

**Glenn Davis for QLDC – Summary of Evidence, 21 July 2017
Queenstown Mapping – Hearing Stream 13**

1. My evidence for Queenstown Lakes District Council (**QLDC**) is on ecological matters regarding proposed rezones and amendments to Significant Natural Areas (**SNAs**) within the Queenstown area.

Rural: Group 2

2. In the rural area group, I do not oppose the majority of requests¹ based on the lack of indigenous systems present or the provisions for maintenance of existing vegetation and/or ecological restoration work.
3. Lake Wakatipu Station Limited (**702**) sought a realignment of SNA C24A to assist with stock control through this area while maintaining the core values of the SNA. I have worked with the submitter on this amendment and note that the boundary was amended prior to notification of the SNAs. No further amendment to the SNA boundary is required to satisfy this submitter's request.
4. I now turn to those submissions that I oppose.
5. I oppose the Glentui Heights submission (**694**) to rezone the Bobs Cove sub zone to Rural Residential Zone, on the basis that the Bobs Cove sub zone provisions provides better guidance on the maintenance of existing indigenous vegetation and restoration requirements.
6. I oppose the Bobs Cove Developments Limited submission (**712**) to rezone land in Bobs Cove from Rural to Rural Residential Zone, on the basis that the zoning would result in the removal of a significant area of the indigenous vegetation on the site. It would also be difficult for rural residential development at the site to meet Objective 22.2.7 (Bobs Cove Rural Residential Zone) – '*To maintain and enhance the ecological and amenity values of the Bobs Cove Residential Zone*'.
7. The Gibbston Valley Station Limited submission (**827**) requested a rezoning of land from Rural to the Gibbston Valley Subzone. I opposed the proposed Gibbston Valley Subzone based on my understanding of the ecological values of the subject area and the lack of information regarding the types of activities that

1 168, 298, 328, 331, 431, 478, 689, 764, 826.

could occur within the subzone. Ms Nikki Smetham filed landscape planning evidence on behalf of Gibbston Valley Station and presented a structure plan that sets out the activities that are proposed within the subzone. The important ecological values identified during investigations completed to support resource consent RM080864 are located within the 'Balance Area' of the structure plan. At paragraph 50 of Ms Smetham's evidence she states:

.. the balance areas of the SZ will remain as unimproved tussock grassland pasture or grey shrubland. These areas convey a more natural character and typically contain higher ecological values than the productive areas and activity areas within the GVS subzone.

8. Based on the exclusion of the areas with higher ecological values from the development areas within the subzone, I no longer oppose the proposed Gibbston Valley subzone from an ecological perspective.
9. Karen and Murray Scott (**447**) have sought the rezoning of two areas of Loch Linnhe Station, such that two Farm Base Areas (**FBAs**) were identified on the property, or alternatively that those two areas be rezoned (operative) Rural Visitor Zone. The submission also sought that the PDP should provide for FBAs on large rural properties over 1000 ha.
10. My evidence in chief did not oppose the rezoning of the two areas sought on the submitter's site, based on a lack of indigenous ecological values present. Subsequent landscape planning evidence filed by Mr Ben Espie presented amended boundaries for the two FBAs, that incorporate new land now assessed in my primary evidence. The proposed northern area is shown in Appendix 1 of Mr Espie's evidence and is provided in the context of the original submission area in **Figure 1** below. The amended area extends the original area sought in submission 447 further to the west towards Lake Wakatipu. The revised northern area is approximately 2 ha and includes an area of approximately 5000 m² covered in regenerating indigenous vegetation dominated by bracken fern, but also including other indigenous broadleaved/hardwood species such as *Pittosporum tenuifolium*, *Coriaria spp*, manuka, *Coprosma propinqua*, *Griselinia littoralis*, matagouri and cabbage tree. This regenerating indigenous vegetation borders a marginal strip that contains large mature southern rata (*Metrosideros umbellata*). The whole site lies within a land environment that has less than 20% indigenous vegetation remaining. The regenerating indigenous vegetation within the site is a valuable buffer to the southern rata stand on the lake shore, that is

locally and regionally significant due to its rarity in the southern lakes (Lake Wakatipu, Lake Wanaka and Lake Hawea). I therefore consider the area shown as 'regenerating indigenous vegetation' on **Figure 1** should remain zoned as Rural, as in my view this zoning provides the best mechanism of protection for this vegetation.



Figure 1: Loch Linnhe Farm Base Activity Area (Northern Area), recommended exclusion.

11. The proposed Farm Base Activity Area/Rural Visitor Zone located in the vicinity of the existing Loch Linnhe homestead has also been varied since the original submission. The proposed area shown in Appendix 3 of Mr Espie's evidence extends the proposed area further south across developed pasture and removes the area from the lower reaches of the gully that runs through the site. I can confirm that the amended area has been developed for pastoral activity and indigenous vegetation has been removed. From an ecological perspective, I do not oppose the rezoning of the amended area.
12. I oppose the submission by Amrta Land Ltd (**677**) to rezone Woodbine Station from Rural to (operative) Rural Visitor or (PDP) Rural Lifestyle with a Visitor

Accommodation overlay, based on the regenerating indigenous vegetation on the site and lack of detail regarding the activities that may be associated with the rezoning proposal.

13. The Queenstown Park Limited (**QPL**) submission (**806**) requests that Queenstown Station be rezoned from Rural Zone to a Queenstown Park Special Zone (**QPSZ**). My evidence in chief opposed part of the submission, based on a lack of detail regarding the activities that may occur in the 'Balance Land' of the QPSZ. Based on evidence submitted by QPL and RPL, I have reconsidered my view, given the proposed provisions in the QPSZ including:
 - (a) prohibiting the grazing of cattle in the four SNAs;
 - (b) control over stocking rates in the vicinity of the SNAs with the inclusion of a discretionary activity regime for stocking rates above 3 stock units per hectare; and
 - (c) a requirement for the drafting of a Comprehensive Development Plan (**CDP**) for the Rural Visitor Activity Areas. The CDP is a restricted discretionary activity that among other things provides Council with discretion over vegetation clearance. I consider this provision will mitigate risk to the ecological values associated with development activities within the proposed Rural Visitor Activity Areas.
14. The cattle grazing and stocking rate provisions are controls that provide a greater level of protection to the SNAs that are not provided for under the Rural Zone.
15. I have noted an additional provision in the QPSZ regarding Council control over the installation of new farm tracks, fire breaks and recreational trails less than 2m in width. From an ecological perspective, it is possible that farm tracks less than 2m wide could remove locally and regionally rare plants and threatened plants that are present on the property. In my view, a controlled planning framework for these activities would provide better protection for these species, whereby Council's control would be confined to effects on ecological values.
16. I oppose the submission by Middleton Trustees (**393**) for the establishment of an Airport Mixed Use Zone on the top of Queenstown Hill based on the extensive indigenous cover of the site and the large areas of wetlands. From an ecological perspective, it is my view that a greater level of ecological detail and

understanding of the development footprint is required before a more permissive planning context can be considered for the proposed airport activities.

Strategic²

Nicholas Geddes for Jed Frost (323) in relation to SNA A23A

17. Mr Geddes filed planning evidence in relation to SNA A23A. The submitter requests that the SNA boundary is removed from Lots 4, 14, 17 and 19 DP 26634. Mr Geddes considers the SNA should be excluded from these lots, on the basis that residential development activities on these lots were approved through the granting of resource consent (RM970272) in October 1996. I have reviewed the boundary of SNA A23A through Lots 4, 14, 17 and 19.
18. Putting to one side what the consent approves, Lot 19 which is proposed to be removed from SNA A23A is cleared of indigenous vegetation and I can support the realignment to the boundary of the property.
19. The removal of the SNA from Lots 4, 14 and 17 amount to a total area of approximately 3150 m² which is less than 1% of the total area of SNA A23A. The SNA report recommendation states: "*Accept the shrubland area within the Closeburn Station as an SNA given its contiguous nature with regenerating shrubland and beech forest communities in the adjacent reserve*" (page 3 of SNA Report, 23 June 2011). The requested exclusions from Lots 4, 14 and 17 are on the eastern boundary of the SNA, and in my view, will not undermine the contiguous nature of the regenerating shrubland. For this reason and the relative size of the proposed exclusion zones, I can support the request to amend the boundary of the SNA to the perimeter of the lot boundaries. I have prepared an amended plan for the SNA and provided this in Attachment A of my rebuttal evidence.

Urban and Urban Fringe: Groups 1A, 1B, 1C and 1D

20. From an ecological perspective, I do not oppose any of the rezoning requests within the urban area. This view is based on a lack of remaining ecological values within the urban environment.

2 See also Rebuttal Evidence of Kim Banks dated 7 July 2017.

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21. From an ecological perspective, I do not oppose the majority of the requests on the urban fringe³ as most of the indigenous vegetation has been removed from these areas.

Group 1B

F. S. Mee Developments (429)

22. I oppose the F. S. Mee Developments submission **(429)** which seeks to rezone the site to High Density Residential (**HDR**) as the site contains rocky outcrops and small bluffs that may provide habitat for skinks and geckos. In my view, a skink and gecko survey should be undertaken on this site to establish the ecological values prior to approving a higher density zone for this land.

3 399, 717, 751, 847, 751, 338, 396, 476, 768, 48, 425, 347, 150, 336, 389, 722, 716, 349, 494, 527, 450, 495, 642.