

Before Queenstown Lakes District Council

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In the matter of            The Resource Management Act 1991

And                            The Queenstown Lakes District proposed District Plan –  
Rezoning Hearing Topic 13 Queenstown Mapping – Group 1B  
(Queenstown Urban, Frankton and South)

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**SUMMARY EVIDENCE OF STEPHEN SKELTON FOR**

Oasis in the Basin (Further Submitter 1289)

Dated 17 August 2017

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## SUMMARY EVIDENCE

### INTRODUCTION

- 1 My name is Stephen Russell Skelton.
- 2 My Evidence in Chief dated 9 June 2017 outlines my experience and qualifications relevant to this evidence in respect of the Queenstown Mapping Hearings of the Proposed District Plan (**PDP**).
- 3 My Evidence in Chief considered submission #338 in three parts:
  - a. whether the notified Outstanding Natural Landscape (**ONL**) landscape category, in relation to that part of the land subject to the submission as located within the notified ONL (**Site**), is correct;
  - b. the effects of rezoning the Site Low Density Residential (**LDR**);
  - c. the landscape effects of establishing of a road between the Frankton Road – Hawthorne Road roundabout and the Site.
2. My brief in respect to a and b above is limited to the part of the proposed LDR zone located within the ONL as notified in the PDP Site and I have not considered the parts of the proposal outside of the ONL since preparing my evidence in chief. I have read Dr Marion Read's rebuttal evidence dated July 7<sup>th</sup>.
3. The Site is part of a glacier overridden - alluvial terrace landscape which holds a strong natural rural character. The proposed residential activities would take place over a series of land parcels on north facing slopes near Lake Johnson. A road is also proposed which would be cut into south facing slopes near the foot of Ferry Hill, crossing undulating topography south, east and north of Lake Johnson.

### LANDSCAPE CATEGORY

4. My Evidence in Chief assessed the landscape category under the amended Pigeon Bay factors. I found:
  - a. The Site is part of a highly legible glacier overridden landform;
  - b. A significant feature in this landscape is Lake Johnson, which rests in an elevated position between two larger mountain forms;
  - c. The landscape exists between areas with rural (north) and urban (south) values. From the rural north, the Site's open character and

dominant pastoral cover provides an open, rural context, often acting as the frontispiece to views towards the Remarkables Mountains. From the urban south, the Site contributes to a sense of an open, rural character and an awareness of the dominant surrounding lake and mountain landscapes which give the Wakatipu Basin and wider District much of its aesthetic value.

- d. Lake Johnson is 'hidden' from views as experienced from the greater part of the landscape. Its isolated qualities give it a sense of remoteness that, while near an urban environment, can be experienced without the visual interference of the built form. Lake Johnson holds a sense of place which is unique in its proximity to more urban environments.
  - e. The Site's pastoral activities and open grasslands are strongly associated with cultural understandings of place while the few patches of indigenous scrubland exhibit the Site's ecological context.
  - f. Lake Johnson holds significant recreation values which are shared and widely recognised.
5. I consider that the Site is part of an ONL. It is the northern ONL boundary that Submission #338 seeks to realign to a minor extent. I consider that the PDP ONL boundary east of Hansen Road is a more robust and defensible interpretation of the northern ONL boundary that shown in the Operative District Plan. I do not support the relief sought by the submitter to realign this ONL boundary. Dr Read and I are in agreement as to the appropriate location of this boundary.

#### **PROPOSED LDR ZONE WITHIN THE ONL**

6. The submission seeks to establish a LDR zone in the ONL above and to the east of Lake Johnson as well as on the lower slopes to the north and northwest of the lake. These slopes are highly visible throughout much of the Wakatipu Basin, display a high degree of openness and act as the frontispiece to views of the Remarkables Mountains. I consider that development of the scale proposed would have very high adverse effects on the character and quality of the ONL as it would enable built development to cloak and modify the legible landform resulting in a significant loss of the landscape's rural and natural character.
7. I also consider that the relief sought would result in very high adverse effects on the natural, open character of Lake Johnson. Furthermore, the visual amenity as experienced from public and private places north and northeast of the Site

would be adversely affected to a moderate to high degree as the type of development proposed would detract from views of the dramatic mountains.

### **ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED ACCESS ROAD**

8. The proposal seeks to establish an access road from the Frankton Road – Hawthorne Drive roundabout, crossing the elevated south facing slopes between Ferry Hill and Lake Johnson, then crossing Hansen Road near the Site's highpoint and entering the proposed LDR. This road would be widely visible from public and private places, would likely be urban in appearance and in places would require significant cuts. I consider this road would degrade the rural character and natural values of the ONL. These south facing slopes provide an open, rural context to the rapidly urbanising areas of Frankton. I consider the open, rural character and natural values of the Site will be more widely recognised as the valley floor urbanises. I consider that the proposed access road would have moderate to high adverse effects on the landscape's quality and character and visual amenity as experienced from public and private places, including Hansen Road and that there is very limited capacity to avoid, remedy or mitigate these adverse effects.

### **CONCLUSION**

9. This submission is for the rezoning of a portion of Rural land to Low Density Residential and the establishment of a road between the Frankton Road – Hawthorne Road roundabout and the Site. I have considered the effects of this relief on the ONL portions of the landscape. I consider the ONL category boundary as notified in the PDP to be a robust interpretation of the landscape boundary. I also consider LDR type development within the ONL would have a very high adverse effect on the quality and character of the landscape and on visual amenity. Finally, I also consider that the proposed access road would have moderate to high adverse effects on the quality and character of the landscape and visual amenity.

**Stephen Skelton**

**17 August 2017**