

QUAIL RISE ZONE EXTENSION PRIVATE PLAN CHANGE

ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

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INTRODUCTION

- 1 The purpose and scope of the Quail Rise Zone Extension Private Plan Change is detailed in the section 32 report. In summary, the request seeks the rezoning of an area of land, at the southern end of the existing Quail Rise Zone to enable residential development of land that is of marginal utility for agricultural production. The effect of the plan change will be to enable the rationalisation and consolidation of residential development on peri-urban land immediately adjacent to residential development within the Quail Rise Zone.
- 2 The land that is the subject of the request consists of two separate parcels, accessible from the southern end of Ferry Hill Drive, and Jims Way. The larger parcel of land abuts the Frankton—Ladies Mile Highway to the south-east. The smaller parcel of land (Lot 50) is further to the north on the lower slopes of Ferry Hill, where the private access way Abbottswood Lane joins the western side of Ferry Hill Drive. The two areas are identified on the Clark Fortune and McDonald Associates drawing (No 13-3) that accompanies the application. Drawing 13-1 illustrates the relationship between the area of the proposed plan change, existing QLDC zoning, and the Frankton Flats proposed Plan Change. For convenience, all that area that is covered by the proposed plan change is referred to in this report as ‘the site’.
- 3 A revised Quail Rise Structure Plan for the site has been prepared by Clark Fortune MacDonald, and is attached to the plan change application document. While no subdivisional layout is proposed at this stage, It is anticipated that the proposed rezoning of the site will permit the development of a further 40 residential dwellings.
- 4 This report replaces an earlier landscape and visual effects assessment report that addressed effects associated with an earlier version of the plan change.

THE EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

Landscape Character

- 5 The site predominantly lies on an elevated terrace that adjoins the south eastern flanks of Ferry Hill but also incorporates some rolling land that forms a transitional landform between the terrace and the steeper slopes of Ferry Hill (Figures 1, 2 and 3). The Lot 50 part of the site is located on the lower slopes of Ferry Hill itself (Figure 5), as distinct from the adjoining terrace.
- 6 Land use within the site is predominantly rough grassland or pastoral land, although managed grazing is restricted to the small holdings of B and N Thomson and J and J Thomson (Figure 1). Existing residential development occurs on the eastern side of Ferry Hill Drive (Figure 4). The area exhibits the characteristics of a peri-urban landscape, being neither rural nor properly residential. The character of the area is further influenced by the adjacent Glenda Drive industrial estate, which the land overlooks.
- 7 A range of significant, mature exotic tree species is located within the Thomson properties, mainly along fence lines and property boundaries. North of the line of the legal road between Jims Way and Ferry Hill Drive, short lengths of remnant hedgerows remain (Figure 2)
- 8 The site is north of the Glenda Drive Industrial Zone, which it overlooks, and is separated from by the Frankton—Ladies Mile Highway (Figure 3). Figure 3 also shows the 33kVA transmission line that forms the southern boundary of the proposed plan change. The area covered by the proposed plan change will be separated from the transmission line by a 30 m buffer.

Landscape Status

- 9 The landscape categorisation of the Frankton Flats and the adjacent Ferry Hill landscape was determined by the Environment Court in decision C180/99 (the 'First Queenstown Landscape Decision'). Referring to the Frankton Flats landscape, the Court stated:

...on the evidence we find that the Frankton Flats are not an outstanding natural landscape and they are not particularly open. (para. [162])

10 In the same decision (para. [112]), the Court also found Ferry Hill (to the north of SH6) to be an outstanding natural feature (ONF) and part of a wider outstanding natural landscape incorporating Queenstown Hill and the peak K No 2. In defining the boundary of the Outstanding natural landscape (ONL) / Visual Amenity Landscape (VAL) line around Ferry Hill, the Court at paragraph [111] found the boundary to be the following line:

Applying those criteria [the Pigeon Bay factors] as we have found them in this case, we hold that the inner edge of the ring – inside which the landscape is not [emphasis in original] an outstanding natural landscape but is at least in part visual amenity landscape – is the area inside the black lines marked on the attached Appendix II.

The edge runs approximately:

- Starting at Sunshine Bay, clockwise around Queenstown (as zoned) to Frankton
- Doubling back around Ferry Hill to the north at the change of the slope, and then
- West to Queenstown Hill Station (so that Queenstown Hill, Sugarloaf, Lake Johnson and ferry Hill are included in the outstanding natural landscape

11 The line demarcating the boundary between the Frankton Flats visual amenity landscape (VAL) and the ONL of which Ferry Hill is a part (shown on Map 1, *Appendix 8A, Landscape Categorisation in the Wakatipu Basin*, QLDC Partly Operative District Plan) is indicative only and is open to more precise definition. The line appears to follow the base of the slope of Ferry Hill, and can be assumed to lie uphill of residential sections that flank the western side of ferry Hill Drive.

12 If the line between the Ferry Hill ONL and the adjacent Frankton Flats is understood as following the dominant break in the slope at the foot of Ferry Hill, then a possible interpretation of the ONL boundary line in the vicinity of Lot 8, DP 22166 could have the ONL boundary running diagonally through Lot 8 in the south-west corner of the lot. However, there are no values attributable to this part of the ONL that would be compromised were the ONL line located further up the slope of ferry Hill, such as is the case where the ONL line runs uphill of Lot 50. No ONL related characteristics of qualities will be compromised or adversely affected by residential development within Lot 50, regardless of the exact position of the line.

13 Lot 1, DP 27552 is Rural General land within the existing Quail Rise Zone and is more obviously within that part of the lower slopes of Ferry Hill that can be regarded as being ONL. However, this area is not affected by the requested plan change.

- 14 While the site is separated by the Frankton—Ladies Mile Highway from the predominant area of land understood to be the Frankton Flats (that area to the south of the highway), it is still reasonable to regard the site as being part of the Frankton Flats, albeit on the extreme north-east fringe of the flats.
- 15 While identified in the District plan as VAL, ongoing development of the Frankton Flats and the prospect of further significant changes as a consequence of proposed Plan Change 19 indicate that it is more credible to regard the Frankton Flats as Other Rural Land. This classification is equally relevant when applied to the site of the requested plan change.
- 16 Existing residential development within the Quail Rise Zone abuts the Ferry Hill ONL with no adverse effects upon the characteristics and qualities of Ferry Hill that are associated with its status as ONL. While the proposed re-zoning will permit up to 40 further residential dwellings to be developed, only those dwellings to be developed on Lot 50 will be on land directly contiguous with the ONL. As Figure 5 illustrates, Lot 50 is already flanked on either side by existing residential development that also abuts the ONL, with no adverse effects on the ONL itself.

ASSESSMENT

Landscape

- 17 The land that is the subject of the plan change request is not understood to have characteristics or qualities of a biophysical nature that would be compromised by the proposed plan change and any consequent residential development.

Visual

- 18 Visibility from the Frankton—Ladies Mile Highway is limited. To the west of the Shotover River a dense roadside shelterbelt of mature coniferous evergreen trees blocks all views towards the site for vehicles travelling north towards the Shotover River. Closer to the Shotover River the highway descends into a deep cutting (Figure 6) which results in the site being separated from the highway by a steep bank, effectively rendering views into the site impossible.

- 19 North of the Shotover River, vehicles travelling south towards Queenstown will be exposed to middleground views of the site across the Shotover River, but these views will also include the existing Quail Rise Zone
- 20 Overall, views to the site from the highway are very limited, and the visual effects of residential development that will follow the requested re-zoning will be acceptable.
- 21 Some loss of rural amenity may be experienced by the occupants of the Thomson properties as a consequence of development of land owned by Quail Rise Estate Ltd.
- 22 Should residential development be undertaken on the Thomson properties at a density permitted by the requested plan change, it is possible that many of the mature trees on this land may be removed in the interests of achieving the most efficient subdivision design. The loss of mature trees within the southern area of the site will lead to a loss of visual amenity within the wider landscape at some future date.

Landscape Buffer

- 23 The Section 32 report for plan Change 19, in addressing visual amenity and the preservation of views, introduces the concept of an Open Space Buffer (Activity Area A) as a means of securing views from SH6 towards the Remarkables, Peninsula Hill, and Walter and Cecil Peaks.
- 24 Consistent with proposals for a landscape buffer strip adjacent to SH6 on the south side of the highway, the requested plan change incorporates provision for a 50 m wide buffer of amenity planting between the SH and the site on the northern side of the highway. Only amenity landscape development is proposed within this part of the site. A 50 m wide landscape zone on both sides of the highway would give effect to the need for a visual buffer and would, with sensitive site analysis and design, safeguard views to the Remarkables and other ONL to the south of SH6, and to the ONF of Ferry Hill and wider the ONL to the north of SH6.
- 25 The need for the landscape buffer diminishes at the eastern end of this section of SH6, where the road descends through a steep cutting immediately west of the Lower Shotover Bridge (Figure 6). Within this section of SH6, the steep slope of the road cutting itself functions as a buffer between the highway and existing and proposed

development north of the highway. As a consequence, no additional buffer, is deemed necessary.

- 26 In lieu of a 50 m landscape buffer such as has been proposed for that section of the Frankton Flats subject to Plan Change 19, the following provision is proposed:

A no building restriction area along the frontage of State Highway 6 for that area of the plan change site adjoining the Highway. A 15m building boundary setback from the road boundary of Pt Section 20 BLK II Shotover SD, Lot 1 DP 372232, Lot 2 DP 412992 and Lot 2 DP 346179 is considered an appropriate distance due to the steep cutting which separates SH6 from the site.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 27 The requested plan change seeks to extend the area available for residential dwellings within the existing Quail Rise Zone. The affected land lies on the north-west margin of the Frankton Flats, an area best described in QLDC District plan landscape categorisation terms as Other Rural Land. The can best be described as peri-urban in character.
- 28 The site abuts the outstanding natural landscape (ONL) of Ferry Hill, but within a locality where existing Quail Rise residential development also abuts the Ferry Hill ONL. The development of residential dwellings, consequent upon the requested plan change, with not further diminish not compromise the landscape characteristics and qualities associated with the adjacent ONL.
- 29 Visibility of the site is marginal with only distant views towards the site available from the the Frankton—Ladies Mile Highway while approaching Queenstown. Adjacent to the site the highway drops into a deep cutting south of the Shotover River. This provides for a high degree of physical separation between the site and the highway through the section in which they are adjacent.
- 30 The change from peri-urban to residential character may be experienced in terms of a loss of rural amenity by occupants of land south of the line of the legal road between Jims Way and Ferry Hill Drive (the Thomson properties). A further loss of rural amenity may result if mature trees within the Thomson land are lost at such time as this land is developed for residential purposes.
- 31 Overall the requested plan change represents a rationalisation of marginalised peri-urban land for which the extension and consolidation of nearby residential development

represents a sound landuse option. No adverse landscape or visual effects will result from residential development that will follow consequent upon the requested plan change. No adverse effects will impact upon the adjacent Ferry Hill ONL

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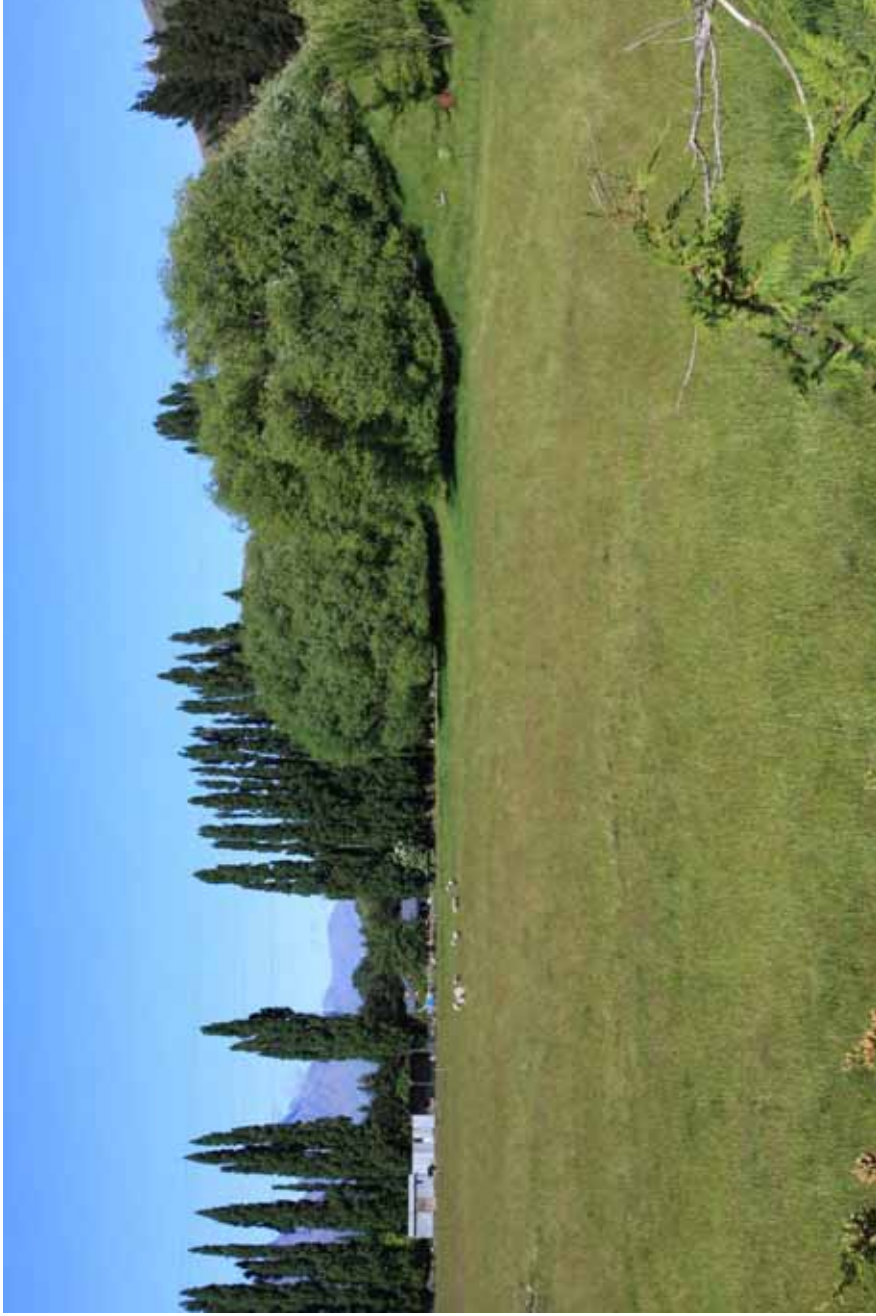


Figure 1: The Thomson properties (Lot 2, DP 38174 and Pt Section 20, Blk II Shotover SD (foreground)), south of the formed track that follows the line of the paper road linking Jims Way with Ferry Hill Drive. The transmission line that forms the southern boundary of the requested plan change area is just visible between the poplar trees to the left of the image.



Figure 2: QREL properties (foreground) on the terrace north of the formed track that follows the line of the paper road linking Jims Way with Ferry Hill Drive. The dwelling in the centre of the image is the Hunter residence on Lot 1, DP412992



Figure 3: View looking down from the Ferry Hill ONL onto the southern part of the requested plan change area (Thomson properties). From this perspective this part of the proposed plan change area is clearly a part of the Frankton Flats. The transmission line that forms the southern boundary of the plan change area is visible in the centre of the image. The Frankton—Ladies Mile Highway runs parallel to the evergreen shelterbelt that separates the site from the Glenda Drive Industrial Zone, visible in the middleground of the image.



Figure 4: Existing residential dwellings flanking the eastern side of the Southern end of Ferry Hill Road. (Lot 1, DP 403892, and Lots 2, 5, 6 and 7, DP 403880). The requested plan change will permit the land in the right foreground to be developed at a similar density. The slopes in the centre and upper left of the image are part of the Ferry Hill ONL.

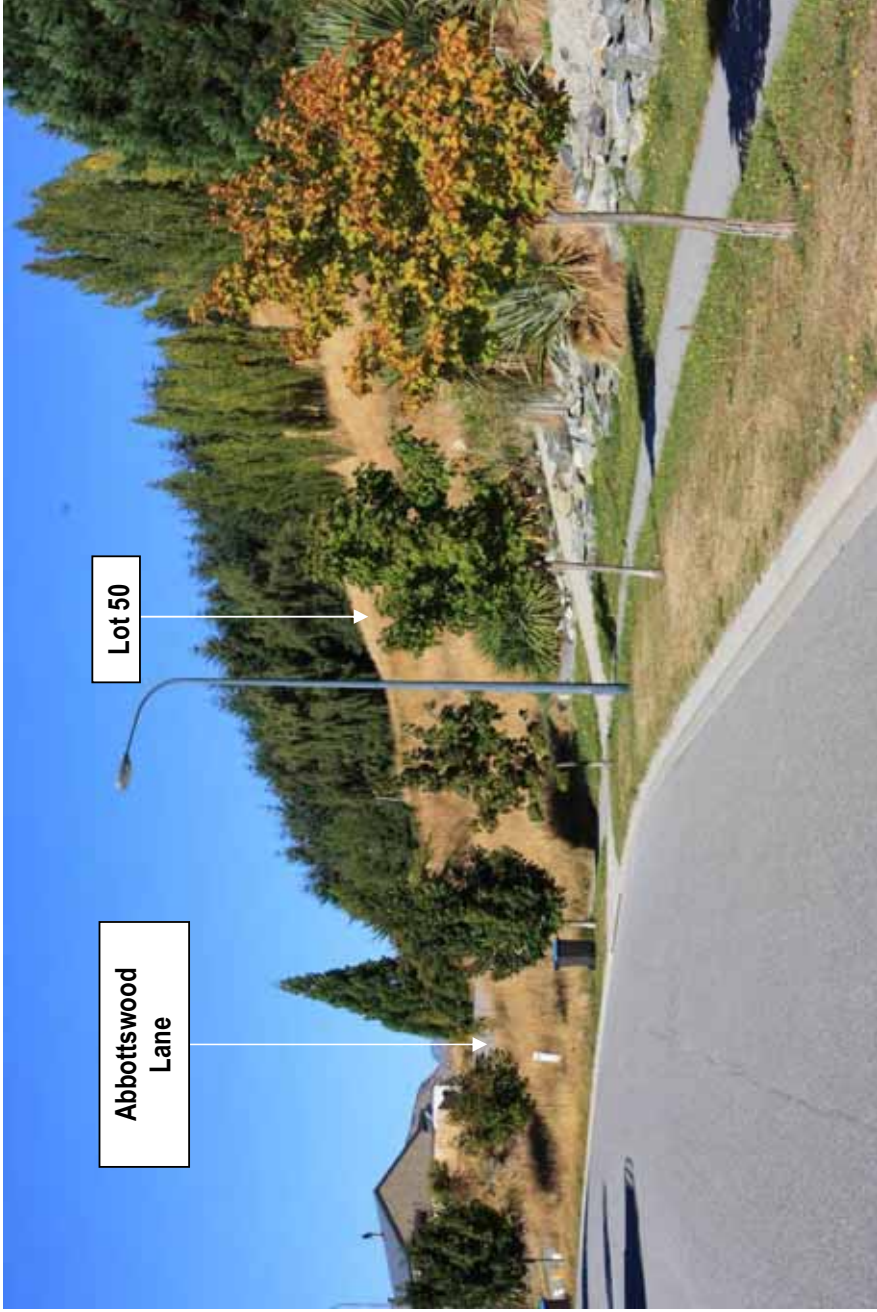


Figure 5: Lot 50 (centre of image), west of Ferry Hill Drive at the intersection of Abbottswood Lane (arrowed). Residential development flanks Lot 50 on either side. Residential development on Lot 50 will have no greater effects on the ONL of Ferry Hill than existing adjacent development.



Figure 6: Jims Way (upper level) and State Highway 6 (lower level) at the eastern end of the site. The need for a landscape buffer within this section of the site is rendered unnecessary by the steep cutting that separates SH6 from the site.