan', prepared by S. Ballinger and dated 25 March 2025 (1 page)• 'Conveyor plan', prepared by S. Ballinger and dated 7 April 2025 (1 page)• 'Site Environmental Management Plan' (SEMP), prepared by Biosis, dated and signed 7 April 2025 (17 pages)• 'Cultural Heritage Letter of Advice', prepared by Biosis, dated 3 March 2023 (14 pages)• 'Town Planning Assessment Report', prepared by Vail Resorts, dated March 2025 (27 pages).

2. The subject of this report is the decision plans (as described above).

Subject Site and Surrounds

Site Description

3. The site is located within two parcels of land, namely to the rear of White Crystal Apartments, (27 Great Alpine Road) and the associated trenching is partly located within Crown Allotments 1, Parish of Hotham, within the Hotham Central area, within the Mount Hotham Alpine Resort. (Refer to Figure 1).
4. White Crystal Apartments is an existing multi use building. The site is also adjacent to the Bunderool ski conveyor which was installed in 2024.
5. The proposed development area is within the Mount Hotham Ski Field Lease, granted in favour of the applicant, Mount Hotham Skiing Company Pty Ltd (MHSC). The lessor is Alpine Resorts Victoria (ARV), who leases the land under their powers vested by the Alpine Resorts (Management) Act 1998.
6. The ski conveyor lift and most of the associated service trenching will be located within 27 Great Alpine Road, with approximately 4.6 metres of associated electrical trenching extending into Crown Allotment 1, Parish of Hotham.
7. The development site is a linear section encompassing the 17m ski conveyor and 30 metres of trenching to provide power from the existing Bunderool Ski Conveyor (located on Crown Allotment 1). The development site inclusive of a construction buffer encompasses 90 sqm of land within these two allotments.
8. Downslope to the east of the subject site is the majority of the Mt Hotham ski resort ski areas.

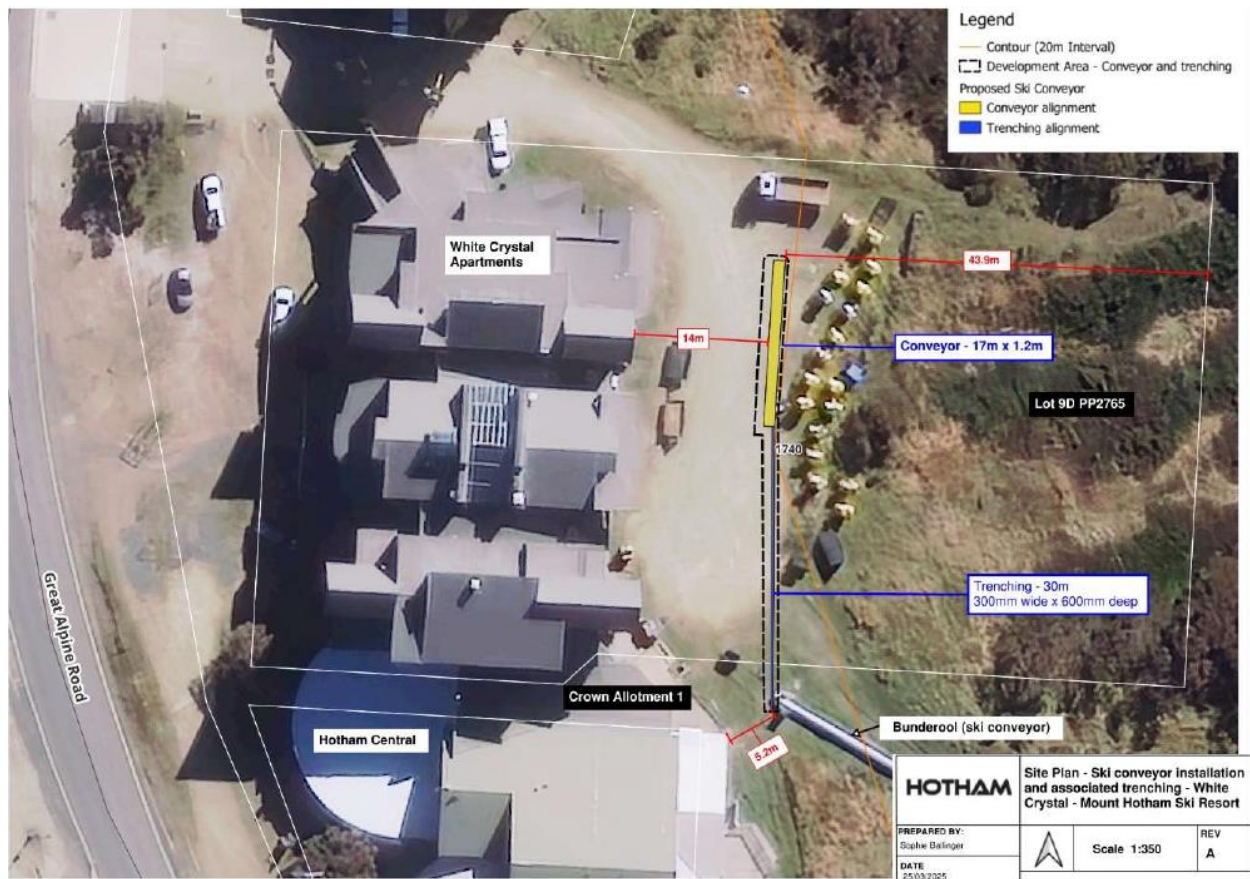


Figure 1: Site plan/aerial (Source: Application)

Site Surrounds

9. The surrounding development consists mainly of buildings used for commercial and accommodation purposes and open ski fields and associated infrastructure.
10. Development surrounding the site can be described as follows:

27 Great Alpine Road and part of Crown Allotment 1, Parish of Hotham, Hotham Heights



- To the **north** of the site: open ski fields
- To the **south** of the site: open ski fields
- To the **east** of the site: open ski fields
- To the **west** of the site: White Crystal Apartments (retail and accommodation).

11. The proposal can be summarised as follows:
 - Buildings and works for the purpose of a 'ski conveyor lift' (also known as a people transporter or magic carpet) and associated electrical trenching.
 - The ski conveyor lift is intended to be used for children ski lessons.
12. Specific details of the application (referred to as 'the Project') include:
 - The installation of a ski conveyor lift that comprises 17m long and 1.5m wide and sits approximately 750mm above ground level.
 - The ski conveyor lift exists in the Big D area of the Mt Hotham ski resort (refer to Figure 2) and will be relocated to the proposed location behind White Crystal Apartments.
 - Construction of a trench (approximately 600mm deep by 300mm wide by 30m long for installation of a power supply between the proposed ski conveyor and the Bunderool ski conveyor located 30m away.
 - The ski conveyor lift will be setback a minimum 14m from the closest existing building (White Crystal Apartments).
 - No vegetation removal is required or proposed.



Figure 2: Existing ski conveyor in its existing Big D area (before it is relocated) (Source: Application)



Planning Policy Framework

16. The Planning Policy Framework (PPF) provides the broad policy direction within the Victoria Planning Provisions. The planning principles set out under the PPF are to be used to guide decision making on planning proposals across the state.
17. The following policies are considered relevant to this application:

Clause no.	Description
02.01	Context
02.02	Vision
02.03-2	Environmental and landscape values
02.03-3	Environmental risks and amenity
02.03-4	Natural resource management
02.03-5	Built environment and heritage
02.03-6	Economic development
02.03-8	Infrastructure
02.04	Strategic framework plans
12.01-1S	Protection of biodiversity
12.01-2S	Native vegetation management
12.04-1S	Sustainable development in alpine areas
13.02-1S	Bushfire planning
13.04-2S	Erosion and landslip
14.02-1S	Catchment planning and management
15.03-2S	Aboriginal cultural heritage
17.04-1S	Facilitating tourism

Local Planning Policy Framework

18. The Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) and Local Planning Policy Framework (LPPF) within Planning Schemes across Victoria outline principal characteristics of a given municipality (municipal profile) and provide specific visions, goals, objectives, strategies and implementation plans.
19. The MSS within the Alpine Resorts Planning Scheme identifies the objectives and strategies for the Mount Hotham alpine resort.
20. The following clauses are relevant:

Clause no.	Description
12.01-1L	Protection of biodiversity in alpine resorts
12.04-1L	Sustainable development – alpine resorts
12.04-1L	Sustainable development – Mt Hotham Alpine Resort
13.04-2L	Erosion and landslip in alpine resorts
17.04-1L	Alpine tourism

13. The Assessment section of this report provides a detailed assessment of the relevant planning policies (as relevant to the proposal and key considerations)

Statutory Planning Controls

Clause 37.02 – Comprehensive Development Zone, Schedule 1 (CDZ1)

21. The land is affected by the CDZ1. (Refer to Figure 3).
22. The relevant purpose of the CDZ1 is to encourage development and the year-round use of the land for a commercially oriented, alpine resort.
23. A planning permit is not required for the use of the land for 'leisure and recreation'.
24. A planning permit is triggered to construct a building or construct or carry out works pursuant to the CDZ1.
25. The CDZ1 includes application requirements and decision guidelines for consideration of the site's context, including a Site Environmental Management Plan (SEMP). The following sections include discussion of how the Project responds to these requirements.



Figure 3: Planning zones (Source: Application)

Clause 44.06 – Bushfire Management Overlay, Schedule 1 (BMO1)

26. A planning permit is required to construct a building or construct or carry out works associated with 'leisure and recreation', pursuant to the BMO1.
27. The relevant purposes of the BMO include:
 - To ensure that the development of land prioritises the protection of human life and strengthens community resilience to bushfire.
 - To identify areas where the bushfire hazard warrants bushfire protection measures to be implemented.
 - To ensure development is only permitted where the risk to life and property from bushfire can be reduced to an acceptable level.
28. Clause 44.06-3 specifies that an application under the BMO must be accompanied by:
 - A bushfire hazard site assessment
 - A bushfire hazard landscape assessment

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- A bushfire management statement.
29. The clause states that if these requirements are not deemed relevant to the assessment of an application, the responsible authority may waive, vary or reduce the requirement.

Particular provisions

30. None applicable.



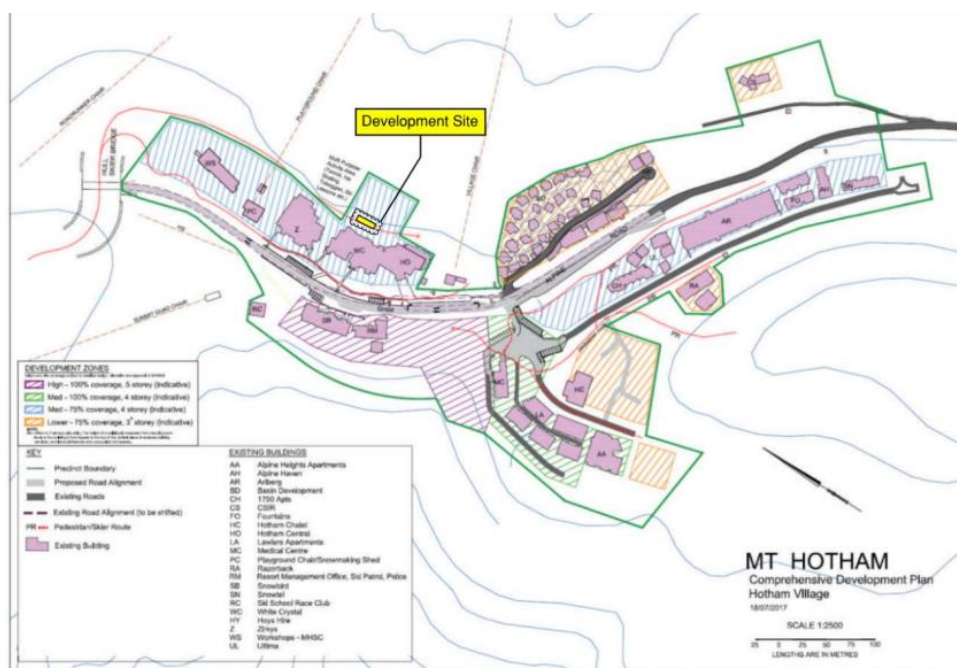
Referrals

31. The application was referred to the following groups:

Provision/ Clause	Organisation	Response Received (date)
<i>Section 55 Referral- Determining (Clause 7 of Schedule 1 to the CDZ (37.02) for 'any use or development which requires connection to reticulated services')</i>	Alpine Resorts Victoria (ARV)	<u>6 May 2025</u> No objection and no conditions.
<i>Section 55 Referral- Determining (Clause 7 of Schedule 1 to the CDZ (37.02) for 'any use or development that involves alteration to the topography including native vegetation removal')</i>	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA)	<u>29 April 2025</u> No objection and no conditions.
<i>Section 55 Referral- Determining (Clause 44.06-6 (BMO) for 'an application under the overlay other than an application to construct a building or carry out works associated with a dwelling or an application to subdivide land'.)</i>	Country Fire Authority (CFA)	<u>24 April 2023</u> No objection and no conditions. Agreed to waive requirements.
<i>Section 55 Referral- Determining (Clause 7 of Schedule 1 to the CDZ (37.02) for 'any use or development which requires connection to reticulated services')</i>	AusNet Services	<u>10 April 2025</u> No objection and inclusion of one note.

Notice

32. The application is exempt from the notice requirements of section 52(1)(a), (b) and (d), the decision requirements of section 64(1), (2) and (3) and the review rights of section 82(1) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* pursuant to the following provisions:
- Clause 44.06-7 (BMO)
33. Pursuant to Clause 4.2 of Schedule 1 to the Comprehensive Development Zone, 'an application to construct a building or construct or carry out works (including the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation) which is consistent with a comprehensive development plan incorporated into this scheme, is exempt from the notice requirements of section 52(1)(a), (b) and (d), the decision requirements of section 64(1), (2) and (3) and the appeal rights of section 82(1) of the Act'. (Refers to the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (the Act)).
34. The 'Hotham Village – Mt Hotham – Comprehensive Development Plan 1 (July 2017)' (referred to as CDP1) is an incorporated document that is incorporated into the Scheme and is therefore relevant. The location of the proposed development in relation to the CDP1 is included in Figure 4.



Location of Development - Mt Hotham Comprehensive Development Plan - Hotham Village

Figure 4: Location of proposed ski conveyor lift in relation to the CDP1

35. A complete assessment against the relevant 'mandatory parameters' of the CDP1 was undertaken as part of the 'Advertising Memo' and it was concluded that the proposed development is consistent with the relevant comprehensive development plan incorporated into the scheme.
36. Notice was however given to the 'relevant adjoining Municipal Council' (Alpine Shire Council) and to the 'relevant Resort Management Board' (ARV) under section 52(1)(c) pursuant to Clause 8.0 of Schedule 1 of the CDZ.
37. No objections have been received.

Planning Policy

Consistency with State and Local Planning Policies

38. Broadly, the planning policies relevant to this proposal encourage the sustainable use and development of the Alpine areas for year-round use and activity, encourage tourism development, seek to protect areas prone to erosion and landslip and environmentally sensitive areas, and ensure that development respects the Alpine character.
39. The specific policies relevant to Mount Hotham that apply, and a response to them, is provided as follows:
- To assist the protection and conservation of Victoria's biodiversity (Clause 12.01-1S)
 - Avoid impacts of land use and development on important areas of biodiversity (Clause 12.01-1S)
 - To ensure that there is no net loss to biodiversity as a result of the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation (Clause 12.01-2S)
 - To preserve and enhance the habitat of threatened species and communities within the alpine resorts (Clause 12.01-1L)
 - To facilitate sustainable use and development of Alpine areas for year-round use and activity (Clause 12.04-1S)
 - Ensure passive and active recreational activities are in balance with the conservation and protection of the natural environment within and adjacent to the resorts (Clause 12.04-1L)
 - To strengthen the resilience of settlements and communities to bushfire through risk-based planning that prioritises the protection of human life (Clause 13.02-1S)
 - To protect areas prone to erosion, landslip or other land degradation processes (Clause 13.04-2S)
 - To ensure that geotechnical hazards are managed throughout the resorts so as to minimise risk to property and persons (Clause 13.04-2L)
 - To assist the protection and restoration of catchments, waterways, estuaries, bays, water bodies, groundwater, and the marine environment (Clause 14.02-1S)
 - To ensure the protection and conservation of places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance (Clause 15.03-2S)
 - To encourage tourism development to maximise the economic, social and cultural benefits of developing the state as a competitive domestic and international tourist destination (Clause 17.04-1S)
 - To provide for year-round recreation, having regard to environmental, social, ecological, economic, aesthetic and safety considerations (Clause 17.04-1L)
 - To encourage a broad range of commercial activities and recreational facilities at multi-purpose venues (Clause 17.04-1L).
40. The Project is consistent with the relevant policies. The Project will contribute to the sustainable development of Mount Hotham by creating an activity that will promote tourism during the snow season. The Project is part of the Mount Hotham Skiing Company's ongoing works to continually increase ski-field safety and function, and the ski conveyor lift will enhance the children's ski facilities and improve teaching terrain.
41. The Project footprint has been designed to ensure the potential adverse impacts to the environment have been avoided by avoiding the need to remove vegetation whilst providing safety and function for ski field users. The proposed location sits outside the area affected by the Erosion Management Overlay, therefore the requirement for a geotechnical assessment is not required, confirming geotechnical risks are not of concern.
42. The Project will not increase the risk to life or property from bushfire. The ski field area already exists and is utilised largely in the winter season when bushfire risk is low.
43. The Project will be completed using hand excavation and avoidance measures which have been integrated into the SEMP, to ensure that no disturbance to Aboriginal Cultural Heritage occurs.

Zoning and Land Use

Comprehensive Development Zone, Schedule 1 (CDZ1)

42. The relevant purpose of the CDZ1 is to encourage development and the year-round use of land for a commercially orientated, alpine resort.
43. A planning permit is triggered for buildings and works pursuant to CDZ1.
44. The Project is consistent with the purposes of Schedule 1 to the CDZ. The ski conveyor lift is proposed in a highly modified area of the Resort and will have minimal or no impact on significant landscapes, significant vegetation or indigenous fauna habitat.
45. The site is within an existing ski area and the proposed ski conveyor lift will utilise an area to the rear of the mixed use commercial and accommodation building. The location due to the nature of the landscape allows the development to limit its impacts on the environment. The development requires only minor excavation to facilitate utilities connection with no excavation required to install the conveyor. The ski conveyor lift is currently in use in another area of the resort (Big D) and in order to reimagine the guest offering, it will be re-used in another location, making it sustainable. The development has little to no visual impact as it is a ground-based ski lift with no additional buildings or structures required for its operation.
46. In accordance with the permit application requirements, a SEMP has been provided, consistent with the requirements of Clause 4.3-3 of Schedule 1 to the CDZ. DEECA have reviewed the SEMP and did not raise any issues or require any modifications be made.

Bushfire

47. The application was referred to the CFA as a statutory referral authority. The CFA support the waiving of the BMO requirements of Clause 44.06 given the type of proposal. Waiving the requirements is considered reasonable in this instance given the ski conveyor lift is proposed in an area already used for recreational purposes and it will only be utilised in the snow season when bushfire risk is at its lowest. The ski conveyor lift cannot be constructed to a BAL as it is not a habitable space.
47. Furthermore, the proposed works will not detrimentally impact the resilience of the existing buildings immediately south/west of the site and it is not considered that there will be a net increase in risk from bushfire.
48. However, the mandatory condition as per Clause 44.06-5 of the Scheme will be included in any permit issued.

Cultural Heritage

49. A cultural heritage letter of advice (LOA) and place inspection was completed by Biosis in February 2023. The LOA confirms that a mandatory cultural heritage management plan (CHMP) is not required because the activity will be carried out by manual excavation and as such it is not considered a high impact activity under the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018.

Environmental Considerations

Native vegetation and ecological value

50. The location of the proposed development including associated electrical trenching will not result in any vegetation removal, thus assists with the protection and conservation of Victoria's biodiversity.

Referral Authority Conditions

52. The ARV, as a statutory, section 55 referral authority, did not require any conditions.
53. DEECA, as a statutory, section 55 referral authority did not require any conditions.
54. The CFA as a statutory, section 55 referral authority supported the waiving of the BMO requirements and did not include any conditions.
55. AusNet Services, as a statutory, section 55 referral authority, requested one note be included alerting to a 'Dial Before You Dig' process being undertaken before construction commences.

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Conclusion



Recommendation

56. It is recommended that a Delegate of the Minister for Planning issue Planning Permit No. PA2503626 for *Buildings and works for the installation of a ski conveyor lift and associated electrical trenching* at 27 Great Alpine Road and part of Crown Allotment 1, Parish of Hotham, Hotham Heights, subject to conditions.

Conclusion

57. The proposed buildings and works is generally consistent with the relevant planning policies of the Alpine Resorts Planning Scheme.
58. The Project is supported by all referral authorities.
59. It is recommended that the applicant be notified of the above in writing.

Prepared and approved by:

I have considered whether there is a conflict of interest in assessing this application and I have determined that I have:

- ☐ **No Conflict**
- ☐ Conflict and have therefore undertaken the following actions:
- ☐ Completed the **Statutory Planning Services declaration of Conflict/Interest form**.
 - ☐ Attached the Statutory Planning Services declaration of Conflict/Interest form on to the hardcopy file.
 - ☐ Attached the Statutory Planning Services declaration of Conflict/Interest form into the relevant electronic workspace.

Name:

Title:

Signed:

Phone:

Dated: 7 May 2025

Reviewed by:

I have considered whether there is a conflict of interest in assessing this application and I have determined that I have:

- ☒ **No Conflict**
- ☐ Conflict and have therefore undertaken the following actions:
- ☐ Completed the **Statutory Planning Services declaration of Conflict/Interest form**.
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Name:

Title:

Signed:

Phone:

Dated: 7/05/2025