

**BEFORE AN INDEPENDENT HEARING PANEL
APPOINTED BY THE QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT COUNCIL**

UNDER the Resource Management Act 1991

IN THE MATTER of a Variation to Proposed Queenstown Lake District Plan for
Te Pūtahi Ladies Mile Zones

STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF JANA REWI WILLIAM DAVIS

**ON BEHALF OF
KĀI TAHU KI MURIHIKU, KĀI TAHU KI OTAGO AND
TE RŪNANGA O NGĀI TAHU**

(collectively, Kāi Tahu)

20 October 2023

MIHIMIHI

1. Tenei te mihi atu kia koutou,
Ko Waitaha, Ko Kāti Mamoe, Ko Kāi Tahu kā Iwi
Ko Takitimu tōku waka, Ko Hananui te mauka
Ko Aparima me Waiau te awa
Ko Ōraka-Aparima taku rūnaka
Ko Takutai o te tītī tōku marae
Ko Putauhinu tōku kāika
Nō Tāhuna me Waihōhai ahau
Ko Bill Davis tōku Poua – te upoko o Ōraka-Aparima
Ko Jane Davis tōku Taua
Ko Rewi Davis tōku Papa
Ko Jana Davis tōku ikoa
Tehei Mauriora!
2. Tēnā koutou katoa

I wish to acknowledge the Chair and the Hearings Panel and all those involved in the proceedings, who are tasked with the significant responsibility of safeguarding our waters, our land, and the well-being of future generations ki uta ki tai – from the mountains to the sea. I wish to acknowledge the complexities of the balancing of social, cultural and environmental expectations in an ever-expanding world, and wish to acknowledge the importance of working towards mutually beneficial outcomes for both our community and the environment. I believe that the land and the water will not be healed until the people are healed. Educated, and informed. In some instances, I prefer to use the collective *We* as I carry with me my Tīpuna before me and my mokopuna yet to come.

INTRODUCTION

3. My full name is Jana Rewi William Davis.
4. I was born and raised in Tāhuna / Queenstown under our great mauka Kawarau and Pahaaraki, the Remarkables and Coronet Peak.
5. I affiliate to Te Rūnaka o Kāi Tahu and I am a member of Te Rūnaka o Ōraka-Aparima who are one of the seven Rūnaka from Murihiku and Otago who are mana whenua in the Queenstown Lakes District.
6. The takiwā of the Murihiku Rūnaka stretches from the southern Tītī/Crown islands up past Lake Hāwea. We share our kaitiaki role in the inland lakes and mountains and along the Mata-au (Clutha River) with the Otago Rūnaka.
7. I am Pou Tūraka / Chief Executive Officer at Te Tapu o Tāne Limited, a conservation organisation which is jointly owned by the four Papatipu Rūnaka of Murihiku. Our ikoa (name) means ‘The Sacredness of Tāne and his tamariki’ (the forest). Our goal is to grow and plant quality native trees and plants and to restore the mauri of our whenua (land) and awa (rivers) by undertaking catchment rehabilitation from a te ao māori perspective.
8. I am a member of the Waiwhakaata Lake Hayes Strategy Group representing the community voice of mana whenua, I report back to Rūnaka via Aukaha and Te Ao Marama on this group.

I sit on this group with a member of Puketeraki Rūnaka, and representatives of Otago Regional Council, Department of Conservation, Queenstown Lakes District Council and Friends of Lake Hayes.

9. I have also been involved in progressing catchment restoration work through the Lake Hayes Vision Programme and my previous role as Kaiwhakahaere Mahi / Chief Operating Officer of Mana Tahuna, a charitable trust that is leading collaborative restoration work in the Waiwhakaata catchment named Vision Lake Hayes.
10. I am writing this document in support of our Kāi Tahu Papatipu Rūnaka and on behalf of our most precious natural asset – Wai-māori (fresh water). I am deeply committed to safeguarding the health of our water bodies and existing and preexisting ecosystems, recognising the biocultural significance that affects whānau both positively and negatively ki uta ki tai.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

11. Our connection with wai-māori and the biodiversity that it helps sustain forms an intrinsic part of the cultural identity of Kai Tahu Whānui.¹ The connection between Mana Whenua and wai-māori extends through time with whakapapa. The connection encompasses and envelops Rangatiratanga and Kaitiakitanga obligations, it is our duty as the temporary stewards to protect the mauri of wai-māori. What happens in our headwaters causes cumulative effects that reverberate downstream, affecting kaimoana, fisheries, plants, taonga birds and as such the cultural identity of Kāi Tahu. To reduce the significant value of wai-māori is to reduce the identity of Mana Whenua Kai Tahu Whānui.
12. Over the past 4 years, I have spent a large focus on restoring Waiwhakaata/ Lake Hayes. Why? Because I have witnessed its significant deterioration within my lifetime. As a representative of Kāi Tahu ki Murihiku on the Waiwhakaata Lake Hayes Strategy Group, I have actively participated in fundraising, planting, supporting consents and supporting positive outcomes for freshwater and biodiversity in the Waiwhakaata catchment.
13. The changes observed in Waiwhakaata are significant and should be addressed. We are seeing reduced eel populations, episodic fish kills, algal blooms and more. I have concerns about continued sediment discharges from Urban Development and increased town populations. We are concerned in relation to stormwater run-off and its potential to contain contaminants. There will always be a knock on effect to expansion of our towns; cumulative effects are real and should be addressed in an integrated approach.
14. I wish to extend my heartfelt acknowledgement to Mana Whenua, Matawaka and Takata Tiriti who have been working on the catchment and building momentum for educating around manaaki to our whenua and promoting an integrated approach to restoration activities.
15. To effectively implement an integrated "ki uta ki tai" approach, we must wholeheartedly embrace the concept of integration. By solely adhering to formal zoning and not recognizing the importance of integration, we risk undermining the principles of integrated catchment

¹ Kāi Tahu Whānui refers to the uri or descendants of the Waitaha, Kāti Māmoe and Kāi Tahu peoples who settled Te Wai Pounamu.

management, which require us to consider the broader environment both upstream and downstream from our kaika, our homes, and communities.

16. The biggest concern around cumulative effects is distributed effects across te Taiao. Cumulative effects commence at the top of the catchment and accumulate, affecting whānau all the way to the moana. A ki uta ki tai approach is necessary where we are not restricted by borders and regional zoning.
17. The biggest test that we face is to rise to the challenge and understand what shared success can look like for our precious catchments. Success is building the whare for whānau to live in, and protecting the environment that sustains the whare and the whānau into the future. Both are necessary for survival.
18. I have deep concerns about the changing narratives from one in one-in-a-hundred year events to one-in-twenty year events. Cumulative effects are real and they are present.
19. The deterioration of Wai-Māori and Mahika Kai values will be to our own peril. It starts with our small lakes, like Waiwhakaata, and it will end with our great lakes.

WAIWHAKAATA STRATEGY GROUP

20. For the Waiwhakaata catchment it is essential to have good collaboration between stakeholders, because there are so many. The stakeholders range from homeowners to golf courses, farmers to ski fields; all contributing to both positive and negative effects on the catchment. The progress made towards improving the health of Waiwhakaata has come about because of fantastic community collaboration and partnership.
21. We have seen the establishment of the Waiwhakaata Strategy Group with the Otago Regional Council, Department of Conservation, Queenstown Lakes District Council and Friends of Lake Hayes. The Waiwhakaata Lake Hayes Strategy Group is working to revise the existing Lake Hayes strategy and develop a new action plan to improve the lake's water quality. This collaborative effort aims to prioritize Te Mana o te Wai and the lake's health and well-being in decision-making processes.
22. The strategic approach the group is taking is about assessing the opportunity and redefining what success looks like for Waiwhakaata for our community moving forward - to be equally driven across the four pou of social, cultural, economical and environmental outcomes.
23. As part of this project, cultural studies of Waiwhakaata have been undertaken, led by Aukaha and Te Ao Marama. These looked at how our relationship as kaitiaki to our taoka has been degraded, as its mauri has suffered over decades of mistreatment. The studies set out expectations around what is required to uplift the mana of the lake and of Kāi Tahu as kaitiaki, including creating the circumstances so that mahika kai species such as tuna and kōura can thrive. In my opinion, the state of degraded mauri is currently at its worst at the southwest end of the lake near Te Pūtahi Ladies Mile, partly because the main focus of our restoration to date has been in the upper part of the catchment and at the north end of the lake.
24. In summary, we advocate for an integrated approach (ki uta ki tai) to catchment management across the region - if we do not stand up for our precious environment it will be to our own peril.

KAITIAKITANGA

25. Our Kaitiakitaka obligations are brought about by the symbiotic relationship between Wai Māori, taoka manu and taoka tīpu.
26. Mahika Kai – Toitū te marae o Tāne, Toitū te marae o Tangaroa, Toitū te Iwi – care for the land and water and the people will be sustained. What’s good for the land and the water is good for the people.
27. Maintaining sustainable mahika kai practices forms part of maintaining Kāi Tahu cultural identity. It is how we pass on mātauranga māori from generation to generation. The common misconception around mahika kai, cultural harvest is about more than just consumption; this might involve the harvesting of tītī or tuna for kai, or the stripping of tree bark for medicinal purposes. Mahika Kai is about a balanced and healthy ecosystem – toitū te marae o Tāne, toitū te marae o Takaroa, toitū te Iwi, care for the land and water and the people will be sustained. The harvest does not take place unless the environment is in balance, if the environment is not in balance, then the value is not being upheld.
28. The connection my whānau has with being Kaitiaki stretches back through time. My Taua (grandmother) Jane Davis was a mana Kaitiaki for Kai Tahu whānui. During her lifetime my Taua was told not to speak Te Reo Māori, this was one form of separating my Taua from her natural Identity. With the changing of time and land acquisition came the loss of language and connection. Between the 1980’s and early 2000’s it was evident that a great deal of knowledge that sat with our Kaumatua might be lost. And as such Kāi Tahu started documenting the stories of our Kaumatua.
29. There is one video of my Taua that always sticks with me; it’s her sitting in her whare where we used to drink tea and talk about Tītī and our island Putauhinu. Taua was asked a question about Wai-māori, “How clean should wai-māori be in this country?” Taua replied, ‘Clean enough that you can drink it.’ I see this as the expectation and the standard set by Mana Whenua that we should always strive for, no matter where we whakapapa to. The taking of Mahika Kai imposes a manaaki obligation to give back to our waterways. By protecting the mauri of wai-māori, we protect the cultural identity of Kāi Tahu.

KI UTA KI TAI

30. We are seeing cumulative effects from sediment impact, stormwater, deforestation, water takes, and urban development necessitate holistic management to prevent downstream consequences in our awa, wetlands and ecosystems.
31. The enduring relationship between Kāi Tahu and the Mata-au (Clutha) catchment is deeply rooted and is formally acknowledged through the Ngai Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998. The lakes and wetlands within this catchment have been essential sources of mahika kai for generations.
32. The degradation of Waiwhakaata results from both rural and urban activities. For example, deforestation and nutrient-rich sediment discharges from rural areas have contributed to its decline. While at a regional level, the Omnibus Plan Change - Plan Change 8 hearing addressed rural discharges, this evidence focuses on the impacts of urban development, particularly sediment and contaminant discharges from development earthworks and stormwater.

33. Waiwhakaata is currently degraded. Nutrient rich sediment entering the lake has contributed to algal blooms, regular and now normalised fish kills, and restricts use of the lake during the summer months.
34. I have spent the last four years campaigning for Waiwhakaata / Lake Hayes because I have seen first-hand the effects on this small lake in my lifetime. If the degradation of our small lake can happen in just 50 years, what will happen to our great lakes?
35. The impacts on Waiwhakaata are coming from both rural activities and urban activities. Examples of rural impacts include clearance of forestry plantations, and discharges of nutrient rich sediment from rural parts of the catchment.
36. I believe that both those residing on the lake and those impacting its condition should share collective responsibility. It's worth noting the irony that many of the workers involved in the lake's restoration cannot afford to live in its vicinity.

HOUSING

37. Housing in Queenstown Lakes District is difficult, everybody deserves to live in a warm and healthy whare. I fully support development and expansion, but I believe that we are still yet to get the balance right between economic growth and biocultural significance.
38. Having whakapapa and being born and raised within the Queenstown Lakes District, I am deeply concerned about the substantial growth and burden this growth places on whānau and our environment. The expectations of mana whenua for this catchment align with all of the mahi that they are supporting within the catchment. We believe that the land and the water will not be healed until the people are healed.

CONCLUSION

39. As Kāi Tahu Kaitiaki and a deeply concerned community member, I challenge Ladies Mile developers to rise to the occasion and work on solutions and opportunities that do support the catchment to thrive. After all, the very reason people would intend to move to the area is to live in this outstanding natural landscape. There is so much opportunity to contribute to the catchment in an integrated way.
40. I believe that collaboration across agencies and developers that are shaping the future of our town must adopt an integrated approach.
41. The vision for protecting all water bodies cannot be achieved in isolation.
42. To adopt an integrated approach, we must have a mutual understanding of what success looks like. And this can only be achieved with better relationships and common goals.
43. How do we build better developments in Queenstown? We set the standard for others to rise to the occasion. It takes innovation, collaboration and working towards common goals.
44. Thank you to the Panel and those here today for hearing my statement, mō tatou a mō kā uri a muri ake nei.

Nāku iti noa, nā,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several fluid, overlapping loops and a long, sweeping tail that extends downwards and to the left.

Jana Davis

Waitaha, Kāti Mamoe, Kāi Tahu

Te Rūnaka o Ōraka-Aparima

Te Rūnanga o Hokonui

20 October 2023