

The Environment Court has denied Queenstown Airport Corporation (QAC) permission to rezone land, according to an interim decision released last week.

QAC has issued a notice of requirement to alter land owned by Remarkables Park Ltd (RPL) to extend its aerodrome by 18.4ha.

Judge Jane Borthwick and commissioners Ross Dunlop and David Bunting have denied the airport's proposal for a parallel taxiway, which would allow the introduction of aircraft not used at the airport at present.

The taxiway would have covered only part of the 18.4ha and the airport would now file submissions requested by the court on how much of the land they would now seek.

The court decision comes after the July hearing when both Air New Zealand and RPL filed a submission to the court opposing QAC's Notice of Requirement.

Air New Zealand's reason for concern was the proposed taxiway had "no foundation", there had been inadequate consideration of alternatives, including off airport sites, the taxiway's cost and they claimed there was already sufficient land available with QAC's existing designation to accommodate the relocation of the helicopters and general aviation.

QLDC in a non-regulatory capacity had supported the airport's proposal.

The land at stake is zoned as Remarkables Park Activity Area 8 and is used for grazing.

The remainder of the 18.4ha that is subject to the QAC's proposal would be used by helicopters, general aviation, private and corporate jets.

The final decision would be important to the airport as well as the surrounding land developers, because it would determine the final location of the air noise boundary, subject to Plan Change 35 (PC35).

QAC's submission on the court's interim decision of PC35 is due on October 12 and the airport's chief executive, Scott Paterson, said yesterday they had sought a three-week extension for its submission to last week's interim decision.

"We are still working through the various court requests and will be submitting a number of points."

The airport asked for a three-week extension yesterday.

Mr Paterson said the airport sought the Code D parallel taxi in order to "future proof" the airport for new aircraft.

The airport at present caters for A320s and 737 type aircraft.

A final decision on PC35 is to be released in conjunction with this decision.