



## **STATEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS**

### **PROJECT: Removal of the Ridge Quad Chairlift midstation infrastructure, Blue Cow**

**Background:** The Ridge Quad Chairlift was constructed on the Excelerator Ski Run at Blue Cow Resort Area in 1986 (Figures 1 and 2). Following this, in 1991 a midstation was added to the original chair design to allow use of the lower half of the slope (Showboat ski run) when low snow cover and a lack of snowmaking did not enable skiing on the upper section of Excelerator. Since the installation of snowmaking on the Excelerator ski run in 2004, the midstation has proven to be redundant, and the infrastructure is no longer required on the ski slope.

**Project Description:** The Ridge Quad Chairlift midstation consists of the following infrastructure:

- Chairlift tower (Tower 6A) and concrete footing (approx. 2m wide x 3m long);
- Chairlift operator's hut; and
- Steel unload platform, posts and footings.

The infrastructure will initially be dismantled by hand where possible, with a crane and excavator to be brought to site for removal of the larger components. Machinery to be used will include:

- 16 tonne crane;
- 14 tonne excavator (with hammer);
- 6WD truck; and
- 4WD passenger vehicles & quad bikes.

The concrete tower footing will be reduced to ground level using the hydraulic hammer on the excavator. The concrete will be loaded into the back of a truck and removed from site. The footing site will be spread with a layer of soil (from the Smiggin Holes stockpile site) to match the profile of the surrounding slope, and will be seeded and spread with a layer of hay mulch.

Access to the site will be from an existing access track from the bottom of Zalis ski run, across an area known as Easy Way Out.

**Objectives:** To remove the Ridge Quad Chairlift midstation; in order to:

- remove the need for maintenance and upkeep of this infrastructure, which has proved redundant;
- improve visual aspects of the Excelerator ski run by removing unnecessary infrastructure;
- improve public safety, by removing redundant infrastructure which currently acts as an obstacle to skiers and snowboarders; and
- improve skier experience by enabling access to the top of Showboat ski run, through the site currently occupied by the midstation.

**Site Environmental Management:** The removal of the Ridge Quad Chairlift midstation infrastructure will be undertaken with the following proposed environmental safeguards, to minimise or avoid potential adverse impacts of the proposal:

- Access routes and staging areas will be fenced prior to works to avoid impacts to native heath vegetation;
- Access and staging areas will be on previously disturbed and / or grassed areas;
- Materials from the midstation will be reused where possible, including the operator's hut, which will be retained for use within the Resort. Recyclable materials will be separated for recycling, eg. steel. All materials unsuitable for reuse will be taken to Jindabyne Landfill for disposal;
- Erosion controls such as hay bales to be placed downslope of disturbed ground until stabilised;
- Disturbed areas will be seeded with a mix of *Poa fawcettiae* and Chewings fescue (50/50) and spread with a layer of hay mulch following works to promote rapid stabilisation of the slope.

**Reversibility:** The removal of the midstation could be readily reversed, with the reconstruction of the infrastructure. This is an unlikely requirement, however, given the operation of the site having proven proving that the midstation is no longer necessary for operation of the lift and ski run.

**Alternatives:** An alternative to the proposal is to leave the midstation in place. The midstation has been in place and used only once since snowmaking was installed in 2004, and it is deemed appropriate that the infrastructure be removed to achieve the objectives outlined in this report. Partial removal of the midstation is not a viable option, as this would render the midstation unusable, while leaving obstacles on the ski run.

**Issues relating to the Project**

<b>History of the site</b>
The Ridge Quad Chairlift was constructed in 1986. A midstation was added to the original design, to allow skiing of the lower half of the slope (Showboat ski run) in times when low snow cover and a lack of snowmaking did not enable skiing on the upper section of Excelerator. Snowmaking was installed on the Excelerator ski slope in 2004 which removed the concern over low snow cover, and rendered the midstation redundant. The midstation has been used only once since this snowmaking was installed.
<b>Site suitability</b>
The original Ridge Quad Chairlift design did not incorporate a midstation, however no modifications to the overall chairlift design were needed to include the midstation infrastructure. Similarly, no modifications to the overall chairlift operation or design will be needed for removal of the midstation.
The removal of the infrastructure will reduce obstacles from a 'Blue' rated ski run, which already experiences high levels of incidents each year. It will also open access to the top of Showboat ski run.
<b>Present and previous uses</b>
For current and previous uses, see above, "History of the Site".
<b>Operational details</b>
Perisher's Lifts Manager has inspected the site and confirmed that removal of the midstation will not impact on the safety or operation of the chairlift.
The midstation will be dismantled and removed, as described in this SEE, section "Project Description".
<b>Building classification and Building Code of Australia (BCA)</b>
N/A
<b>Change of use of a building (where there is no building work)</b>
N/A
<b>Wind classification and snow loading</b>
Perisher's Lifts Manager has inspected the site and confirmed that removal of the midstation will not impact on the safety or operation of the chairlift.
<b>Engineering details</b>
Perisher's Lifts Manager has inspected the site and confirmed that removal of the midstation will not impact on the safety or operation of the chairlift.
<b>Social and economic impact</b>
The removal of the midstation infrastructure will result in the following positive impacts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improving public safety, by removing obstacle to skiers and snowboarders;</li> <li>• improve visual aspects of the Excelerator Ski Run slope;</li> <li>• removing the need for maintenance and upkeep of this infrastructure, which has proved redundant; and</li> <li>• improving skier experience by enabling access to the top of Showboat ski run.</li> </ul>
<b>Access and traffic</b>
The site will be accessed via the existing access track from the base of Zali's Ski Run, across the area known as Easy Way Out. Vehicles required to access the site are outlined in the Project Description above.
No further impacts on access or traffic will result following removal of the midstation.
<b>Privacy, views and overshadowing</b>
No impacts on privacy or overshadowing will result from the proposal. Views of the Excelerator ski run will be improved through the removal of redundant infrastructure.

<b>Air and noise</b>
Short-term construction air and noise impacts may result during removal of the midstation. These will be managed as described in the Environmental Safeguards section of this SEE.
There will be no long-term impacts on air and noise resulting from this proposal.
<b>Soil, water and wastewater management</b>
Short-term construction soil impacts may result during removal of the midstation. These will be managed as described in the Environmental Safeguards section of this SEE.
There will be no long-term impacts on soil, water and wastewater resulting from this proposal.
<b>Heritage</b>
There will be no impacts on heritage resulting from the proposal.
<b>Aboriginal cultural heritage</b>
There will be no impacts on Aboriginal cultural heritage resulting from the proposal.
<b>Energy</b>
There will be no impacts on Energy resulting from the proposal.
<b>Waste</b>
Materials from the midstation will be reused wherever possible, including the operator's hut, which will be retained for use within the Resort. Recyclable materials will be separated for recycling, eg. steel. All materials unsuitable for reuse will be taken to Jindabyne Landfill for disposal.
<b>Demolition</b>
The midstation will be dismantled to ensure no impact to the existing lift infrastructure, or destabilisation of the surrounding slope. No blasting is proposed.
<b>Threatened species</b>
There will be no impacts on Threatened species resulting from the proposal.
<b>SEPP (Kosciuszko National Park – Alpine Resorts) 2007</b>
The proposal meets the aims and objectives of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Kosciuszko National Park—Alpine Resorts) 2007.

**Attached maps, plans and reports that assist in describing the activity:**

- **Photo 1 – Ridge Quad Chairlift midstation, view looking downslope**
- **Figure 1 – Site Locality Plan**
- **Figure 2 – Site Plan / Site Environmental Management Plan**



*Photo 1 – Ridge Quad Chairlift midstation, view looking downslope*



Figure 1 - Site Locality Plan





Figure 2 - Site Plan / Site Environmental Management Plan

