

**BEFORE THE HEARINGS PANEL FOR THE QUEENSTOWN LAKES
PROPOSED DISTRICT PLAN**

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management
Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER of Hearing Stream 13 –
Queenstown Mapping

BETWEEN **GIBBSTON VALLEY
STATION**

Submitter (#827)

**PLANNING EVIDENCE OF GREGORY WILLIAM HUNT
ON BEHALF OF GIBBSTON VALLEY STATION**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 My name is Gregory William Hunt. I am the CEO and one of two directors of Gibbston Valley Station (“GVS”). I am authorised to provide this evidence to the Hearings Panel on behalf of GVS (submitter 827) in relation to our company’s submission in the Queenstown-Lakes District Plan Planning Maps.

2. PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND & EXPERIENCE

Landscape Architecture

- 2.1 I obtained a Bachelor of Science (BSc), Landscape Architecture and Planning, from the California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. I am a licensed Landscape Architect in California.
- 2.2 Prior to relocating to New Zealand, I had I had eight years’ experience as a Landscape Architect in the United States.

Millbrook Resort

- 2.3 From 1993 to 2000, I was the General Manager of Development, and Landscape Architect for Millbrook Resort, Queenstown.
- 2.4 At Millbrook, I did the master plan, and was responsible for the financial control of capital construction. I oversaw the design for a significant portion of the resort, including:
- a) The Butel Inn;
 - b) The Millhouse Restaurant;
 - c) Keachy’s Restaurant;
 - d) The Health & Fitness facility – which contains a gymnasium, a 25m lap pool, outdoor hot pools, and sauna;
 - e) The Village Inn; and
 - f) Mulligan’s Ridge.

- 2.5 In addition, I oversaw the design and construction of the Wharf Casino in Queenstown.

Infinity Investment Group

- 2.6 From 2001 to 2006 I was the General Manager at Infinity Investment Group, a Wanaka-based property development company which I founded with Bob and Jen Robertson. My role was to oversee the planning, design and development of the construction projects.
- 2.7 I oversaw the planning and consent process for several large developments, including:
- a) Sunrise Bay - a high-end 20 lot subdivision in Wanaka;
 - b) Far Horizon Park - a rural residential subdivision, consisting of 45 4000m² sections, in Wanaka;
 - c) Peninsula Bay - a 240 lot subdivision in Wanaka;
 - d) Lakeside Apartments - a 24 unit, three story apartment complex in Wanaka;
 - e) Marina Terrace Apartments - a consented 200 room luxury 5-star hotel overlooking Lake Wanaka;
 - f) Riverside Park – a 224 lot subdivision in Wanaka with a range of sections sized from 700m² to 1851m²; and
 - g) Pegasus Town - a new town in the Waimakariri District of Canterbury, 25km north of Christchurch.

Gibbston Valley Station and Gibbston Valley Winery

- 2.8 I have been the CEO of GVS since April 2007, and the CEO of Gibbston Valley Wine (“GVW”) since January 2009.
- 2.9 In 2006, I joined Phil Griffith in the development of GVS, a 1000 acre consented development which includes private residencies, visitor accommodation, Vintner’s Village, spa facility, workers accommodation and workshop area.

- 2.10 My role was to develop a master plan and manage the consenting process through to the consent which was granted in 2008.

Greenstone Entertainment

- 2.11 I have been a partner of Greenstone Entertainment since May 2012. Greenstone Entertainment is a partnership between Alpine Entertainment and GVW, which runs concerts and events in New Zealand.
- 2.12 Greenstone Entertainment hosts the inaugural Gibbston Valley Winery Summer concert, and has held concerts in Taupo and Matakana. Previous headliners include Creedence Clearwater Revisited, Dr. Hook, Doobie Brothers, Little River Band, Pat Benatar, Neil Giraldo, Starship and Lynyrd Skynyrd, amongst others. More than 16,000 people attended the 2017 Gibbston Valley Winery Summer concert.

Destination Queenstown

- 2.13 I have been a Director of Destination Queenstown Incorporated, since 2012. Destination Queenstown is the Regional Tourism Organisation responsible for marketing Queenstown as the Southern Hemisphere's premier lake and alpine resort.
- 2.14 In preparing my brief I have reviewed the proposed planning provisions and Structure Plan relating to the Gibbston Valley Sub Zone, and the supporting evidence of Mr Brett Giddens, Mr Andy Carr, Ms Nikki Smetham, Mr Chris Keys, Mr Ken Gousmett.

3. THE 2008 RESOURCE CONSENT

- 3.1 In 2008, resource consent was granted for GVS. This included private residences, visitor accommodation, Vintner's Village, spa facility, worker's accommodation, and a workshop area.
- 3.2 I was instrumental in organising and obtaining the resource consent granted to GVS in 2008 and was intimately involved in that process, and this process now before the Hearings Panel.
- 3.3 The landscape setting for this consent included vineyards, native plantings, an 18-hole golf course and areas that had archaeological and historical

importance as well as ecological importance. We had also worked with the Queenstown Trails Trust to allow a trail to be located on GVS to ensure the network could continue from Arrow Junction down through Gibbston Valley and in the future through the Kawarau Gorge.

- 3.4 However, due to the global financial crisis, 2008 was not the ideal time to develop the resort. At this point, GVW was experiencing some financial difficulties and the brand needed to be rejuvenated. We realised that GVW was an integral part of people's perception of GVS and the resort activity and therefore I stepped in as the CEO of GVW to re-build the brand and ensure it was on a good financial footing.
- 3.5 From 2009 to 2017 we undertook some development at GVW to improve the tourism experience and the winemaking capabilities.
- 3.6 We have repositioned the Gibbston Valley ("GV") brand in preparation for when we wanted to develop the GVS. It was necessary to ensure that the GV brand was perceived as one of quality and one that people could have confidence in.
- 3.7 GV and its winery is one of the most long-established features of the district and has worked hard to win and treasure the confidence of the district, but particularly the residents and visitors of the Gibbston area.
- 3.8 GVW is now repositioned as a quality brand and its financial positioning is very strong. These factors, together with the fact the local economy and the New Zealand economy are strong, indicated that it was the correct time to re-consider GVS and the development of the resort on the station.

The 2008 Consultation Process

- 3.9 Throughout my 32 years' experience in master planning, one lesson I have learned is the importance of consultation. GVS spent two years consulting with the local and wider community before applying for its resource consent in 2007.
- 3.10 The consultation process always begins with a mix of curiosity and a negative perspective from those who may be affected by what is being proposed. GVS held regular meetings with the local community and set up an office at the winery that was open during business hours for anyone

who had any questions to be able to call in and discuss whatever issues they may have had.

- 3.11 Through this process, we recognised what the local community thought would be a good outcome from our proposal. We learned what the community did not want to see, or would like to be included.
- 3.12 We consulted with diverse parties such as Gibbston Trails Trust, Environmental Society, Historical Society, local Iwi, the Mountain Bike Group, local residents, local businesses, Vineyard and Winery Owners, Council Planners and service providers.
- 3.13 There were many more parties we consulted, but this gives an indication of the groups and individuals who we listened to. Through all of this dialogue and over the course of two years we developed a plan. By time we went to the hearing, we found that we had favour with the local community and most of the wider community.
- 3.14 It was a large resource consent to be granted, and it was not appealed to the Environment Court. This gave me satisfaction knowing that the local and wider community supported what we were proposing and many came and spoke in support at our hearing. I am comfortable that what we spoke about and promised to the wider and local community follows through in the master plan that is now being proposed and built on as part of this process.

4. DISTRICT PLAN REVIEW

- 4.1 The current review of the Queenstown-Lakes District Plan (“the District Plan”) has allowed GVS the opportunity to reassess the development it was authorised in 2008. Since 2008, the economic and social environment in the Lakes District has changed considerably. In particular, in regard to residential, visitor and short-term workers’ accommodation.
- 4.2 This District Plan review meant that GVS could reassess the consent it had been granted and re-evaluate it, based on what was more appropriate in 2017.

- 4.3 This process allowed us to review the resort and re-evaluate it based on our desire to create an integrated development within a frame work that would allow the ability to craft the specific areas that would achieve the outcome we wanted to achieve but give certainty to the Council and the community of the end result. This is very different to a resource consent which in my experience has been a very costly process with a high degree of uncertainty. The process also inevitably requires variations as things change and added pressure arises due to the 5 year timeframe of consents.
- 4.4 GVS has protected the historical, archaeological and ecological areas of importance as well as still providing for local amenities that were requested and I will outline in this evidence.
- 4.5 As part of the process I have carried out, through the review of the District Plan, I have spoken with many of the parties who spoke in support of our original consent and they are still comfortable with what we are proposing in this current application. These include local residents, wine growers and special interest groups such as the Wakatipu Trails Trust.
- 4.6 Through my experience in developing master plans, I believe the correct approach is to give certainty of outcome in the District Plan itself while allowing flexibility for changes. Such changes might be required as the development matures or outside influences such as social or economic requirements dictate.

5. THE GVS CONCEPT

Vintner's Village

- 5.1 The Vintner's Village is part of GVS's resource consent, and will conceptually flow into the development envisaged by the sub-zone. In consulting with the local Gibbston community, as part of GVS's resource consent process, we promised the local community that the Vintner's Village would include a cellar door where the local wine makers, who do not have a cellar door, could promote and sell their wine.

- 5.2 In addition, we propose to hold a farmer's market where the produce on GVS will be sold as well as being available for those off-site to sell their produce.
- 5.3 The Vintner's Market will be a gathering point for our guests, residents as well as those who live in the local and wider community. Being located on State Highway 6, the Vintners Market will draw in travellers to visit the cellar door, farmer's market and add to the richness of the experience for those who are staying on the resort.
- 5.4 GVS is also considering the idea of a day-care and after-school facility. This would be available to GVS and GVW staff, the local community and guests. In addition, consideration is being given to a café, and a local store where the local community could come and get their daily requirements such as milk, bread and other essential grocery items saving the travel time and effort involved in going to Arrowtown as would currently be required for such items. My experience in Gibbston over many years now indicates that this facility would be greatly appreciated by the local community and would also form a gathering point for locals and visitors to interact.
- 5.5 The Vintner's Village would also act as our concierge and reception for those visiting the GVS. Around the Vintner's Village are nodes of residential and visitor accommodation to the east and west of the concert site. On the north of the highway, linked by and underpass, there is another node of residential and visitor accommodation. The underpass will cater for pedestrian and cycle links as well as passenger vehicles.
- 5.6 Vintner's Village will form a "hub" for those living, visiting and staying in these nodes of development. The resort will offer a concierge service for our residential owners. This service will maintain and service all of the properties on the resort.
- 5.7 The subdivision plan GVS has had consented will be modified; we will limit the owners' footprint to their build form, with the balance of the property being retained under the ownership of GVS. This means GVS can ensure that the property is maintained to the quality and standard we require, and to a level which will be acceptable for QLDC's requirements for the

Gibbston valley and its planning overlay. This will include the maintenance of the utility services.

An Organic Approach

- 5.8 GVW is the pioneer winery in Central Otago, and in keeping with its pioneering approach, GVW is in the process of converting all its vineyards to be organic.
- 5.9 In addition, the intended future orchards and plantings will also be organic, and will form the basis not only for our approach to winemaking - but also set the theme for the overall resort.
- 5.10 GVS believes that an overall organic approach is not only the correct position to take environmentally, but from a global tourism perspective. We believe our organic philosophy will be viewed favourably by visitors to GVS, and the wider community.

Oenology and Culinary School

- 5.11 We envisage incorporating a culinary and oenology (the science of wine and winemaking) school as a focus of GVS in AA2 of the sub zone, which would naturally have an affiliation with the viticulture the region is recognised for.
- 5.12 GVW's history and approach to winemaking allows us uniquely to position the proposed oenology and culinary school. We are basing the school concept on practices that we are currently undertaking, rather than telling a story of what we intend to do.
- 5.13 Philosophically, and physically, the winery and the resort activity will intermingle with the oenology school. The envisaged horticultural activities of the orchards and the plantings will follow the same practices that the winery undertakes – being an organic approach, with a focus on sustainability.
- 5.14 GVS has envisioned for the resort a concept of a “paddock to plate” philosophy that will underline not only our marketing positioning for the resort but will also create the physical landscape setting and the environmental approach we take for the resort, being a District Plan integrated one.

- 5.15 The culinary and oenology school would be located to the north of the winery. It is intended that the school will be the centre of activity, with close access to the vegetable gardens, orchards and vineyards which are integral to the educative courses to be provided. We intend to offer courses to tourists staying in our visitor accommodation, and potentially to students with an interest in these areas.
- 5.16 GVS is in discussion with Queenstown Resort College (“QRC”) to integrate classes for QRC students who have an interest in tourism, culinary or oenology. Such a partnership would be a great opportunity for local students to learn more about Gibbston Valley’s unique character.

6. LANDSCAPE CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 A critical part of the GVS concept, is to protect the areas of ecological and historical importance, while including new elements such as the vineyards and orchard plantings that are an expected outcome in the Gibbston Character Zone.
- 6.2 You will note that GVS’s evidence shows an intention to plant further vineyards as well as planting orchards and vegetable gardens. Truffle inoculated oak trees will also be planted. As outlined above, GVS intends to undertake a wholly organic approach to its vineyards, and its intended future orchards and gardens.
- 6.3 The additional plantings will not only form an aesthetically pleasing setting for the different clusters of residential and visitor accommodation, but they will be integral to what the resort living and activities are all about.

Viticulture

- 6.4 Since 2008, the demand for GVW has also grown, and therefore GVS’s requirement for grapes has increased exponentially. In 2008, it was recognised by local viticulturists who gave evidence at the hearing, that the north side of the state highway was marginal at best for Pinot Noir grapes. The primary reason is the north side tends to be a little cooler and the growing days are not year on year reliable for the ripening of Pinot Noir.

- 6.5 The only area where GVS showed grapes on the north side in its 2008 consent application was adjacent to Peregrine Winery. Since 2008, the demand for our Rosé and the introduction of our Méthode Traditionelle product has increased our need for Pinot Noir grapes that we pick earlier for Rosé and Méthode Traditionelle.
- 6.6 Based on our viticultural team's recommendations, we now are able to identify further areas within GVS for the planting of grapes. In particular, at the western end of the property. In addition, we also propose a significant planting of grapes on the western side of the Vintner's Village.
- 6.7 The other areas on the north side are not recommended for grapes by our viticultural team but are suitable for orchard and nut plantings, as indicated on the plan. It is GVS's intent to start putting in the infrastructure for the vineyards and to start planting the orchards this coming spring.
- 6.8 GVS is willing to provide in favour of QLDC that the viticultural planting and the orchard planting will be installed prior to any other commercial/residential development occurring. This is important as such plantings are integral to the underlying philosophy of what GVS really means. The vineyards will be owned by GVS and leased by GVW.
- 6.9 This will mean that GVS will receive income from the purchase of the grapes, which will go towards the maintenance of the landscaping. This is another example of the close relationship between GVW and the GVS.
- 6.10 In general terms, further development of vines would be very unlikely to be advanced by GVS due to the costs of establishment and the overall returns being low. This is a common issue for the planting of new vines in Gibbston. The development as part of the GVS allows the negative costs to be offset against positive gains.

Environmental and Sustainable Building Philosophy

- 6.11 The philosophy behind GVS is one of sustainability and environmental awareness. This includes the vineyards being organic as well as the orchards and other plantings. There is a significant cost in the installation of these vineyards, orchards and other horticultural features. The mechanism that allows these plantings to occur is the development of GVS. There is a symbiotic relationship between the needs of GVW for

grapes and the philosophy behind GVS that works for both commercial entities. GVW gets the grapes they need and GVS gets the vineyards and orchards that create the setting for the resort as well as providing the fruit and story that supports the “Paddock to Plate”, environmental and sustainable approach of the resort.

- 6.12 In addition to the environmental considerations we are giving to the landscape, we also want to carry this philosophy through with the houses, visitor accommodation units and commercial building. It is GVS’s intent to use healthy building techniques. A healthy house is dry, clean, ventilated, pest free, and contaminant free. It is also our intent that our built forms will be energy efficient and sustainable. This means they will utilize energy efficient and environmentally friendly materials.
- 6.13 The approach that GVS outlines above is not only correct in relation to controlling built form and the environment, but they happily dovetail as appealing marketing approaches for those wishing to stay at GVS, or indeed purchasing a property within it.
- 6.14 This provides a unique point of difference and will, in my opinion, create a resort that not only will be financially successful but provides a reputation that the wider community benefits from.

Self Sufficiency

- 6.15 Reflecting GVS’s philosophical approach with a focus on sustainability and the environment, it is GVS’s intent that the resort will be self-sufficient in regard to services. GVS has already prepared designs for package waste-water systems.
- 6.16 Further, we proposed as part of GVS’s 2008 consent, the use of roading and pathway systems that were permeable, as well as run-off to ground to ensure the water table is retained and water is not piped off-site. The waste system will create grey water that will be utilised for the watering of landscape areas. We are also intending to use solar power where possible as we are a north-facing site.
- 6.17 On the same self-reliant basis, we are investigating the installation of a small hydro scheme on Tom’s Creek. The intent is to minimise our reliance on the national electricity grid system.

7. TOURISM ACTIVITIES

Gibbston Valley Winery Concert

- 7.1 Since 2009, the annual Gibbston Valley Winery Concert has been an integral part of our business. GVW has held the concerts on the station land for seven years and each year the concerts have grown in number. The concerts are now part of the local Queenstown Lakes District calendar as well as the wider New Zealand calendar. We have recognised that it is important, not only to GVW but also the wider community to try and retain the concert location as part of the resort development.
- 7.2 The Gibbston Valley Winery Concert draws more than 15,000 people every year from the Queenstown Lakes District and the rest of NZ and beyond. The concert provides a significant economic boost to the region.
- 7.3 To retain the concert site (AA7), it has been necessary to evaluate where we place the activities of residential and visitor accommodation. We have relocated these activities to the east and the west of the concert site (AA3 and AA6).

General Tourism Activities

- 7.4 In addition to using the concert site for the annual concert, we intend to make the space available for other community activities – such as sporting and cultural events, farmer’s markets, wine festivals, and other similar activities.
- 7.5 It is logical and reasonable from a planning perspective, to locate the tourism activity and visitor accommodation in proximity to the winery. These activities will be linked to the winery by an underpass under State Highway 6, thereby relieving a pressure on that important arterial road.

The Gibbston Cycle Trail

- 7.6 Since 2008, trail cycling has become a major tourism attraction in New Zealand, and in particular the Queenstown-Lakes District. In my view, it is only going to grow stronger in the future.
- 7.7 Gibbston Valley is well placed in the middle of this cycling activity. As mentioned previously GVS worked closely with the Queenstown Trails

Trust allowing the Arrow Junction to Gibbston Cycle Trail to continue. Without GVS's involvement, the trail potentially would not have gone ahead or it would have cost significantly more to build. This is because the trail would have had to be built off GVS land, which was far easier for construction rather than on DOC land. The Queenstown Trails Trust has acknowledged the unqualified generosity of GVSR in this regard.

- 7.8 Gibbston is currently linked with Arrowtown and Queenstown by cycling trails. In the future this link will continue down through the Kawarau Gorge to Clyde and the Otago Central Rail Trail. In addition, there will also be a link to Wanaka and returning to the Queenstown Lakes District. We currently have a cycle centre at GVW that forms a hub for cycling in the Gibbston region. We see cycling as a major attraction to bring visitors to Gibbston. It also fits in with our philosophy of healthy living which underlines the central premise of the GVS.
- 7.9 As part of the resource consent granted in 2008 we had a number of key reports completed for ecology, the protection of historical and archaeological sites. These reports and their recommendations are retained and form part of GVS's planning. Again, this recognition of important ecological and archaeological sites on the property is not only the correct thing to do but fits in with our philosophy for the resort and will form part of the attraction for our visitors. These archaeological, historical and ecological sites will be identified and form part of cycling and walking trails, not only for our visitors but for the public to enjoy.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 In summary, I feel the passage of time, since 2008, has given GVS the opportunity to reassess the resource consent we were granted, and now present a refined vision to be included within the District Plan that will suit and meet the demands of QLDC as representative of the local community, and visitors to the area and their expectations for the district.

DATED 12 June 2017

Gregory Hunt