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LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

QLDC Rural Visitor Zone Review

Landscape assessment



May 2019

Prepared for
Queenstown Lakes District Council

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1 Introduction

1.1 QLDC Rural Visitor Zone review

Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) are reviewing the Operative District Plan (ODP) Rural Visitor (RV) Zones at Windermere, Cardrona, Arthurs Point, Cecil Peak, Walter Peak, Blanket Bay and Arcadia. The RV Zones will be brought into the PDP and notified alongside other Stage 3 topics in the third quarter of 2019.

QLDC have commissioned a landscape assessment to help better understand the appropriateness of the existing RV zones and their ability to absorb development from a landscape perspective. The assessment is also to provide advice on whether the ODP RV zone provisions are appropriate from a landscape perspective.

1.2 Background

The 2010 Rural Visitor Zone Monitoring Report prepared by QLDC states that the Rural Visitor Zones established in 1995 as part of the ODP were intended to fulfil the following criteria:

- (i) there are tourist activities to provide a focal point for the zone*
- (ii) accommodation is provided for both residents and visitors*
- (iii) the land within the zone is in single ownership, providing for coordinated and structured development*
- (iv) the sites are self-sufficient in the provision of services*
- (v) the sites are separated from areas zoned for urban purposes*
- (vi) there is a clear actual, or intended, concept for their development*
- (vii) the scale of development is significant, being greater than that which would be reasonably expected to occur within areas zoned for rural or rural-residential purposes, but insufficient to justify a residential or other such urban zoning*
- (viii) The site was zoned for tourist purposes in the Transitional District Plan.*

However some decisions were made to provide for the RV Zone in ODP when not all of the above criteria were met. This was largely in response to submissions seeking RV zoning or expansion of proposed RV zones.

The monitoring report also states that *'the zone is considered ineffective in achieving many of the overarching objectives in parts 4 and 5 of the District Plan relating to landscape protection, especially where the sites fall within outstanding natural landscapes (this matter has not been conclusively determined for some sites).'*

Initial work on a review of the RV zones was initiated in 2010 and an assessment of the landscape absorption capacity of some of the zones (Windemeer, Blanket Bay, Arthurs Point and Arcadia) was undertaken by Dr Marion Read in April 2013.

1.3 Scope

Helen Mellsoy Landscape Architect has been engaged by QLDC to provide a landscape assessment of existing ODP RV zones, with a specific focus on the capacity of the zones to absorb visitor facility development while protecting or maintaining the values of the rural landscapes in which they sit. The assessment includes the following components:

- A high level appraisal of whether the ODP RV Zone provisions are appropriate from a landscape perspective;
- Description of the attributes and character of the wider receiving landscape for each RV Zone, followed by evaluation of the landscape values and landscape categorisation in terms of the QLDC Stage 1 Decisions Version PDP categories;
- Description of the attributes and character of the ODP RV Zone area and any proposed or potential extensions to the zone area;
- Evaluation of the landscape and visual sensitivity and absorption capacity of the wider receiving landscape and of the RV Zone area;
- Recommendations on whether visitor facility development could be appropriate subject to controls (eg. building height, coverage, landscaping) and where this development would be appropriate.

The landscape assessment has been undertaken within the context of the strategic policy framework of Chapters 3 and 6 of the QLDC Decisions Version PDP. Among other functions, these chapters set out a strategic approach to the management of landscapes within the District. It is acknowledged that many of the objectives and policies in these chapters are currently under appeal.

The scope of the assessment has not included consultation with stakeholders or the wider community, although the outcomes of previous community planning studies (eg. 2003 Cardrona Community Plan) have been taken into account.

1.4 Methodology

This assessment has been carried out in accordance with the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects (NZILA) Best Practice Note 10.1 Landscape Assessment and Sustainable Management (2/11/2010). The assessment process has comprised the following steps:

- (a) Identification of the area of landscape under consideration;
- (b) Description of the landscape attributes, including biophysical elements, patterns and processes, sensory/perceptual qualities, and associative attributes (refer list of attributes in **Appendix A**). Attributes were determined on the basis of expert landscape assessment and publicly available information about geological, ecological, archaeological and cultural aspects;

- (c) Evaluation of the landscape values, described on a qualitative scale (very low, low, low-moderate, moderate, moderate-high, high, very high). Landscape values were determined on the basis of expert landscape interpretation, taking into account publicly available information about community and visitor landscape values;
- (d) Landscape categorisation in terms of the QLDC Stage 1 Decisions Version PDP categories;
- (e) Description of the RV zone landscape attributes and character;
- (f) Evaluation of the landscape sensitivity of the RV zone area (the degree to which the character and values of a particular landscape are susceptible to the scale of external change) and landscape capacity of the RV zone area (the amount of change the landscape can accommodate without substantially altering or compromising existing character and values).

2 ODP RV Zone provisions

2.1 Activity status

Under the ODP RV Zone rules, commercial and retail activities have discretionary status but most anticipated activities within the zone have controlled activity status:

- Structure Plans;
- Parking, loading and access;
- Buildings;
- Landscaping;
- Commercial Recreation Activities; and
- Visitor Accommodation.

Somewhat surprisingly, farming activities are a non-complying activity. Many of the zones are currently farmed or combine farming with visitor facilities (eg. Walter Peak RV Zone).

The matters of control for structure plans and buildings are appropriate from a landscape perspective, as they include development location, density, external appearance, earthworks, access and landscaping. It is clear that the extent of control for buildings is intended to avoid or mitigate adverse effects on landscape and visual amenity values. However the controlled activity status means that QLDC has no ability to decline applications and limited ability to modify the location, density or design of development proposals to achieve the desired landscape outcomes. In addition there are no clear outcomes specified for structure plans and no assessment matters for such plans.

Without restricted discretionary or discretionary activity status for anticipated activities in the RV Zones, it is difficult to enforce changes to development applications that otherwise meet the Site and Zone Standards for the zone. This has led to potentially poor landscape outcomes in some instances (eg. the approved structure plan for Arcadia RV Zone¹, which spreads residential and visitor accommodation development across much of the zone).

2.2 Standards

Site Standards for the zone include minimum setback distances from all boundaries of 10 metres for residential accommodation and 20 metres for visitor accommodation. From a landscape perspective these setbacks are appropriate in situations where the setback would help to maintain the rural character and visual amenity experienced from public roads and minimise adverse effects on the visual and rural amenities of adjacent land. However in other situations where there are numerous individual lots within the RV Zone (eg. Arthurs Point and

¹ RM110010.

Cardrona RV Zones), this standard could lead to poor urban design outcomes, in terms of the arrangement of built form and the relationship between buildings and adjacent streets.

Building height within the zone is restricted by a Zone Standard, with a 12-metre maximum for visitor accommodation, an 8-metre maximum for commercial, recreation and residential activities, and a 7-metre maximum for other buildings and structures. The 12-metre limit for visitor accommodation has the potential to result in significant adverse effects on landscape character and values in most of the RV Zones. Combined with a lack of standards for site coverage, it could result in bulky, visually dominant development that would detract from the naturalness and aesthetic values of the landscapes in which the zones are set.

The 8-metre maximum height for commercial, recreation and residential buildings is consistent with that for buildings in the PDP Rural Zone. From a landscape perspective there are locations within the zones where two-storey buildings could be visually dominating, detracting from visual amenity and landscape values (particularly naturalness) or would be more difficult to integrate or screen with landscaping. In some situations two-storey buildings could also detract from the landscape setting of heritage buildings within the zones.

The lack of any standard for site coverage in the RV Zone is a significant landscape issue, as it potentially allows very dense built development across the entire zone area (apart from the boundary setbacks). Given the location of almost all the RV Zones within ONL and the relatively large site area for these zones (except Cecil Peak RV Zone), the ODP provisions could allow significant nodes of dense urban-style development within these highly valued landscapes. This would not achieve the landscape-related objectives and policies in Chapters 3 and 6 of the PDP, particularly Strategic Objective 3.2.5 – The retention of the District’s distinctive landscapes.

2.3 Assessment matters

The ODP assessment matters relevant to landscape issues² relate to pedestrian activity, loss of privacy, opportunities for enjoyment of peace and tranquillity, external appearance of buildings and landscaping to mitigate visual effects. While the adverse effects of buildings and associated earthworks, access, parking and landscaping are mentioned, the relevant assessment matter does not specify what kind of adverse effect is to be considered or what the desired environmental outcomes are. As a consequence the assessment matters do not provide a clear process for determining whether adverse effects on landscape and visual amenity values or the natural character of the rural environment have been avoided or mitigated.

The external cladding materials specified in the assessment matters³ are limited in range and have not been complied with for many developments within the RV Zone. Similarly the requirement for a unified design theme based on a pitched roof of 20 degrees has not generally been implemented, particularly where there are a number of individual lots within

² ODP Assessment Matter 12.5.2 (vi).

³ ODP Assessment Matter 12.5.2 (ix).

a zone. The suggested predominant external colours for buildings include cream, a highly reflective colour, as well as greens, greys, browns and earth tones. It is likely that this light colour was included so that new buildings could be consistent with historic buildings within the Walter Peak and Cardrona RV zones. However it has meant that there is potential for light-coloured prominent buildings within the context ONLs. This is inconsistent with the requirement for recessive external building materials in Rural Zone.

The assessment matters for controlled activity landscaping require consideration of whether there is a need for planting mitigation but they do not address the type of landscaping and whether it would be consistent with the predominant vegetation patterns within the landscape. They therefore create the potential for landscaping that detracts from the rural character or naturalness of the surrounding landscape.

Finally, there are no assessment criteria for controlled activity structure plans amongst the ODP provisions. This means that there is no guidance as to the appropriate landscape outcomes of a structure plan or how such a plan might achieve the objective and policies for the zone, particularly Policy 12.3.4 (1) - ensuring development has regard to the landscape values of the surrounding rural area.

3 Landscape Assessment

3.1 Arcadia RV Zone

The Arcadia RV Zone is an area of about 85 hectares located on the northern side of Diamond Lake between Mount Alfred and Mount Earnslaw (refer **Figure 1** below). It is approximately 15 kilometres north of Glenorchy township and is accessed via a dead end gravel road that meets the end of the Dart-Rees track on the Dart River.



Figure 1: Location of Arcadia RV Zone.

3.1.1 Area of landscape

The zone is located within the landscape of the mid to lower Dart and Rees river valleys, enclosed by Mt Earnslaw/Pikirakatahi to the north, the Humboldt Mountains to the west and the Richardson Mountains to the east. Mount Alfred separates the Dart and Rees, while the low lying Paradise/Diamond Lake area connects the two river valleys. Much of the landscape is Conservation land (including Mt Aspiring National Park) or Crown pastoral leasehold land.

3.1.2 Landscape description

Biophysical attributes
The landscape is part of the Southern Alps, and is within an area of uplifted schist mountains shaped by glacial and fluvial action. The Dart and Rees rivers have formed broad river floodplains between the mountains, while the Paradise valley is the remnant of a glacier that divided and passed over and on both sides of Mt Alfred. Diamond Lake is impounded by alluvial material from Mt Earnslaw and the Rees, and is fed by Earnslaw Burn, the River of Jordan and other smaller streams. Distinctive

hillocks or kames are present in the Dart valley and these are scheduled as heritage features in the PDP.

The mountains are largely covered with indigenous beech forest, subalpine and alpine communities and support indigenous fauna, including the endangered mohua (yellowhead). Much of this forest is protected by Conservation status or by Significant Natural Area (SNA) status in the PDP. Some mountain slopes, largely within Crown pastoral leases, have been cleared for extensive pastoral use and have only scattered areas of regenerating vegetation. The alluvial flats and fans are generally more intensively farmed, with improved grasslands, scattered matagouri and evergreen shelterbelts. Large wetland areas are present in the Dart Rees delta and west and south of Diamond Lake. The large braided river systems of the Dart and Rees provide habitat for specialist birds and the river and lake waters support indigenous fauna as well as trout and salmon. Outside the valley farms, natural patterns and processes predominate within the landscape.

Settlement and built development is confined to the valley floors and generally consists of widely scattered farm homestead clusters and occasional farm buildings. There are areas of rural living development within Rural Lifestyle-zoned land on the lower mountain slopes east of the Rees. The area has been a tourist destination since the late 1800s and there are a number of historic buildings and sites associated with early tourism, including the lodges at Paradise and Arcadia. Remnants of historic scheelite mines within the landscape are also scheduled in the PDP.

Further rural living development is anticipated within the Rural Lifestyle Zone east of the Rees and is consented within the Camp Hill Rural Residential Subzone east of Paradise Road. Consent has also been granted for a structure plan for the Arcadia RV zone (RM110010), as well as for an 11-lot residential subdivision in accordance with the structure plan (RM130799).

Sensory/perceptual attributes

The landscape has very high scenic qualities, as a result of the dramatic scale and extent of the mountains, the steepness of the ice-scoured slopes, the coherence of the landscape patterns and the contrast between the open alluvial flats and forested mountain slopes. Observers are dwarfed and enclosed by the mountains, leading to a sense of awe and appreciation for the natural environment.

The presence of native forest and shrubland, broad braided rivers, clear lakes and a low density of built form contribute to a high level of perceived naturalness. The action of glaciers and rivers in shaping the mountainsides valleys is legible and expressive. The landscape, and in particular views up the Paradise and Dart valleys, is highly memorable. Photographs taken northwards across Diamond Lake have been used in Tourism NZ campaigns (see **Figure 2** below) and the Dart and Paradise valleys have been a very popular film location. Public recreational access to Mount Aspiring National Park and other conservation areas, and recreational tourism on the Dart River and valley flats (eg horse trekking) allows people to immerse themselves within the landscape and to experience the sights, sounds and smells as they move through it. Unlike other parts of the National Park, people are also able to access and experience the landscape by vehicle.

Transient attributes include changing levels of snow and ice on the mountains, varying river and lake levels, cloud cover around the peaks, and the presence of stock and birdlife.

A sense of relative remoteness and tranquillity is a strong feature of the landscape, resulting from the distance from urban settlements, the low population density and general level of activity, the presence of gravel roads, and the enclosure by the mountains.

Associative attributes

The landscape has significant associations for Ngāi Tahu - historically as a seasonal settlement area and source of pounamu, and also culturally and spiritually. The PDP identifies a Ngāi Tahu Statutory Acknowledgement Area and Tōpuni at Pikirakatahi (Mt Earnslaw), recognising a special relationship with this landscape feature, and a Tōpuni at Te Koroka (Dart/Slipstream).

European historic associations include the early pastoral use by William Rees from 1860, 19th century tourism and historic gold and scheelite mining.

The landscape is important to the shared cultural identity of the Districts' residents, and to some visitors from within NZ. Memories of views and experiences within the landscape can form part of people's attachment to New Zealand as a 'place'.



Figure 2: View north across Diamond Lake, used as part of the 2015 Tourism NZ 100% Pure campaign. Arcadia RV Zone is visible on the far shore of the lake.

3.1.3 Landscape values

Based on an evaluation of the landscape attributes, and available information about community and visitor perceptions, the values attached to the receiving landscape include:

- **Very high biophysical values**, as a result of the unmodified geomorphology of the landscape, the predominance of intact indigenous ecosystems and the presence of wetlands and geological features that are relatively rare within the District. The values are recognised by national park or other conservation land status, SNA status and recognition of the distinctive hillocks in the PDP.

- **Very high naturalness values**, as a result of the strong dominance of natural elements, patterns and processes within the landscape, the low level of built modification, the presence of lakes and rivers, and people’s perceptions of a high quality natural environment. The last aspect is evidenced by the use of the area in a 100% Pure NZ tourism campaign.
- **Very high scenic values**, as a result of the dramatic scale and form of the mountains and braided rivers, the contrast between the open flats and forested mountain slopes, reflections available in lakes and other water bodies, the coherence of the landscape, and the accessibility of the area by road, river or on public tracks. The scenic values are evidenced by the use of photographs of the landscape in tourism promotions and the popularity of the landscape as a film location.
- **Very high memorability values**, largely as a result of the scenic quality of the landscape and the strong impression this makes in people’s minds.
- **High expressiveness values**, resulting from the obvious processes of mountain uplift, glacial scouring and alluvial erosion and deposition within the landscape.
- **High experiential values**, as a consequence of the ability for people to access the landscape on roads, rivers and popular walking tracks.
- **High remoteness and tranquillity values**, resulting from the distance from population centres, the generally low level of human activity and modification, and the need to negotiate gravel roads and fords or walking tracks to access the landscape.
- **Moderate transient values**, as a consequence of changing weather and snow conditions, river levels and the varying presence of wildlife.
- **Very high cultural values to Ngāi Tahu**, as evidenced by Statutory Acknowledgement Areas and Tōpuni within the landscape.
- **High heritage values**, associated with the evidence of early tourism and pastoral farming and historic mining activity. This is evidenced in part by the concentration of protected heritage features and buildings around Diamond Lake, and also by the evocative place names – Paradise, Arcadia, River of Jordan etc.
- **Very high shared and recognised values**, as an important part of sense of place and identity within the District and as a component of New Zealand’s national and international image as a high quality natural environment.

3.1.4 *Landscape category*

The landscape area containing the Arcadia RV zone has a high level of naturalness and has values that mean it is exceptional and outstanding at both a district and national level. It is appropriately categorised as an Outstanding Natural Landscape (ONL) in the PDP. Both Mt Alfred and Diamond Lake are identified as Outstanding Natural Features (ONF) in the PDP and I agree that these are distinct legible and outstandingly natural features within the wider landscape. The Dart and Rees rivers would also, in my assessment, qualify as ONF.

3.1.5 *RV zone attributes and character*

The Arcadia RV zone is located on the northern shore of Diamond Lake, a sloping area of bouldery glacial till and alluvial fan material from the River of Jordan (refer **Figures 1 and 2** in

Appendix B). This river flows from Mt Earnslaw through the eastern part of the zone and has an active fan extending into the lake. There is another small unnamed water course on the western side of the zone. The land is predominantly evenly sloping but there is an area of elevated terraced land west and south-west of the homestead. The property appears to be predominantly used for sheep grazing and possibly baleage.

Vegetative cover is predominantly pasture grass, but there are scattered to dense semi-mature matagouri near the stream in the eastern third of the zone, mature exotic trees around the homestead, and other shelter trees around the elevated terrace. Built structures are currently confined to a small haybarn and the substantial two-storey Arcadia House, built in the early 20th century. The subdivision consented under RM130799 anticipates 11 dwellings west of the homestead and an access road across the lower terrace in the north-western corner of the site.

The zoned area currently has a remote working rural character, with the prominence of the historic building adding a cultural heritage overlay. The presence of unmodified streams and indigenous shrubland, together with the low level of built modification leads to a moderate-high level of naturalness. Available views to the adjacent lake and forested mountains means the zone has a very high level of visual amenity.

Figure 2 in **Appendix B** shows the immediate context of the zone, which includes Diamond Lake (a wildlife management reserve) to the south, Earnslaw Station Crown lease, conservation land and the Paradise Trust beech forest to the west, Arcadia Station (freehold land) to the north and Mt Aspiring National Park to the east. There is a Department of Conservation campsite on the lake shore adjacent to the RV Zone.

*3.1.6 RV zone landscape sensitivity and landscape absorption capacity (refer **Figure 3** in **Appendix B**)*

The ONL in which the zone is set is very highly valued (refer 3.1.3 above) and the character and values of this landscape are highly sensitive to changes that degrade naturalness, scenic quality, memorability, remoteness and tranquillity, heritage significance, or shared and recognised values.

The zone forms the mid-ground of iconic views from the Paradise Road, Diamond Creek and the southern shores of Diamond Lake towards the Humboldt Mountains (refer **Photograph 1** in **Appendix B** and **Figure 2** above), and the foreground of views south from the road towards the lake and Richardson Mountains (refer **Photograph 2** in **Appendix B**). Visible development on the lower slopes near the lake and in the open areas between Paradise Road and lake would reduce the naturalness and coherence, and from some viewpoints, the extent of scenic views. Such development could also have significant adverse effects on the perceived quality and aesthetic coherence of the surrounding landscape.

Views from the road are also available across open pasture in the north-west corner of the site (refer **Photograph 4** in **Appendix B**) and prominent or unsympathetic development in this

area would detract from the perceived naturalness and coherence of the landscape, as well as the character of views toward the Category 1 former staff quarters at Paradise Trust.

The mature exotic trees around Arcadia House are part of the landscape setting of the heritage building and views to the building across open pasture from Paradise Road (refer **Photograph 3** in **Appendix B**) also enhance its presence and significance. The garden and the zone area north and north-east of the house are therefore sensitive to additional built development or screen planting.

The margins of the River of Jordan and the lake, as well as the areas of contiguous matagouri cover are sensitive to changes that would degrade their natural character.

3.1.7 Recommendations

The RV zone area has capacity to absorb appropriately designed visitor facility development on the elevated terrace west and south-west of the house without substantially altering or compromising the character and values of the wider landscape. Topography and existing vegetation mean that this area of land is not highly visible from public places outside the zone, and visible development would appear clustered with the homestead rather than spread across the zone. There is potential for some development to extend south towards the lake below the terrace, as existing mature trees would provide integration and partial screening if retained.

Limiting the extent and capacity for development would also limit the potential for significant adverse effects on the valued remoteness and tranquillity of the landscape, as a result of increased traffic and activity.

In order to be successfully absorbed I consider that visitor facility development would need to be subject to the following controls:

- Maximum building height of 6m;
- Limits on building coverage to ensure that the scale and mass of development were appropriate;
- Road setbacks to ensure that development did not detract from the heritage significance of Arcadia House;
- Recessive external building materials similar to those required for buildings in the PDP Rural Zone;
- Retention of existing vegetation to ensure that development is not visually prominent from Paradise Road or other public places;
- Retention of existing vegetation that forms the landscape setting of Arcadia House;
- Landscaping to ensure that access, parking, earthworks and built form are adequately mitigated and integrated.

3.2 Arthurs Point RV Zone

The Arthurs Point RV Zone was created as a result of submissions to the 1995 Proposed District Plan. It is located within the Arthurs Point Basin between the toe of Mt Dewar and the Shotover River (refer **Figure 3** below), about 6 kilometres north of downtown Queenstown. The zone is close to the suburban development of Arthurs Point township to the west and also adjoins a Special Housing Overlay Area that has been zoned Medium Density Residential in the PDP.



Figure 3: Location of Arthurs Point RV Zone.

3.2.1 Area of landscape

The zone is located within the landscape of the Arthurs Point Basin and the surrounding mountains, including Mt Dewar, Bowen Peak, Ben Lomond and Queenstown Hill/Sugar Loaf. The Shotover River, together with its tributaries, is the main waterway within the landscape. The majority of the landscape is freehold suburban, rural living or pastoral land, but the upper slopes of Bowen Peak and northern faces of Ben Lomond are Crown pastoral lease land within Ben Lomond Station. There are also DOC reserves along the Shotover River.

3.2.2 Landscape description

Biophysical attributes
<p><i>The Arthurs Point area comprises a hard schist rock peninsula around which the Shotover River flows; the eastern facing mountain slopes of Bowen Peak to the west of the Shotover River; and the lower slopes of Mount Dewar to the east and to the north of the Shotover River. The mountains and peninsula are schist and a platform to the north of the peninsula has been formed by glacial till [refer Figure 4 In Appendix B] which the river has eroded along the western side, creating a set of river terraces. The topography of this area is complex, the river passing through a narrow gorge around the western end of the peninsula with steep cliffs dropping precipitously to the river. Bluffs of 60 to 80m follow the river along much of its true left through this area. The ecology of the vicinity is highly modified, with wilding conifers [some now dead and either standing or felled] both enclosing the area to its north on Mount Dewar, and being located within it on the Larchmont property and on the slopes to the river corridor. Some indigenous vegetation is present within the river corridor and on the slopes of Bowen Peak, in particular, but conifers dominate. It is a highly dynamic landscape with the river changing its level and flows⁴.</i></p> <p>Big Beach, a large shingle beach adjacent to the Shotover, was the site of Sewhoys' mining company in the 1880s and there are a number of other heritage sites and buildings related to early European settlement and gold mining throughout the landscape.</p> <p>Settlement is concentrated in the suburban area of Arthurs Point and within the RV Zone and Special Housing Area, but there is also scattered rural living development along Moonlight Track and Gorge Rd, and to the east along Arthurs Point Rd. Multi-storey hotel and apartment developments are present within the RV Zone and additional medium density residential development is anticipated within a new area of Medium Density Residential zoning south-east of the RV Zone on a terrace above the Shotover.</p>
Sensory/perceptual attributes
<p>Although the glacial till peninsula above the Shotover and the lower slopes of Bowen Peak are relatively densely settled, these modified parts of the landscape are dominated by the surrounding steep and rugged mountains. As a whole the landscape is perceived as having a moderately high level of naturalness, despite the presence of wilding conifer spread and dead conifers in the lower basin and on Mt Dewar. The remainder of the mountain slopes are open tussockland or grassland and are highly legible and expressive. The waters, gorges and beaches of the Shotover are also perceived as highly natural and these contribute strongly to the high aesthetic values and expressiveness of the landscape. Access along the river is possible by boat or raft, and along public tracks, including the Moonlight Track, and this means that many visitors and locals take away strong images and memories of the landscape.</p> <p>The autumn colours of larches and poplars and the presence of winter snow on the surrounding peaks are important transient attributes.</p>
Associative attributes
<p>The landscape has strong European historic associations with early gold mining and settlement along the Shotover River. This is recognised by scheduled historic buildings within the Arthurs Point settlement, the historic Oxenbridge Tunnel and engine and the recognition of the Big Beach alluvial mining site by NZ Historic Places.</p>

⁴ Dr Marion Read's landscape evidence (on behalf of Council) for PDP Hearing Stream 13: Queenstown Annotations and Rezoning Requests, dated 24 May 2017. Paragraph 9.5.

The landscape has shared and recognised values in terms of the Shotover gorges and their surrounding mountainous setting, which is part of the sense of identity for Arthurs Point residents.

3.2.3 *Landscape values*

Based on an evaluation of the landscape attributes, and available information about community and visitor perceptions, the values attached to the receiving landscape include:

- **High biophysical values**, as a result of the unmodified geomorphology of the mountains and river gorges, the presence of regenerating indigenous shrublands on lower mountain slopes and gorges and tussocklands on the upper slopes.
- **Moderately high naturalness values**, as a result of the dominance of natural elements, patterns and processes within the landscape, particularly the dynamic processes of the Shotover River. The level of naturalness is reduced by the presence of suburban and tourist facility development and, for some, by the spread of wilding conifers and other exotic weeds within the landscape.
- **High scenic values**, as a result of the dramatic scale and form of the rugged mountains and river gorges.
- **Moderately high memorability values**, largely as a result of the scenic quality of the landscape and the accessibility of the landscape by road, boat or walking/cycling paths.
- **High expressiveness values**, resulting from the obvious processes of mountain uplift, glacial scouring and alluvial erosion and deposition within the landscape.
- **Moderate transient values**, as a consequence of autumn tree colours, changing snow conditions on the mountains, and variations in river levels and colour.
- **High heritage values**, associated with the extensive evidence of historic gold mining activity and associated early settlement.
- **High shared and recognised values**, as part of the sense of place for local residents and as a tourist destination for trips on the Shotover River.

3.2.4 *Landscape category*

The landscape area containing the Arthurs Point RV zone has a moderately high level of naturalness and has values that mean it is outstanding at a district level. It is appropriately categorised as an ONL in the PDP. The Shotover River from the crest of the first enclosing cliffs (and in particular the river gorges), is in my view an Outstanding Natural Feature (ONF) within the wider ONL. Under the provisions of the Decisions Version PDP, the landscape categorisations do not apply to the land zoned Lower Density Residential or Medium Density Residential.

3.2.5 *RV zone attributes and character*

Arthurs Point RV Zone is largely situated on a level glacial terrace that extends from the toe of Mt Dewar across Arthurs Point Road to the south. However the zone also extends up Mt Dewar to about the 520masl contour and down the Shotover River escarpment (refer **Figure 5** in

Appendix B). A narrow finger also extends past the hill that encloses Arthurs Point to the east and encompasses the scheduled former Bordeau's Store at 201 Arthurs Point Rd and steep land above the first section of Skippers Rd.

The zone is one of the most developed of the RV Zones within the District, with the flat terrace being relatively intensively developed for visitor accommodation, visitor facilities, apartments, commercial/industrial activities and restaurants/cafes. Development has also spilled over the steep Shotover River escarpment, with construction currently underway for an extension to the existing Onsen Hot Pools on the escarpment (RM180965). The Mt Dewar slopes within the zone are currently undeveloped and are largely covered with wilding conifers.

The terrace flats within the zone currently have an urban character, with very mixed building forms, styles and uses, ranging from a single storey historic cottage to 3- to 4-storey apartment blocks. Buildings are generally set back from Arthurs Point Rd. The urban and streetscape amenity of the developed part of the zone is reduced by the lack of consistency in building style and form and the generally poor interface with the road.

The less developed parts of the zone have a predominantly wild unkempt rural character.

3.2.6 *RV zone landscape sensitivity and landscape absorption capacity (refer **Figure 6** in **Appendix B**)*

The ONL setting of the zone, particularly the mountain slopes and Shotover River corridor, is highly valued (refer 3.2.3 above) by the local community and by tourists. The character and values of these parts of the landscape are sensitive to changes that degrade perceived naturalness and coherence, scenic quality, memorability and shared and recognised values.

The flat terrace within the zone already has an urban character. The enclosed nature of this area (by the Mt Dewar slopes, the change in level down to suburban Arthurs Point and the river and the hill to the east) and its limited visibility from public places means that it has the ability to absorb additional development. The tree-covered Shotover River escarpment and the slopes of Mt Dewar currently provide a vegetative foreground and background to this area, which enhance its capacity to absorb relatively intensive development.

In contrast, the lower slopes of Mt Dewar within the zone are widely visible from Arthurs Point settlement and public roads (refer **Photograph 5** in **Appendix B**). Both topographically and in terms of landscape character they are part of the Mt Dewar landform. The PDP ONL boundary currently follows the toe of the mountain slopes west of the zone but then diverts uphill around the property boundaries of the RV zone. If the ONL boundary had been considered in isolation without regard for zoning I consider that the line would have continued eastward at the toe of the mountain behind Shotover Lodge and Swiss BelResort. I consider the mountain slopes within the zone are highly sensitive to development, which could lead to elevated visible buildings and a rectilinear pattern of land use or land management that could significantly detract from the coherence and naturalness of the landscape.

I also consider that RV-zoned land east of the small hill that encloses Arthurs Point settlement has limited capacity to absorb visitor facility development. It is within a separate visual catchment, which is strongly rural in character, and is also elevated on the slopes of Mt Dewar.

The whole of the Shotover River escarpment, which forms the legible edge of the river as a feature, is sensitive to development which degrades its legibility and natural character. The escarpments are clearly visible from the Shotover River, Big Beach, and parts of suburban Arthurs Point (refer **Photograph 8** in **Appendix B**). Development within the RV Zone has already spilled over this escarpment in places and a narrow intermediate terrace to the east is within a site that has been part zoned Medium Density Residential in the PDP. These parts of the zone have some capacity to absorb development that is recessive and well integrated by vegetation. The remaining steep unmodified parts of the cliffs that are within the zone do not have any absorption capacity for development.

There are two other areas within the RV Zone that have a moderate capacity to absorb sensitively designed and low density development. These are the west side of the small hill that encloses the settlement, which is within the same visual catchment as existing development, and the domestic curtilage area of the property at 201 Arthurs Point Rd (site of the former Bordeaux Store), which is a level area well screened from Arthurs Point Rd.

3.2.7 Recommendations

The terrace area of the RV zone has capacity to absorb high density development that addresses and enhances the streetscape and is similar in scale to the existing multi-storey development. Such tall development could be contained against a vegetated mountainous backdrop.

The areas shown as pink hatch in **Figure 6** in **Appendix B** have some limited capacity to absorb sensitively designed low density visitor facility development. In order to be successfully absorbed I consider that visitor facility development in these areas would need to be subject to the following controls:

- Maximum building height of 8m;
- Limits on building coverage to ensure a low overall density of development;
- Use of recessive external building materials similar to those required for buildings in the PDP Rural Zone;
- Appropriate indigenous landscaping that is of sufficient height and density to effectively integrate development (including earthworks) and mitigate potential adverse effects on the naturalness of the landscape.

3.3 Blanket Bay RV Zone

The Blanket Bay RV Zone is approximately 20.2 hectares in size and is located on the eastern shores of Lake Wakatipu about 1.5 kilometres south of Glenorchy township. It is accessed from the Glenorchy – Queenstown Road via a private driveway that crosses Rural-zoned pastoral land.



Figure 4: Location of Blanket Bay RV Zone.

3.3.1 Area of landscape

The zone is located within the landscape of the northern arm of Lake Wakatipu, surrounded and enclosed by the Humboldt Mountains to the west and the Richardson Mountains to the east. The landscape is largely freehold pastoral grazing land on the lower mountain slopes near the lake and DOC conservation land on the upper slopes and mountain tops.

3.3.2 Landscape description

Biophysical attributes
<p>The landscape is a classical U-shaped glacial valley, with relatively even ice-scoured mountain slopes enclosing the lake and higher rugged eroding peaks beyond. Pigeon (Wāwāhi Waka) and Pig (Mātau) Islands in the lake and the lakeside hill south of the RV Zone are remnant bedrock protrusions that have been overridden by ice (refer Figure 7 in Appendix B). Pockets of lateral moraine are present on the mountain slopes and the lake is edged by alluvial fans, lake beaches and the expansive Dart River delta. Most of the water courses have steep short catchments on the even slopes, but Buckler Burn and the Greenstone River drain larger catchments and have formed fans that protrude into the lake. At Blanket Bay Stone Creek drains a heavily eroding catchment and has also formed a strongly protruding fan.</p> <p>Vegetation on the lower mountain slopes is a mixture of remnant and regenerating shrubland, bracken and pasture, with some beech forest in gullies and on conservation land. Higher up the</p>

vegetation is dominated by short and then tall tussockland, with significant areas of scree in some catchments. The indigenous shrublands and tussocklands support diverse invertebrate and avifauna, including vulnerable and threatened species^{5,6}, and endangered buff weka have been re-established on Pigeon and Pig Islands. Exotic shelter trees are present in some farmed areas of the alluvial fans and beach terraces and Spanish heath and broom are problem plants on some eastern lake faces and river gorges. Natural elements, patterns and processes are dominant within the landscape, with ongoing processes of erosion and deposition and indigenous regeneration. Burning and bracken clearance for pasture management disrupts natural vegetation patterns on the lower lake faces, particularly on the western side. The main land uses are pastoral farming and conservation/informal recreation.

Glenorchy is the main settlement within the landscape but there is a concentration of rural living/tourism development at Wyuna Rise, within the Rural Lifestyle Zone, and scattered homestead/tourist clusters at Greenstone Station, Kinloch, Blanket Bay and Mount Creighton Station. Remnants of historic gold and scheelite mining, including huts, mines and a battery, are present in the Buckler Burn catchment, which is designated as the Glenorchy Heritage Overlay Area in the PDP. Evidence of historic gold mining is present in Twenty-Five Mile Creek and there are numerous recorded Maori occupation sites around the head of the lake.

Sensory/perceptual attributes

The landscape has very high scenic attributes, as a result of the coherent form of the mountain slopes, the azure waters of Lake Wakatipu, the rugged peaks, the shrub-covered islands within the lake and the extent of natural vegetation patterns.

The mountains and lake are highly expressive and legible as a glacially formed valley with ice-scoured slopes and alluvial fans extending into the lake. Iconic views up the north arm of the lake towards the Dart River delta and Mount Earnslaw are available from Bennett’s Bluff on the Glenorchy – Queenstown Road. The experience of the landscape as people move through it on public roads is very memorable, with a succession of open expansive views to the lake and mountains and enclosure by regenerating shrubland. People are also able to move through and experience the sights, sounds and smells of the landscape on the lake and on DOC tracks in the Whakaari Conservation Area and Mount Aspiring National Park.

Despite a long history of modification by pastoral farming the landscape is perceived by most viewers as highly natural. The rectilinear patterns of vegetation clearance on the western lake faces detract from perceived naturalness for some viewers.

Transient attributes are strong, with changing snow levels and lake surface colour and texture, the presence of wildlife, and daily changes in the play of light and shadow on the hummocky and fissured mountain slopes.

Outside the Glenorchy settlement, the landscape is experienced as remote, tranquil and wild, particularly in the mountainous areas accessed by walking tracks.

Associative attributes

Lake Wakatipu (Whakatipu-wai-māori) and its shores are identified as a Statutory Acknowledgement Area for Ngāi Tahu, and there are many seasonal camp sites around the head of the lake. Land at Elfin Bay and Greenstone/Capes on the western side of the lake has been returned to the iwi as part of their treaty settlement.

⁵ Crown Pastoral Land Tenure Review. Mt Creighton Conservation resources report. June 2003.

⁶ Crown Pastoral Land Tenure Review. Wyuna Conservation resources report. November 2002

European historic associations include early pastoral farming on the high country stations and subsequent nature/adventure tourism and mining activities.

The landscape is nationally and internationally recognised as outstanding and is important to the shared cultural identity of the Districts' residents, and to some visitors from within NZ. Memories of views and experiences within the landscape can form part of people's attachment to New Zealand as a 'place'.

3.3.3 Landscape values

Based on an evaluation of the landscape attributes, and available information about community and visitor perceptions, the values attached to the receiving landscape include:

- **Very high biophysical values**, as a result of the distinctive U-shaped glacial geomorphology, the dominance of relatively intact indigenous vegetation communities and the presence of threatened and rare indigenous fauna.
- **High naturalness values**, as a result of the dominance of natural elements, patterns and processes within the landscape, the low level of built modification, the presence of the lake waters, and people's perceptions of a highly natural environment.
- **Very high scenic values**, as a result of the enclosure and elongated form of the lake, the coherence of the mountain slopes and snowy peaks, the contrast between the lake waters and the mountains and islands, reflections in the lake waters and the visibility of the landscape from the Glenorchy - Queenstown Road. The iconic view up the lake from Bennetts Bluff is internationally acclaimed and is a very popular photo opportunity.
- **Very high memorability values**, largely as a result of the scenic quality of the landscape and the strong impression this makes in people's minds.
- **Very high expressiveness values**, as a result of the readily legible form of the glacial valley and lake, the open rugged mountain tops and the Dart River delta.
- **High experiential values**, as a consequence of the ability for people to move through the landscape on roads, boats and walking tracks.
- **High remoteness and wilderness values**, resulting from the low density of visible settlement outside Glenorchy township and the presence of significant areas of remnant or regenerating indigenous vegetation and, in most places, the low level of human activity and modification.
- **High transient values**, as a consequence of changing snow levels and vegetation colours, varying lake surface textures and colours, and the play of light on the open topography.
- **Very high cultural values to Ngāi Tahu**, as evidenced by Statutory Acknowledgement Areas and returned lands within the landscape.
- **High heritage values**, as evidenced by the density of scheduled historic sites within the landscape and the identification of the Glenorchy Heritage Overlay Area in the PDP.

- **Very high shared and recognised values**, as an important part of sense of place and identity for the Wakatipu and as part of the marketing of Queenstown as a national and international tourist destination.

3.3.4 *Landscape category*

The landscape area containing the Blanket Bay RV Zone has a high level of naturalness and has values that mean it is exceptional and outstanding at both a district and national level. It is appropriately categorised as an Outstanding Natural Landscape (ONL) in the PDP.

3.3.5 *RV zone attributes and character*

The RV Zone straddles the ancient lake beach terrace that separates Buckler Burn from Stone Creek and part of the lower gorge of Stone Creek, where the water course has eroded deeply into the beach terrace (refer **Figure 7** in **Appendix B**). The beach terrace slopes down from the eastern boundary of the zone to meet the lake shore at Blanket Bay, a sheltered area that is protected from westerly winds. Land to the north and south of the zone is Crown-owned recreation reserve, some of which is leased for grazing. The Glenorchy airport is on the lake terrace south of Stone Creek and the land between the zone and road, through which the access road passes, is freehold pastoral land (refer **Figure 8** in **Appendix B**).

Development on the site includes a luxury lodge, established in the mid-1990s, two sets of villas, a lakeside jetty, accessory buildings and car parks. Part of the carpark extends into the recreation reserve on the Stone Creek fan. Built development has been designed to sit into the slope of the land and is integrated by well-maintained predominantly native planting, as well as mature pine trees. The recessive exterior materials of the buildings mean that while they can be seen from the Greenstone Road across the lake, they do not attract attention. The only part of the development visible from the Glenorchy – Queenstown Road is the entry gates and walls and the driveway. There is a Crown-owned marginal strip along the lake edge but few people access this public area from the adjacent reserves.

The character of the zone is that of a high end well-maintained luxury retreat with a low density of built form and a very high level of amenity as a consequence of the tranquillity, remoteness and scenic views out over the lake to the mountains.

3.3.6 *RV zone landscape sensitivity and landscape absorption capacity (refer **Figure 9** in **Appendix B**)*

The ONL setting of the zone is very highly valued (refer 3.3.3 above) by the local community and by national and international tourists. The character and values of the landscape are sensitive to changes that degrade perceived naturalness, scenic quality (including visual coherence), memorability, remoteness and wildness, heritage values, and shared and recognised values.

Existing development within the zone has been sensitively designed and located where it is not highly visible from frequented public places other than the lake itself. Tall buildings on the upper eastern part of the zone would be visible from Glenorchy – Queenstown Road and could

detract significantly from the naturalness and scenic values of the landscape, and the relative sense of remoteness.

The escarpments and bed of Stone Creek have no capacity to absorb development, owing to the topography and ongoing natural processes of erosion and deposition. An area of native shrubland west of the lodge (refer **Photograph 11** in **Appendix B**) also has little capacity for change without loss of the natural patterns and processes occurring in this regenerating vegetation. Development in this area would adversely affect the naturalness of the landscape and the natural character of the lake and stream margins. There is also potential for built development close to the lake and marginal strip to adversely affect the natural character of the lake margins and the recreational experience of any members of the public using the lakeshore and margin (refer **Photograph 10** in **Appendix B**). This area has a moderately high sensitivity to development.

Additional low density, well designed and recessive development could be absorbed on the remainder of the zone area without compromising the important values of the surrounding landscape. Visually prominent, bulky or dense development would increase the prominence of the zone from the lake and Greenstone Road and could appear as an anomalous and jarring concentration of urban form within the ONL.

If public access to the lake marginal and/or adjacent recreation reserves increased in the future, buffer planting might be required to mitigate the adverse effects of development within the zone on visual and recreational amenity.

3.3.7 Recommendations

The RV zone has some limited capacity to absorb additional visitor facility development that is not visible from the Glenorchy – Queenstown Road, is sensitively designed, and is of low density. In order to be successfully absorbed I consider that visitor facility development would need to be subject to the following controls:

- Maximum building height of 8m;
- Limits on building coverage to ensure a low overall density of development;
- Use of recessive external building materials similar to those required for buildings in the PDP Rural Zone;
- Appropriate indigenous landscaping that effectively integrates development (including earthworks) and mitigates potential adverse effects on adjoining public land.

3.4 Cardrona RV Zone

The Cardrona RV Zone is located in the Cardrona Valley, about 23 kilometres from Wanaka (refer **Figure 5** below). The zone was carried over from a Rural Tourist Zone in the Transitional Plan but was extended considerably to the east as a result of a submission to the 1995 Proposed District Plan. The ODP also included a larger RV Zone to the north on Cardrona Valley Road – the Mount Cardrona Station RV Zone. A later plan change modified the extent of and provisions for this zone, which became the Mt Cardrona Station Special Zone.



Figure 5: Location of Cardrona RV Zone..

3.4.1 Area of landscape

The zone is located within the landscape of the Cardrona Valley, a north-south oriented valley enclosed by the Crown/Cardrona Range to the west and the Pisa/Criffel Range to the east. The landscape is largely freehold pastoral land but there are large areas of DOC conservation reserve in the upper Cardrona River catchment and on the crest of the Pisa Range.

3.4.2 Landscape description

Biophysical attributes
The landscape is a deep cut valley with a flat alluvial floor of up to 700 metres in width below Cardrona Village and a narrower valley above this point. The eastern side is defined by the Criffel/Pisa Range, which is the westernmost element of the characteristic ‘basin and range’ landscape that stretches almost to the Dunedin coast. The parallel schist ranges of this sequence are characterised

by broad planar crests and frequent tors. The western enclosure of the valley is part of the wider Harris Mountains, which are more rugged and jagged in form than the Pisa/Criffel Range. The Cardrona is the main water course, fed by numerous creeks from the surrounding mountains, and is a habitat for indigenous fauna, including a rare Clutha flathead galaxid⁷. In some parts the landform has been substantially modified by historic alluvial gold mining, flood protection works, and by earthworks for skifield and vehicle testing ground development.

The lower valley flats are dominated by improved pasture, exotic shelterbelts and willows lining the river. Pasture grasses and scattered grey shrubland extend up the walls of the valley, but the higher slopes and crests of the mountains, as well as the upper river catchment are dominated by relatively intact indigenous tussockland and grey shrubland. The predominant land use is pastoral farming but some areas have been retired for conservation and recreation. The Cardrona skifield, the Southern Hemisphere Proving Ground and the Snow Farm cross country ski area are significant tourism and commercial activities within the landscape. Access roads to these activities are visually prominent within the landscape.

Cardrona Village is the main settlement within the valley but significant development is anticipated within the Mt Cardrona Station Special Zone. Some rural living development is present north and south of the village and there is also a loose cluster of tourism-related development near the Cardrona skifield road intersection.

Sensory/perceptual attributes

The landscape has high scenic qualities, largely as a consequence of the unmodified tussock-covered upper valley and the dramatic nature of the enclosing mountains in the lower valley. Cardrona Valley Road is a renowned scenic and tourist route between Queenstown and Wanaka and the aesthetic attributes of the landscape are consequently appreciated by a large number of people.

The form of the valley is easily legible, with long views up and down and close, steep mountain walls providing a sense of enclosure. The open character of the mountains means that hummocky or gullied surface of the land is displayed. The landscape is highly memorable and the upper valley in particular has a strong sense of remoteness and wildness.

Perceptions of the naturalness of the landscape are modified by the presence of development in the lower valley floor and at the skifields (including their access roads), but overall the landscape is perceived as having a high level of naturalness. Transient attributes are very strong, with changing snow and ice levels, large variations in the Cardrona River flow, the characteristic autumn colours of poplars and willows, changes in the play of light and shadow on the mountain slopes, and the presence of birdlife.

Associative attributes

The significant values of the Cardrona Valley to Ngāi Tahu are listed in Appendix 1D of the Regional Plan:Water for Otago as wāhi tapu, resource sites and food sources, and as a traditional route between the Upper Clutha and Wakatipu Basins.

The landscape also has significant historical associations, predominantly as a result of extensive gold mining in the 1860s, but also as a historic route between the basins. Evidence of stacked boulder tailings, hut foundations and alluvial sluicings remain, as well as built remnants of the 19th century settlement at Cardrona and mature exotic trees planted around that time. The names of roads, creeks and features also preserve elements of this history.

⁷ Verbal communication, Matthew Dale, Water Resources Scientist, Otago Regional Council, 12 May 2009.

The shared and recognised attributes of the landscape include its scenic beauty and remoteness, the frequently photographed historic buildings in the village, and the more recent associations with skiing.

3.4.3 *Landscape values*

Based on an evaluation of the landscape attributes, and available information about community and visitor perceptions, the values attached to the receiving landscape include:

- **High biophysical values**, as a result of the distinctive geomorphology of the valley landscape and its enclosing mountains, the presence of relatively intact indigenous tussocklands and shrublands, and the habitat values for indigenous fauna.
- **Moderately high naturalness values**, as a result of the dominance of natural elements, patterns and processes within the landscape and people's perceptions (in the context of the District) of a natural environment. While the lower valley contains considerable human modification, the upper valley and the mountain slopes have a higher level of naturalness.
- **High scenic values**, as a result of the coherent and enclosed form of the valley, the contrast between tawny tussocklands, snow and sky, the presence of mature heritage trees and picturesque historic buildings, and the very high level of visibility to locals and visitors travelling the Cardrona Valley Road..
- **High memorability values**, as a consequence of the coherence and distinctiveness of the landscape and the strong impression this makes in people's minds.
- **High expressiveness values**, as a result of the generally open character of the landscape and legible form of the enclosed valley.
- **High experiential values**, as a consequence of the opportunities for people to access and move through the landscape on Cardrona Valley Road, at the skifields and on public walking tracks.
- **High remoteness and tranquillity values** in the upper valley, where there is a very low level of obvious human activity other than the road, and on the crest of the Pisa Range when accessed by walking or cross country skiing.
- **Very high transient values**, as a consequence of changing snow levels and vegetation colours and the play of light on the open topography.
- **Very high heritage values**, associated with the evidence of historic gold mining and settlement.
- **High shared and recognised values**, as a part of the sense of place and identity of the District and as a national and international tourist destination.

3.4.4 *Landscape category*

The floor of the lower Cardrona Valley contains substantial human modification in the form of existing or consented settlements and domesticated patterns of pastoral farming, The presence of skifield and proving ground development, including associated roads, has also reduced the naturalness of the landscape. However the valley floor is contained and

dominated by the enclosing mountain slopes and the landscape retains an overall high level of naturalness. The aesthetic, memorability, transient, heritage and shared and recognised values mean it is outstanding at a district level. It is appropriately categorised as an Outstanding Natural Landscape (ONL) in the PDP.

3.4.5 RV zone attributes and character

The Cardrona RV Zone is located on alluvial terraces within the Cardrona Valley floor (refer **Figures 10 and 11 in Appendix B**). Both Cardrona Valley Road and the river divide portions of the zone. The legal river boundaries and marginal strips no longer follow the actual river course, which has shifted to the east and is partly within the RV zoning (refer **Figure 12 in Appendix B**). It appears that exchange of marginal strips has been authorised to recognise the current river course but this is not currently reflected in the title or zone boundaries.

Small portions of the zone also extend up the toe of the schist hill to the west (adjacent to the Hall Reserve) and also up an escarpment east of the river that has been eroded by historic sluice mining. A small unnamed water course runs through the north-west part of the zone (refer **Photograph 14 in Appendix B**), crossing in a culvert under the road. An informal mountain bike track has also been constructed in this part of the zone.

Vegetation within the zone varies from manicured gardens and lawns to unkempt exotic weeds on vacant lots. The mature trees surrounding Cardrona Hotel and the poplars and more recently planted street trees lining the road contribute strongly to the amenity and character of the village. Excavations into the hill behind the dense visitor accommodation facilities have detracted from the naturalness of the landform and the visual amenity of the zone.

Development within the RV zone is scattered and inconsistent, with many vacant lots and a general lack of coherence in the density, form and bulk of built development. The historic Cardrona Hotel and associated historic buildings form the central focus of the zone (refer **Photograph 13 in Appendix B**). Other significant development includes the two visitor accommodation facilities west of the road, the isolated Cardrona Store, a retail and residential building and a number of domestic residences. A residential subdivision west of the river, with lots of between 1500 and 2500m², has remained vacant to date (refer **Photograph 15 in Appendix B**). Development that has been consented but not yet implemented includes:

- a lodge and visitor accommodation (accessed by a bridge from Soho St across the river) have been consented east of the river (RM061204). This consent expires in 2020.

Consent is also currently sought for a hot pool complex and visitor accommodation facility on a triangular site just north of the zone.

Community planning processes for Cardrona Village in 2003 and again in 2006-2007 led to the development of the QLDC Structure Plan for the Cardrona Valley⁸ and the subsequent

⁸ QLDC. Cardrona Valley Structure Plan 2009.

Cardrona Village Character Guidelines⁹. Some of the recommended streetscape improvements in the 2009 Structure Plan have been implemented.

The character of the zone is mixed, with undeveloped lots retaining a pastoral or unkempt rural character, other areas having a domestic residential character and others containing dense visitor accommodation units.

3.4.6 *RV zone landscape sensitivity and landscape absorption capacity (refer **Figure 12** in **Appendix B**)*

The natural and rural character of the ONL setting for the zone, and the cultural heritage attributes of the zone and surrounding area, are highly valued by the local community¹⁰ and by national and international tourists. The character and values of the landscape are sensitive to changes that degrade naturalness, scenic quality (including visual coherence), memorability, cultural heritage values and shared and recognised values. Sprawl of development beyond Cardrona Village is a risk to the rural character and naturalness of the wider landscape and to the definition and character of the village itself.

In general the RV zone west of the river has capacity to absorb additional development that responds to the historic character of the village and results in a cohesive and integrated urban form. The exception is in the north-west corner where the zone boundary extends up the toe slopes of the mountain. Development in this elevated area could result in an anomalous extension of visually prominent built form beyond the natural boundary of the alluvial terrace/toe slope boundary. The presence of a natural water course in this part of the zone also means that the lower section adjoining Cardrona Valley Road is moderately sensitive to development.

In terms of legible boundaries for the village, it would be appropriate from a landscape perspective for development to encompass No. 2347 Cardrona Valley Road, a large residential lot opposite visitor accommodation and commercial/retail development in the southern part of the zone. To the north of the RV Zone there is a triangular site which straddles the terrace on which the village sits and the sloping escarpment that separates this terrace from lower pastoral land adjoining the river. Development on the level terrace part of this site would be perceived as a logical extension of Cardrona village. However because such development would be the first element of the village visible to motorists travelling south it is important that any built development is sensitively designed and maintains the legibility of the escarpment as a boundary to the urban form.

That part of the zone east of the Cardrona (refer **Photograph 16** in **Appendix B**) has limited capacity to absorb development. This is mainly the result of the presence of the river and its margins, which are sensitive to adverse effects on their natural character, and the presence of cliffs eroded by sluicing, which are sensitive to adverse effects on their heritage landscape

⁹ QLDC. Cardrona Village Character Guidelines 2012.

¹⁰ QLDC Cardrona Valley Structure Plan 2009, p3.

values. It is acknowledged that there is consented but unimplemented development (RM061204) in this area that avoids the cliffs and the immediate river banks, and the landscape sensitivity on the river flats is consequently shown as moderate rather than high in **Figure 12**. However, from a landscape perspective, extension of built form eastward across the river would detract from the cohesion of the village, spreading development across a natural boundary.

3.4.7 Recommendations

Within the area identified as having lower landscape sensitivity on **Figure 12** in **Appendix B**, I consider that urban development consistent with the QLDC character guidelines and limited to 8 metres in height could be absorbed without adverse effects on the character and values of the Cardrona Valley landscape.

3.5 Cecil Peak RV Zone

The Cecil RV Zones are two relatively small areas of land at Cecil Peak Station on the western side of the southern arm of Lake Wakatipu (refer **Figure 6** below). The zones were established for visitor activity in 1983 and carried over into the ODP in 1995, but have never been developed. The zones are only accessible from Queenstown by boat or aircraft.



Figure 6: Location of Cecil Peak and Walter Peak RV Zones.

3.5.1 Area of landscape

The zones are located within the landscape of the northern Eyre Mountains, an extensive mountainous area bounded by Lake Wakatipu to the north and east. The incised valleys now occupied by McKinnons Creek, Collins Creek and the Lochy River divide the main peaks – Walter Peak, Cecil Peak and Bayonet Peaks. The land is largely Crown pastoral lease, with areas of freehold land in the Collins and Lochy valleys and at Water Peak.

3.5.2 Landscape description

Biophysical attributes
The landscape is almost completely steep and rugged mountainous terrain, ice-scoured where successive Wakatipu glaciations passed across the lake faces of the mountains and where tongues of glacier pushed up the Von, Collins Creek and Lochy valleys ¹¹ . Remnant moraine deposits are present in these areas. Elevated lake beaches are a feature at bays around the lake and west of Walter Peak, evidence of higher water levels when the lake outlet was at Kingston (refer Figure 13 in Appendix B). The upper parts of the mountains are characterised by rocky outcrops, bluffs and scree slopes.

¹¹ Crown Pastoral Land Tenure Review. Walter Peak Conservation resources report. July 2005.

<p>Vegetation is predominantly tussock, with some areas of beech forest in gullies and regenerating bracken and mixed shrubland closer to the lake. Some of these areas are identified as SNAs in the PDP. Exotic shelter trees, eucalypts and improved grasslands are found on the alluvial beaches, lake edges and valleys. Natural elements, patterns and processes are dominant within the landscape, with ongoing processes of erosion and deposition and indigenous regeneration. Periodic burning for pasture improvement has modified the processes of regeneration and the small areas of valley and terrace lands have improved pasture and cropping. Predominant land uses are merino sheep and cattle grazing on the lower mountain slopes and flats, and farm tourism.</p> <p>Human settlement is very limited and sparse, with homestead/farm building clusters at Halfway Bay, Collins Bay (Cecil Peak Station) and Mount Nicholas and tourist facilities and associated farm buildings at Water Peak. A lodge is also present on the lake shore west of Walter Peak but an associated consented rural subdivision is yet to be developed. The 1902 original homestead and outbuildings at Walter Peak Farm have heritage significance but are not scheduled in the PDP.</p>
<p>Sensory/perceptual attributes</p>
<p>The landscape has very high scenic qualities, as a result of the dramatic form, scale and extent of the mountains, and their juxtaposition with the waters of Lake Wakatipu. Cecil Peak, Walter Peak and Bayonet Peaks in particular are visually dominant when viewed from Queenstown and the lack of obvious development on the mountains means that they contribute strongly to locals' and visitors' perceptions of the quality of the natural environment. The mountains are highly expressive and legible, as their formative processes are visible in the glacial striations on the open mountain slopes. The even glaciated lower slopes rising from the lake and the characteristic 'mesa-like' peaks make the mountains highly memorable and distinctive.</p> <p>Despite the historic clearance of beech forest from the slopes and the ongoing management of vegetation for extensive pastoral farming, the landscape is perceived as highly natural. Transient attributes are particularly strong, with changing snow levels and vegetation colours, along with dramatic daily changes in the play of light and shadow on the hummocky and fissured mountain slopes.</p> <p>With the exception of Walter Peak Farm and farm tourism activities, the landscape is not generally publicly accessible and the lack of easy vehicle access means it has a very strong sense of tranquillity and remoteness.</p>
<p>Associative attributes</p>
<p>There is no specific information available about the values of the landscape to Ngāi Tahu, but it is likely that the bays and valleys were used as camping sites for Maori travelling further on up the lake or to the Mavora area.</p> <p>European historic associations include early pastoral farming on the high country stations. Cecil and Walter Peaks were named after the elder sons of William Rees, the first pastoral runholder in the Wakatipu.</p> <p>Along with The Remarkables and the lake, the northern Eyre Mountains are a core component of the sense of place and identity of Wakatipu. Their proximity to Queenstown and prominence in views from the town enhances their role in the appreciation of and attachment of residents and visitors to the landscape. Views of the mountains are frequently used in tourism promotions.</p>

3.5.3 *Landscape values*

Based on an evaluation of the landscape attributes, and available information about community and visitor perceptions, the values attached to the receiving landscape include:

- **High biophysical values**, as a result of the unmodified and distinctive geomorphology of the landscape and the dominance of indigenous tussocklands and shrubland.
- **High naturalness values**, as a result of the dominance of natural elements, patterns and processes within the landscape, the very low level of built modification, the adjoining lake, and people's perceptions (in the context of the District) of a highly natural environment.
- **Very high scenic values**, as a result of the awesome and rugged scale, form and extent of the mountains, the contrast between the snow-topped peaks, tawny tussocklands and blue lake waters, the reflections in the lake waters, the patterns of light and shadow on the mountain slopes, and the high level of visibility from the population and tourist centres of Queenstown. The scenic values are evidenced by the use of photographs of the landscape in tourism promotions for Queenstown and its popularity as a farm tourism destination.
- **Very high memorability values**, largely as a result of the scenic quality of the landscape and the strong impression this makes in people's minds.
- **Very high expressiveness values**, as a result of the open character of the landscape and the way the exposed topography demonstrates the formative processes of the mountains and lake.
- **Low experiential values**, as a consequence of the limited opportunities for people to access and move through the landscape, except on guided farm tours, heli-tours or on the Mount Nicholas – Beach Bay Road.
- **Very high remoteness and tranquillity values**, resulting from the general lack of road access and, in most places, the low level of human activity and modification.
- **High transient values**, as a consequence of changing snow levels and vegetation colours and the play of light on the open topography.
- **Moderate heritage values**, associated with the evidence of early high country pastoral farming.
- **Very high shared and recognised values**, as a very important part of sense of place and identity for the Wakatipu and as part of the marketing of Queenstown as a national and international tourist destination.

3.5.4 *Landscape category*

The landscape area containing the Cecil Peak and Walter Peak RV zones has a high level of naturalness and has values that mean it is exceptional and outstanding at both a district and national level. It is appropriately categorised as an Outstanding Natural Landscape (ONL) in the PDP.

3.5.5 *RV zone attributes and character*

The northern Cecil Peak RV zone is located on an open beach slope of Collins Bay just east of the loose cluster of the station houses, lodge and farm buildings in the bay (refer **Figure 14** in **Appendix B**). The land is open pasture apart from one row of conifers and has a moderate gradient to the north overlooking the lake. Drift Bay and Jacks Point are visible across the lake and urban Queenstown is seen in the distance. An unformed legal road covered with scattered grey shrubland separates the zone from the foreshore.

The southern RV zone is located about 800 metres up the valley on the toe of an alluvial fan from Bayonet Peaks. The fan has been truncated by Collins Creek and the zone area extends over the creek escarpment onto the alluvial flats adjacent to the creek. The upper area of land is gently sloping and currently used for grazing and baleage. Views are available from the zone north to the lake and urban Queenstown, south down the Collins Creek valley, and to the surrounding peaks.

The zones have a remote and tranquil rural working farm character, dominated by the enclosing mountains but open to high amenity lake views.

3.5.6 *RV zone landscape sensitivity and landscape absorption capacity (refer **Figure 15** in **Appendix B**)*

The ONL setting of the zones is very highly valued (refer 3.5.3 above) by the local community and by national and international tourists. The character and values of the landscape are sensitive to changes that degrade perceived naturalness, scenic quality (including visual coherence), memorability, remoteness and tranquillity, and shared and recognised values.

Existing built development at Collins Bay is well relatively integrated by mature trees, and the viewing distance from public places (apart from boats on the lake) is such that buildings are difficult to see. The closest public viewing point is the Kingston Road just south of Lakeview Estates (about 5.5 kilometres). There is however potential for tall, bulky and/or light coloured buildings within the zone to be visible from across the lake and from the lake itself and to detract from the natural character of the lake edge and the context landscape. The northern zone has no topographical and few vegetative elements that would facilitate absorption of development and is more sensitive to modification than currently undeveloped parts of the loose homestead cluster to the west.

The southern RV Zone has less capacity to absorb change than the northern zone, largely because it is isolated within open pasture and not associated with any other existing development. That said, recessive small scale built development on the toe of the fan is likely to be difficult to see from public places to the north and is unlikely to have any adverse effects on the scenic quality or the shared and recognised values of the landscape.

3.5.7 *Recommendations*

In regard to the northern Cecil Peak RV zone, the section close to the existing house, lodge and mature vegetation has capacity to absorb appropriately designed visitor facility

development at a low density and with adequate mitigation planting. However development would be more readily absorbed in land to the west within the loose homestead cluster.

Recessive low density buildings could also be absorbed on the fan toe of the southern RV zone without substantially altering or compromising the character and values of the wider landscape. The topography of the creek escarpment and drainage issues on the lower creek flats are likely to preclude development in this part of the zone.

In order to be successfully absorbed I consider that visitor facility development would need to be subject to the following controls:

- Maximum building height of 6m;
- Limits on building coverage to ensure that the scale and mass of development were appropriate;
- Recessive external building materials similar to those required for buildings in the PDP Rural Zone;
- Retention of existing mature vegetation near the northern RV Zone;
- Appropriate landscaping that was consistent with existing vegetation in the locality and effectively integrated built development.

3.6 Walter Peak RV Zone

The Walter Peak RV Zone is located on the southern side of the middle arm of Lake Wakatipu opposite Bobs Cove (refer **Figure 6** above) and is about 156 hectares in area. It has been zoned for visitor accommodation activities at least since the early 1980s. The zone is accessed by boat (regular visits by the Earnslaw) and from the Te Anau Mossburn Highway (SH94) via the Von and Mount Nicholas gravel roads.

The zone is within the same receiving landscape as the Cecil Peak RV Zones – the attributes and values of this landscape, and landscape category, are described in 3.5.2 to 3.5.4 above.

3.6.1 RV zone attributes and character

The zone is located at the base of Walter Peak. It takes in Von Hill - a *rôche moutonnée* that has been overridden by the Wakatipu glaciers, Beach Bay – the site of the Walter Peak ‘Colonel’s House’, and lake beach and alluvial flats (refer **Figures 16 and 17** in **Appendix B**). The south-eastern part of the zone extends up the toe slopes of Walter Peak. The only water course is a small stream that flows from the Walter Peak slopes to the eastern side of Beach Bay.

Beach Bay and the valley to the west contain a cluster of visitor facilities and associated infrastructure, including the wharf, Colonel’s homestead restaurant, Ardmore House, woolshed with café/shop, farm demonstration building, cycle and horse-trekking buildings, staff accommodation, and storage and generator buildings. Picnic areas have been developed on the foreshore and at Beach Point and there is a network of tracks for walking, cycling and horse riding around the Von Hill *rôche moutonnée*. A gravel carpark has been developed in the valley behind the bay and there is a grassed airstrip and helicopter landing pad further to the west.

Douglas fir on Beach Point and in the DOC recreation reserve on the eastern side of the bay have recently been removed, although mature trees remain at the bay behind the homestead. Revegetation with indigenous species has been undertaken in some of the cleared areas. Apart from exotic shelter belts along the roads and indigenous shrubland and eucalypts on the lakeside faces of the Von Hill headland, the majority of the land is covered in exotic grassland or crops. Fenced areas of the flats are used for sheep and horse grazing or cropping.

The zone currently has two character areas – the historic buildings and tourism development at Beach Bay and the valley to the west, and the remaining rural farmland or regenerating native vegetation on Von Hill headland and the western valley and flats.

In a submission to Stage 1 of the PDP Te Anau Developments Ltd (#607) sought rezoning of Beach Bay Recreation Reserve and the marginal strip from Beach Point to the bay from Rural Zone to Rural Visitor Zone. In their report on Stream 13, the Hearings Panel recommended that this rezoning be considered as part of the review of the Rural Visitor Zone. This land takes in the lake edge and beaches, gently sloping land within the bay to the east of the Colonel’s homestead and toe slopes of Walter Peak leading down to the lake edge. There is a large stand of mature Douglas fir on part of the Recreation Reserve, some of which appear to be failing

(refer **Photograph 23** in **Appendix B**). Terracing and track earthworks undertaken in the reserve have adversely affected the natural character and visual integrity of the bay.

3.6.2 *RV zone landscape sensitivity and landscape absorption capacity (refer **Figure 18** in **Appendix B**)*

The ONL setting of the zones is very highly valued (refer 3.5.3 above) by the local community and by national and international tourists. The character and values of the landscape are sensitive to changes that degrade perceived naturalness, scenic quality (including visual coherence), memorability, remoteness and tranquillity, and shared and recognised values. The heritage values associated with historic high country station buildings at Walter Peak are also vulnerable to landscape change that detracts from the integrity of their landscape setting.

Existing tourism development at Beach Bay is largely well established and forms an expected node of modification within the wider ONL. Recent newer development (including the farm demonstration building and utility buildings) has been designed to be visually recessive so that it does not detract from the red and cream-coloured former farmstead buildings. Built development is largely confined to the beach slope and the alluvial valley behind the beach and is enclosed by the Von Hill peninsula and the steep slopes of Walter Peak. While development is visible from the lake waters and, in some light conditions, from the Glenorchy-Queenstown Road, it is confined to a small area of the lake edge and is integrated by surrounding and background vegetation.

The bay area, including the flatter beach slope section of the recreation reserve, and the enclosed valley floor west of the bay have the ability to absorb well-designed development of a low density that does not detract from the heritage values of the bay and is not highly visible from the Mount Nicholas-Beach Bay Road.

The biophysical, natural and aesthetic qualities of the Von Hill headland and the lake edge slope and crest west of the headland are highly sensitive to built development or earthworks that modifies the natural landform or is visible from the Glenorchy – Queenstown Road. Such development could detract from the values of the wider ONL and the natural character of the margins of Lake Wakatipu. Development within the DOC marginal strip (which has been sought to be rezoned to RV) also has the potential to degrade the natural character of the lake margins.

The toe slopes of Walter Peak, both within the existing RV Zone (refer **Photograph 24** in **Appendix B**) and within the Beach Bay Recreation Reserve, also have little capacity to absorb visitor facility or visitor accommodation activities. Development in these more elevated areas could degrade the integrity and legibility of the mountain slopes, as well as adversely affecting the visual amenity of the bay and the wider landscape.

Open flat land west of the headland (refer **Photograph 25** in **Appendix B**), currently the site of the airstrip, has a moderately low ability to absorb visitor facility development. While this area of land is not visible from the lake itself, parts of it are seen from the Glenorchy-Queenstown Road (particularly at Twelve Mile Bluff and Rat Point) and it is completely open to the Mount

Nicholas-Beach Bay Road. The flat land does not have any topographical features that would absorb development and existing vegetation is limited to a short section of exotic shelterbelt along the road.

3.6.3 Recommendations

The Walter Peak RV zone area has capacity to absorb appropriately designed visitor facility development clustered with the existing tourist facilities at Beach Bay and in the enclosed valley flats to the west. Such development would not substantially alter or compromise the character and values of the wider landscape.

I note that parts of the Colonel's restaurant extend outside the RV Zone into a small lot that is privately owned. I recommend that this small lot be included in the RV Zone.

In order to be successfully absorbed I consider that visitor facility development would need to be subject to the following controls:

- Maximum building height of 6m;
- Limits on building coverage to ensure a low overall density of development;
- Protection of the landscape setting and heritage values of the Colonel's restaurant, Ardmore House and the woolshed;
- Except where buildings are designed to be coherent with the style, form and external materials of existing historic buildings, use of recessive external building materials similar to those required for buildings in the PDP Rural Zone;
- Retention or replacement of existing mature trees at the rear of Beach Bay;
- Appropriate landscaping that is either indigenous or consistent with existing vegetation in the locality and effectively integrates development (including earthworks);
- Location, design and landscaping of buildings to ensure development is not visually prominent from Mount Nicholas – Beach Bay Road.

3.7 Windermere RV Zone

The Windermere RV Zone is an approximately 23 hectare area of flat terrace land to the south and west of Wanaka airport (refer **Figure 7** below). It is about 8km east of Wanaka township and 4km east of Luggate on the Wanaka Luggate Highway (SH6).

The land was zoned RV as a result of an appeal to the 1995 ODP decisions, and special planning provisions were applied in order to recognise the proximity of the zone to Wanaka airport. Residential uses other than a single unit for on-site custodial purposes are non-complying in the zone and visitor accommodation is discretionary within the Outer Control Boundary of the airport.



Figure 7: Location of Windermere RV Zone.

3.7.1 Area of landscape

The zone is located within the landscape of the Upper Clutha Basin, specifically the outwash terraces and glacial moraine between the Clutha River Mata-Au and the Criffel Range. The land is largely freehold pastoral farmland, rural living properties, or council-owned airport.

3.7.2 Landscape description

Biophysical attributes
<p>The landscape consists of glacial moraine and outwash material that has been shaped by the subsequent fluvial action of the Clutha River (refer Figure 19 in Appendix B). Moving south from the Clutha a series of terraces rises up to the large outwash terrace on which the RV Zone and airport are located. Further south are older weathered outwash terraces against the toe of the Criffel Range mountains. West of the outwash plain is more varied rolling moraine extending as far as the Cardrona River.</p> <p>Vegetation within the landscape is predominantly pasture grasses, with exotic shelterbelts dividing paddocks and surrounding rural homesteads. There is some remnant grey shrubland on terrace escarpments and close to the Clutha River. While natural elements are dominant, the patterns and processes of the landscape are managed for pastoral farming. Predominant land uses are pastoral farming or cropping.</p> <p>Commercial buildings and hangars at Wanaka airport and the adjacent Transport & Toy Museum form a concentration of built development within the landscape, but buildings are otherwise widely scattered on properties of 20 hectares or more. Denser rural living is present near the intersection with Ballantyne Road and there are consented clusters of rural living lots at Corbridge Downs (RM120572) west of the airport.</p>
Sensory/perceptual attributes
<p>The key sensory attributes of the landscape are its general flatness and openness and the consequent availability of expansive views across the Upper Clutha Basin to surrounding mountain ranges. It is a moderately legible and memorable landscape for those reasons.</p> <p>The level of perceived naturalness is moderate, as a result of the presence of the airport cluster and the lack of natural vegetation patterns.</p> <p>Transient attributes include seasonal changes in cropping and vegetation colours and the presence of stock and birdlife.</p>
Associative attributes
<p>Historic associations of the landscape relate to the longstanding farming use of the land and the aviation and transport history associated with the airport and museum. The biennial Warbirds Over Wanaka airshow draws many aviation enthusiasts to the area.</p>

3.7.3 Landscape values

Based on an evaluation of the landscape attributes, and available information about community and visitor perceptions, the values attached to the receiving landscape include:

- **Moderate biophysical values, including naturalness**, as a result of the dominance of natural elements over human modifications and the relatively unmodified outwash plain and moraine landforms.
- **High scenic values**, as a result of the available expansive views across the open landscape to the wider Upper Clutha Basin and surrounding mountains. Views from SH6 are particularly valued.

- **Moderate memorability values**, as a result of the open landscape and available scenic views.
- **Moderate expressiveness values**, as a result of the legible outwash terraces eroded by later fluvial action.
- **Moderate heritage values**, associated with farming and aviation history within the landscape.

3.7.4 *Landscape category*

The landscape area containing the Windemere RV Zone has a moderate level of naturalness, a strongly rural character and a moderately high level of visual amenity, largely as a result of its openness and the available long range scenic views. It is appropriately categorised as a Rural Character Landscape in the PDP.

3.7.5 *RV zone attributes and character*

The RV Zone is a level area of pastoral outwash plain that adjoins the Wanaka Transport and Toy Museum to the east and the airport runway to the north (refer **Figure 20** in **Appendix B**). It is currently owned by the Queenstown Airport Corporation Ltd. The Airport Outer Control Boundary approximately bisects the zone.

The Windemere homestead lies just outside the zone, but the diagonal rows of gum and pine shelter belt that border the homestead extend into the zone and partially enclose farm sheds and another dwelling. Other scattered exotic shelter trees are present on the property, which is currently used for cattle grazing. An intermittent water course runs in a man-made channel through the middle of the site.

Consent was granted in 2010 for construction of 11 aircraft hangars within the zone (RM100030), but this consent has lapsed.

The zone currently has an open rural character, typical of working farmland within the Upper Clutha Basin.

3.7.6 *RV zone landscape sensitivity and landscape absorption capacity (refer **Figure 21** in **Appendix B**)*

The landscape setting of the RV Zone is rural in character, although modified by the concentration of commercial development around Wanaka airport. The key values of the landscape are its openness and legible outwash plain topography, as well as the extensive scenic views. The values are vulnerable to development that substantially obscures views from SH6 and other public roads or compromises the pleasantness and coherence of the surrounding rural landscape. SH6 is a heavily used commuter and tourist highway and the potentially affected viewing audience is consequently high in volume.

The presence of the airport buildings and the Transport and Toy museum means that additional development on the site that was clustered with this node could be more readily absorbed than development in more distant parts of the zone. Given the large area of the

zone, full development of the land could be perceived as sprawl from the airport along the highway.

Tall built development or vegetative screening close to SH6 would block wider views of the landscape (refer **Photograph 30** in **Appendix B**) and this portion of the zone consequently has less absorption capacity than land set back further from the highway.

3.7.7 Recommendations

The Windemere RV zone area has little capacity to absorb visitor accommodation because of its proximity to the airport and the associated noise issues. Development that was compatible with existing commercial airport and museum uses and was of a height and location that did not obscure valued scenic views could be appropriately absorbed. However I consider that such development should be densely clustered close to the existing node rather than spread out across the zone.

In order to be successfully absorbed I consider that any development would need to be subject to the following controls:

- Maximum building height of 10m, consistent with commercial buildings within the airport and museum to the east;
- A road setback of at least 75 metres to maintain views to the Grandview mountains from SH6;
- Recessive external building materials similar to those required for buildings in the PDP Rural Zone.

4 Summary and conclusions

4.1 Summary and conclusions

The RV Zones in the ODP are, with the exception of the Windemere zone, set within the outstanding natural landscapes of the District. These landscapes have significant biophysical, sensory and associative values that require protection from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.

The planning provisions for the ODP RV Zone are relatively enabling, and could facilitate high density, bulky and visually prominent development. Such development has the potential to detract from the quality, character and values of the surrounding landscapes.

This landscape assessment has evaluated the attributes and values of the landscapes within which the zones sit, and described the sensitivity of these landscapes. The landscape absorption capacity of the zones themselves has also been mapped.

The main conclusions of the assessment are as follows:

- Some of the zones (eg. Arcadia and Walter Peak) are extensive in area and contain land that has little capacity to absorb development without degradation of the quality and character of the surrounding landscape.
- Other zones (eg. Blanket Bay, Cardrona and Arthurs Point), while appropriately located for visitor facility, residential or commercial development, contain sensitive areas where development is likely to result in significant adverse visual and/or landscape effects.
- The Windemere zone has some capacity to absorb development that is compatible with the adjacent airport and museum uses, as long as valued scenic views from SH6 are retained.
- More stringent controls over the location, density, height, external appearance and landscaping of buildings would be required to ensure that development within the zones was successfully absorbed within the landscape.

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17 May 2019

Appendix A

Landscape attributes

Landscape Attributes

Biophysical attributes, which can include:

- Geology and soils
- Topography and landform
- Ecological patterns and processes
- Hydrological patterns and water bodies
- Vegetation patterns and types
- Land use, including structures and buildings
- Historic sites, buildings or features
- Likely future (permitted or consented) activities in the environment

Sensory and perceptual attributes, which can include:

- Available views of the landscape
- Scenic attributes – resulting from characteristics such as scale, complexity, coherence, contrast, composition and balance
- Openness – a lack of enclosure by vegetation, buildings or topography
- Legibility or expressiveness – how obviously the landscape demonstrates its formative processes
- Naturalness – to what extent the landscape is perceived as being modified by humans
- Memorability – how strongly the landscape creates a picture or impression in people’s minds that is carried with them
- Experiential attributes other than visual, such as sounds, smells and the ability to access and experience the landscape
- Tranquillity – a sense of peacefulness and quiet
- The darkness of the night sky
- Wildness – the sense of being in a remote and relatively unmodified area
- Transient attributes – those that change during the day or occur intermittently, such as tides, weather-related changes, human activities and wildlife

Associative attributes, which can include:

- Associations and meanings for tangata whenua
- Historic associations and stories attached to the landscape
- Cultural associations relating to shared cultural identity or the sense of attachment to place
- Spiritual associations, such as meanings attached to particular landscapes or pilgrimage sites

Appendix B

Maps and photographs for each Rural Visitor Zone