

**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 a private plan change to the
Queenstown Lakes Proposed District
Plan: Proposed Private Plan Change
1 The Hills Resort Zone

**SECTION 42A REPORT / STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF CRAIG ALAN BARR
ON BEHALF OF QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**PLANNING
13 FEBRUARY 2026**

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Hills Resort Limited (**THRL/Requestor**) seek a private plan change (**plan change/PPC**) to the Queenstown Lakes Proposed District Plan (**PDP**) to amend the provisions of the PDP relating to The Hills Resort Zone Chapter 47 (**THRZ**), Chapter 25 Earthworks and Chapter 27 Subdivision and Development.
- 1.2 The changes are sought by the Requestor to enable the existing 18-hole Golf Course to be rerouted. Substantial changes are proposed to the location of residential activity by way of the dispersal of eleven new Home Sites (**HS**) (HS 6-16) located on the southern portion of THRZ in what is currently Golf Activity Area (**AA G**) and utilised as open space and an existing 9-hole Golf Course. That 9-hole golf course / AA G is proposed to be removed. A new vehicle access is proposed from Hogans Gully Road, to service the new HSs.
- 1.3 The Requestor is not proposing to change the maximum amount of residential activity permitted by THRZ, which is 66 residential units.
- 1.4 In addition, amendments are sought by the Requestor to the location and shape of several activity areas and a new Sportsground (**SG**) Activity Area, a new Golf Facilities (**GF**) area adjacent to the clubhouse (**AA C**), and a new helicopter landing and departure area (**AA H**) located adjacent to **AA C**.
- 1.5 Amended provisions, and an amended THRZ Structure Plan, are proposed to give effect to these changes.
- 1.6 The changes would introduce new or altered development as viewed from McDonnell Road, Advance Terrace and surrounds, Hogans Gully Road and Arrowtown Lakes Hayes Road. The plan change has the potential for the amended THRZ Structure Plan to not meet THRZ Objective 47.2.1, which seeks "*an integrated golf resort development that principally provides for a range of visitor industry related activities, while also providing for limited residential activity*": The distribution of residential activity as proposed through the PPC would be less integrated with the onsite visitor industry activities.
- 1.7 The plan change was Notified on August 15th, 2025, with twenty submissions received. Submitters in opposition seek changes to, or rejection of, the PPC

relating to views from their properties, traffic concerns associated with the new access onto Hogans Gully Road, extensions of the walkway/cycleway trail and helicopter noise. The Summary of Decisions Requested was notified on 23 October 2025 for ten working days, with one Further Submission made on the Private Plan Change.

1.8 Having considered the information provided by the Requestor, submitters, and the landscape advice of Ms Gilbert and traffic advice of Mr Facey for the Council, I recommend the plan change be confirmed if the following amendments to the PPC are satisfactorily addressed:

- (a) Amendments to the Structure Plan (and amendments to any relevant plan provisions as necessary) to reduce the collective landscape effects of Home Sites 9-16, including the reconsideration of building heights, the Landscape Amenity Management Areas (**LAMA**) and the proposed new Structural Planting Area (**SPA**) strategies;
- (b) Additional planting in relation to Submitter Simon Dan's (#15) property associated with visual mitigation of the walkway/cycleway where it is located near his property at 214 McDonnell Road;
- (c) Amendments to Policy 47.2.1.14 (landscape and amenity) to provide a causal link to new Rule 47.5.23 associated with limiting the number of dwellings utilising the eastern Hogans Gully Road access;
- (d) The Structure Plan is amended so that the eastern Hogans Gully Road Access is located eastwards from its current proposed location as recommended by Mr Facey;
- (e) A new staging rule is introduced which requires a minimum 14 visitor accommodation units be constructed within the dedicated visitor related activity areas (A1, A3, A6 and C), before HSs 6-16 can be developed. This in my view will ensure that the plan change achieves Objective 47.2.1.
- (f) The Structure Plan is amended to show the walkway/cycleway trail over Lot 6 DP 392663 (the adjoining site to the southeast corner of the Zone also referred to as the Boxer Hills land);

- (g) That Rule 27.7.22(d)(ii) retains the reference to auditing by the council no sooner than 6 months after completion, subject to clarification from the Requestor.
- (h) That the proposed deletion of the following existing rules be rejected:
 - i. 47.4.5 (buildings where the relevant LAMA has not yet been established);
 - ii. 47.4.7 (buildings in Activity Area G); and
 - iii. 47.4.22 (service activities).
- (i) That proposed amendments to Rule 47.4.10 that would remove the requirement for AA S1 and S2 being in the same ownership as AA C and AA G be rejected.

1.9 I also consider it would be appropriate for the Marshall Day noise assessment on helicopter landings is provided, to confirm my support for the location of the new AA H.

1.10 I note that the potential effects of moving the proposed new Hogans Gully Access further east, as recommended by Mr Facey, have not been considered. The Requestor should address this matter in its evidence.

2. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

2.1 My full name is Craig Alan Barr.

2.2 I have been engaged by the Queenstown Lakes District Council (**QLDC/Council**) to prepare a report on the Proposed Hills Resort Zone private plan change request for the purposes of section 42A of the Resource Management Act 1991 (**RMA**). This report has been prepared as a statement of expert planning evidence.

2.3 I am a resource management planner and hold the qualifications of Master of Planning and a Bachelor of Science from the University of Otago. I have been employed in planning and development roles for 19 years, for both local

authorities as well as in private practice. I am an accredited Commissioner and provide these services to local authorities outside the Queenstown Lakes District.

- 2.4 I am a Director of Waveform Environmental Planning Limited.
- 2.5 I have been involved in district plan and regional policy statement development for over 13 years, including the Queenstown Lakes Proposed District Plan (**PDP**) process for the Queenstown Lakes District Council (**QLDC/Council**). I was the lead planner and reporting officer for QLDC around 2017-2021 in relation to the landscape and rural zones, the Wakatipu Basin variation and also appeared in the Environment Court on these matters and several rezoning appeals, including the promulgation of the Gibbston Valley Resort Zone and Hogans Gully Resort Zone. I also more recently have assisted development clients in private plan change rezonings and submissions on proposed district plans in Central Otago and the combined West Coast District Plan.
- 2.6 I was involved in the promulgation of THRZ and its introduction to the PDP in my role at the time for QLDC as Principal Planner, including filing of a planning joint witness statement and a section 32AA evaluation supporting consent documentation filed in the Environment Court.
- 2.7 Collectively, this background has given me a good understanding of the intentions of the Proposed District Plan generally, the existing Hills Resort Zone PDP provisions in particular, and planning and development issues across the District and specifically within the Wakatipu Basin.

Code of Conduct

- 2.8 Although this is a Council hearing, I confirm that I have read the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses contained in the Environment Court Practice Note 2023 and that I agree to comply with it. I confirm that I have considered all the material facts that I am aware of that might alter or detract from the opinions that I express, and that this evidence is within my area of expertise, except where I state that I am relying on the evidence of another person.

3. INFORMATION RELIED UPON

3.1 I have relied upon the information filed by the Requestor in support of the PPC, being the application documentation forming the notified plan change¹. This information includes a request for further information prepared by the Council pursuant to Clause 23 of Schedule 1 of the RMA², and the Requestors' response to that request made by the Council for further information³, listed in **Appendix 1**, and updated documentation.

3.2 The Clause 23 request for information prepared by the Council requested or raised the following matters:

- (a) A request for a traffic assessment, which was provided in the form of a report by Carriageway Consultants (point 1).
- (b) Confirmation that the Requestor's expectations for servicing have not changed, and no changes are needed to provisions (point 2).
- (c) Further information on the receiving environment. This was provided by the Requestor in the form of a map showing the location of development approved in the vicinity of the site, and forms Attachment C of the Requestors' response (point 3).
- (d) Advice on the rationale of proposed changes to building relative levels (point 4), design rationale for accessway alignment to the new Homesites (point 5) and any operational issues between the golf dispersal corridor between A2 and A4 (point 6). These matters have been addressed.
- (e) Points 7-14 of the RFI requested greater information relating to landscape matters. These matters have been addressed in terms of information provided.

¹ Being the information contained within this sub heading on the QLDC's website for the Plan Change 'Notified Version of Private Plan Change Information & Application' [QLDC - Application Private Plan Change - The Hills Resort Zone](#)

² Request for Further Information dated 11 December 2024. URL Link: <https://www.qldc.govt.nz/media/1uu13j1i/2024-12-11-clause-23-rfi-the-hills.pdf>

³ Requestors Response to Further Information Request, dated 15 May 2025: URL Link. <https://www.qldc.govt.nz/media/jgvmsp2n/rfi-response-letter-15may25.pdf>

- (f) Points 15 and 16 queried whether the text of Chapter 24 Wakatipu Basin Landscape Character Unit (LCU 22) needed to be amended. The Applicant responded that this does not need to be amended.
- (g) Point 17 related to the proposed Structural Planting Areas (SPA) and the Requestor's response addressed these questions.
- (h) Points 18 and 19 related to the location of the trail on THRZ Structure Plan, safety issues and clarification. The Requestor's response addressed these matters.
- (i) Point 20 sought clarification as to any other changes that may be sought to the Structure Plan.
- (j) Points 21 and 22 related to the proposed deletion of provisions, not associated with consequential amendments to the Structure Plan. This matter is addressed further in my evidence.
- (k) Points 23 and 24 requested whether consideration would be given to design guidelines for the new Home Sites. The Requestor responded that this was not proposed.
- (l) Point 25 relates to the function of THRZ as a resort zone. This matter was responded to by the Requestor and is addressed further below in my evidence.

3.3 I have also relied on the additional information provided since notification, which is limited to a letter from the Requestor's planning consultant dated 15 January 2026 which amended some District Plan provisions in relation to the submission from James and Janene Draper (#13).

3.4 This report is aided by technical reviews of the plan change's supporting information and advice on submissions relevant to their expertise by the following persons (also prepared in expert evidence format):

- (a) Landscape: Ms Bridget Gilbert (**Appendix 2**); and
- (b) Traffic: Mr Antoni Facey (**Appendix 3**).

4. THE ENVIRONMENT

4.1 I refer to Section 5 of Ms Gilbert’s evidence which describes the existing environment, including her adoption of THRL’s Landscape Report as it describes the existing environment.

4.2 I provide the following summary of resource consents which have been granted at THRZ⁴ since the land has been zoned THRZ. I note that there are some applications which have not been granted. I have included these for context, but acknowledge that they do not form part of the environment.

Reference	Activity	Status
RM250376	Establish A New Building with Associated Earthworks and Landscaping to Operate as a Golf Facility, adjacent to clubhouse car park.	Granted 2 October 2025
RM250428	Establish a water reservoir located adjacent to the existing access on McDonnell Road, earthworks and relocation of access on McDonnell Road	Granted 9 February 2026
RM250483	Construct and operate three visitor accommodation units within the clubhouse Activity Area C	Granted 29 January 2026
RM250588	Construct worker accommodation in AA S2 (dated August 2025)	On hold external report required
RM250709	Implement new LAMA strategy for LAMA area L3 associated with Activity Area 3 (dated October 2025)	On hold external

⁴ As identified on the QLDC’s edocs online file storage system.

		report required
RM250935	Earthworks over 55ha area to redevelop golf course and for establishment of residential housing clusters across the site (dated November 2025)	Received
RM250967	Renovate clubhouse and reconfigure carpark in Activity Area C (dated November 2025)	Received

4.3 I also note that THRL’s Clause 23 response to further information dated 15 May 2025 included an appraisal of consented development in the vicinity of THRZ⁵. I consider this to provide useful information. In addition to this, I understand that a resource consent was granted in January 2026 for a subdivision of Wakatipu Basin Lifestyle Precinct site located at 112 McDonnell Road to create six lots on an approximate 6ha site (RM250234), which is consistent with the 1ha average allotment size residential density anticipated in the Wakatipu Basin Lifestyle Precinct.

4.4 I am also cognisant of an unresolved Environment Court appeal on the land adjoining the site to the southwest, located on the corner of Hogans Gully Road and Lake Hayes Arrowtown Road, by Boxer Hills Trust⁶, which seeks this site is rezoned from Wakatipu Basin Rural Amenity Zone to Lifestyle Precinct, as shown in **Figure 1**.

⁵ Forming Attachment B of the Clause 23 response to further information. Prepared by Brown and Company, titled: Attachment B Overview of surrounding development context.

⁶ URL Link to the appeal on the QLDC’s Website: [notice-of-appeal-by-boxer-hill-trust.pdf](#)



Figure 1. Excerpt of Appendix A of the notice of appeal from Boxer Hills Trust identifying land sought to be rezoned to Wakatipu Basin Rural Lifestyle Zone (green shading).

- 4.5 This appeal is understood to not be resolved, and therefore the requested zoning does not form the environment in RMA terms. However, if it is accepted in any form through the appeal process, a change to the zoning of the Boxer Hill Site from Wakatipu Basin Rural Amenity Zone to a zoning which is more enabling of residential activity on this site may have an influence on the landscape capacity of the environment to accommodate development within the THRZ. That would be a consideration in relation to the location of the eleven proposed new Home Site locations (HSs 6-16) in the southern portion of the THRZ (as they are in close proximity to the Boxer Hill site).
- 4.6 If the Boxer Hill land is rezoned to provide for residential activity, I consider there should be an opportunity to consider a cohesive landscape management response of the interface between THRZ (specifically HS 6-16) and the Boxer Hill land where they interface at the common boundary. As noted by Ms Gilbert in her evidence, HS 6-16 and the Boxer Hill site share the same landscape catchment of Speargrass Valley, which is distinct from other parts of THRZ which are in a visual catchment more visible from Arrowtown and McDonnell Road.
- 4.7 I acknowledge the Hearings Panel or the Council have no powers to influence the Boxer Hill appeal through this plan change. However, there is a relatively unique opportunity to comprehensively manage the boundary interface of THRZ and the Boxer Hills land because I understand the Requestor to have ownership interests

in both land parcels, and the Requestor seeks zoning to enable residential development in locations that have landscape relationship to each other. I consider it would be appropriate for the Requestor to address this matter in its evidence.

5. THE PRIVATE PLAN CHANGE

Background

- 5.1 The Hills Golf Course was progressively developed through resource consents between 2000 and 2007. To date, The Hills Golf Course comprise an 18-hole course, a 9-hole course, clubhouse and carpark (within current Activity Area C) and services buildings (within current Activity Area S1). Residential activity is currently limited to three existing dwellings identified within Home Sites 1⁷, 2 and 4.
- 5.2 The PDP was notified in August 2015 and THRL made a submission requesting the resort zone. While the submission for a resort zone by THRL was not initially approved by the Council, an appeal to the Environment Court was resolved by Consent Order in September 2021, and THRZ was added to the PDP.
- 5.3 A high-level overview of the THRZ is that it provides for visitor industry activities, principally through the golf course and clubhouse and service buildings currently, with provision for a driving range, and up to 84 visitor accommodation units located within areas identified on THRZ Structure Plan, identified by way of activity areas.
- 5.4 These activity areas, along with 5 Home Sites provide for up to 66 residential units (Homesites 1, 2, and 4 contain existing residential activity). Development is directed to locate within identified Activity Areas on THRZ Structure Plan, which were evaluated as part of the formation of the zone, for the ability of these locations to accommodate development, alongside the Landscape Amenity

⁷ I note that Document F Aerial Mapping Clause 34 version: Indicative LAMA Mounding / Planting: Sheet 04 conflicts with the Structure Plan in that HS 1 is labelled HS 2, with two HS 2 Activity Areas shown on this plan. This is assumed to be typo.

Management Areas (**LAMA**) planting while maintaining or enhancing landscape character.

5.5 In essence, buildings and activities located within an Activity Area which permit a specified land use, require a controlled activity resource consent providing the relevant LAMA is completed⁸. Buildings and activities seeking to locate outside of those identified Activity Areas on the Structure Plan, or occurring prior to the establishment of the LAMA related to that Activity Area require a non-complying activity resource consent⁹.

5.6 Other particularly relevant PDP provisions are in:

(a) Chapter 25 Earthworks which provides a framework to manage earthworks within THRZ; and

(b) Chapter 27 Subdivision and Development, which manages subdivision.

5.7 The further subdivision of THRZ is provided for subject to ensuring that landscape management planting (the LAMA) associated with an Activity Area has been implemented or will be as part of the subdivision. Rule 27.7.22 requires a controlled activity consent for subdivision, with a suite of matters of control relating to management of LAMA areas, while Rule 27.7.22.2 requires a non-complying activity consent for a subdivision creating that would create a new site for residential, visitor or commercial activity. Rule 27.7.23 requires a non-complying activity consent associated with an Activity Area or homesite where the LAMA is not yet established.

5.8 No substantial residential or visitor accommodation, or other physical development as anticipated by THRZ has yet occurred, so far as I am aware. I note that the pine trees near the Clubhouse have been removed as approved by resource consent RM250376 associated with the Golf Training Facility building, noting the above description of the environment lists the resource consent which have been approved by the Council for the THRZ. I am aware that the Requestor

⁸ Rules 47.4.1, 47.41.3 and 47.4.4 are all controlled activity land use rules.

⁹ Rule 47.4.5 requires a non-complying activity consent for buildings in several Activity Areas where the LAMA has not been established. Rules 47.4.36 requires a non-complying activity consent for any activity not provided for by another rule.

has obtained or filed applications for several resource consents associated with the development THRZ, as discussed above.

THRL's Rationale for the Plan Change and the changes sought

- 5.9 THRL identify that re-routing of the 18-hole golf course is sought to position the 18-hole championship course as a course of greater international acclaim (a top 50 course within the southern hemisphere), the premier course in the South Island and a top five course nationally¹⁰. The detailed planning work has determined that the current routing of the golf course could be significantly improved and that rerouting is necessary to achieve premier status.
- 5.10 While THRL could undertake a golf course redevelopment as a permitted activity (subject to earthworks standards in PDP Chapter 25), the desired alternative golf course design conflicts with several development areas on the THRZ Structure Plan.
- 5.11 THRL have also reconsidered the location of resort facilities including visitor accommodation, residential accommodation, golf facilities and other recreational offerings. In light of the changes required to the Structure Plan as a consequential outcome of the rerouting of the golf course, THRL also seeks amendments to the Structure Plan and provisions.
- 5.12 Document 1 prepared by Brown and Company identifies the specific changes sought to the PDP, many of which are consequential to the reconfigured Structure Plan (including new Home Sites, Hogans Gully Road access and reconfigured Activity Areas and new SG Activity Area), and the introduction of the SPAs into the Structure Plan and rule framework.
- 5.13 I consider this description is accurate and I do not repeat it. As noted above and in **Appendix 1** the only other specific changes sought by THRL since notification are those set out in the 15 January 2026 letter by Brown and Company in relation to the Draper Submission.
- 5.14 In summary, the main changes sought by the Requestor are:

¹⁰ Document 1. The Hills Resort Limited Request for a Change to the Proposed Queenstown Lakes District Plan, page 7.

- (a) Relocating residential activity to create several new Homesites to a southern part of the Structure Plan /THRZ (in the Speargrass Valley landscape catchment) with the accompaniment of the new SPAs.
 - (b) A new Sportsground (AA SG) area located in the northeast in proximity to McDonnell Road.
 - (c) A new Golf Facilities (AA GF) activity area located east of the Clubhouse Activity Area, and the Removal of the Driving Range located within existing AA7.
 - (d) A new dedicated activity area 'H' (AA H) for helicopter arrivals and departures, located adjacent to the existing AA C (Clubhouse).
 - (e) Amendments to Activity Areas 4, 5, 6, 10 and 11.
- 5.15 An obvious change when looking at the revised Structure Plan on its face is that residential activity consisting of Home Sites 6-15 will frame the southern flanks of the Structure Plan area and occupy what is currently the existing 9-hole golf course and balance area of Activity Area G. By way of comparison, the existing provisions and Structure Plan identify residential activity within AAs¹¹ 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11 and HSs 1-5 (noting HS 1, 2 and 4 are already developed for residential activity, and HSs 6, 7, 8 and 15 are in the balance G AA, and the remaining occupy what is currently the 9-hole course). The residential activity currently anticipated by the THRZ is interspersed within nodes of visitor accommodation.
- 5.16 The plan change would result in dedicated residential activity located within eleven new residential Home Sites. The overall quantum of residential units is not proposed to be changed, and is limited to 66 residential units by Rule 47.5.16¹².
- 5.17 The plan change is considered by THRL as necessary to address this, and to ensure that resort development anticipated by the HRZ can be delivered in a manner that facilitates, recognises, is compatible with and complements the course redesign.

¹¹ THRZ Rule 47.4.11.

¹² Additional residential units would require resource consent as a non-complying activity.

6. SECTION 32 EVALUATION

- 6.1 Document 4 contains a section 32 evaluation undertaken by Brown and Company. Sections 1 and 2 of that document sets out the RMA’s statutory framework for section 32 evaluations, I agree with that statement and do not repeat it. The section 32 evaluation describes the amendments to the provisions and evaluates these in accordance with the requirements of section 32 of the RMA. I generally concur with the overall structure of this document in terms of addressing section 32 of the RMA, and the relevant matters identified in terms of the evaluation required in section 32 of the Act. I make some additional comments in relation to the statutory framework and section 32 report further below.
- 6.2 In terms of a high level summary of the Requestor’s rationale for a plan change and the accompanying section 32 analysis, requesting a change to the PDP’s Chapters 47 (THRZ), 25 (Earthworks) and 27 (Subdivision and Development) to change THRZ provisions and the Structure Plan will incur a transactional costs of a private plan change on THRL (and submitters who engage in the process), but has the following broad advantages identified by THRL¹³:
- (a) It will avoid the multiple processes required for non-complying activity resource consents, and associated transaction costs;
 - (b) It enables integrated planning for the entire zone on a comprehensive basis;
 - (c) It provides certainty for the entire zoned development at the outset, which will assist with development planning and funding;
 - (d) It will enable a more efficient, and superior, layout of golf course and resort facilities; and
 - (e) It will not cause adverse effects on the environment that cannot be appropriately avoided, remedied or mitigated.
- 6.3 I generally agree with the points raised in (a), (b) and (c). However, with regard to (d), I am not in a position to comment on the adequacy of the golf course in its

¹³ Document L: Updated Section 32 Evaluation dated 15 May 2025.

current form. From a planning perspective that the course can be altered as a permitted activity subject to the earthworks provisions in PDP Chapter 25 without a plan change, although I note the planning and consenting implications where a new golf course layout would impinge upon LAMA and/or development activity areas.

6.4 With regard to (e), my current position is that the notified version of the proposal has the potential to cause adverse effects on the environment, associated with landscape and traffic matters. I also consider that the relocation of residential activity to proposed Home Sites 6-16 has the potential to compromise the integrity of the THRZ as a resort zone, and whether the proposed provisions (including the Structure Plan) could achieve Objective 47.2.1.

6.5 Any further amendments I recommend are subject to section 32AA of the Act, and in accordance with section 32AA(1)(a), a further evaluation is required in respect of the amendments made to the proposal since the section 32 evaluation was completed. Section 32AA(1)(b) states that the further evaluation must be undertaken in accordance with sections 32(1) to (4), while section 32AA(c) requires that the level of detail must correspond to the scale and significance of the changes.

6.6 Section 32AA(1)(d)(ii) and (2) enable the further evaluation to be referred to in the decision-making record in sufficient detail, rather than published as a separate evaluation report. My recommendations will address the requirements of section 32AA, relative to the scale and significance of the changes.

7. STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

7.1 The section 32 evaluation report¹⁴ identifies and evaluates the proposal against Part 2 of the RMA, and identified PDP objectives and policies, including the Strategic Directions (Chapter 3). I consider that the evaluation report has generally identified some of the relevant objectives in Table 2 of the evaluation report, and

¹⁴ Document L: Updated Section 32 Evaluation dated 15 May 2025. Section 5 'Evaluation of the provisions under the relevant District Plan Objectives'. Page 31.

has identified and discussed some of the important objectives and policies and definitions throughout the section 32 report.

- 7.2 In terms of the decision-making guidance in the RMA, I also note that Part 2 of Schedule 1 of the RMA (Preparation, change, and review of policy statements and plans) sets out the framework for requests for changes to district plans (more commonly referred to as private plan changes). I note that Clause 29 (4) states:

After considering a plan or change, undertaking a further evaluation of the plan or change in accordance with section 32AA, and having particular regard to that evaluation, the local authority—

- (a) may decline, approve, or approve with modifications the plan or change; and*
- (b) must give reasons for its decision.*

- 7.3 Clause 29 provides a broader discretion to the Council (and Hearings Panel when making recommendations) than the direction provided for Council initiated plan changes, proposed plans or variation, where Clause 10(1) states *a local authority must give a decision on the provisions and matters raised in submissions.*

- 7.4 Section 7 of the Requestor's section 32 evaluation has identified other relevant national planning instruments. I agree with the section 32 evaluation that these are of limited relevance. I note that since the section 32 report was published, the Government have issued several amendments to national direction documents:

- (a) Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Detached Minor Residential Units) Regulations 2025;
- (b) National Policy Statement for Natural Hazards 2025;
- (c) National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land Amendment 2025;
- (d) New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement Amendment 2025;
- (e) National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity Amendment 2025;

- (f) National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management Amendment 2025;
- (g) Resource Management (National Environmental Standards for Freshwater) Amendment Regulations 2025;
- (h) National Policy Statement for Infrastructure 2025;
- (i) National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation Amendment 2025; and
- (j) National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Amendment 2025.

7.5 I do not consider any of these documents / amendments to be particularly relevant to the plan change.

7.6 The Requestor's section 32 has identified and evaluated the relevant Regional Policy Statement (**RPS**) (Operative 2019 and proposed 2021). I accept that part of the section 32 and do not repeat it. I consider that the RPS provides high-level guidance only and in the context of this plan change, is of limited relevance in terms of decision-making guidance on the PPC. I consider the PDPs objectives and policies to be of primary relevance.

7.7 I consider that a more in-depth explanation of the PDP framework than that provided in the Requestor's section 32 report is necessary to understand the intentions of the PDP as it relates to THRZ. The section 32 report also omits some relevant objectives and some related PDP policies, namely those of PDP Chapter 3 Strategic Directions, and some context behind the Strategic Directions of the PDP, special zones such as THRZ and their provisions compared to more generic PDP zones.

7.8 In addition to the PDP Strategic Directions objectives identified in the section 32 evaluation report, I also consider the following Strategic Issues in PDP Section 3.A1 are relevant in terms of the subsequent Strategic Objectives and Policies, and are important to THRZ and this plan change:

- (a) Strategic Issue 1: Economic prosperity and equity, including strong and robust town centres, and the social and economic wellbeing and

resilience of the District's communities may be challenged if the District's economic base lacks diversification and supporting infrastructure.

- (b) Strategic Issue 2: Growth pressure impacts on the functioning and sustainability of urban areas, and risks detracting from rural landscapes, particularly its outstanding natural features and outstanding natural landscapes.
- (c) Strategic Issue 3: High growth rates can challenge the qualities that people value in their communities.
- (d) Strategic Issue 4: Some resources of the District's natural environment, particularly its outstanding natural features and outstanding natural landscapes and their landscape values, require effective identification and protection in their own right as well as for their significant contribution to the District's economy.
- (e) Strategic Issue 5: The design of developments and environments can either promote or weaken safety, health and social, economic and cultural wellbeing.
- (f) Strategic Issue 6: Tangata Whenua status and values require recognition in the District Plan.

7.9 In my opinion all of the strategic issues from section 3.A1 are relevant to THRZ and any changes to it because these issues reflect the growth pressure within the District, particularly the rural environment, and that the design of development, including by way of methods such as structure plans and bespoke zones which provide for development and tourism industry activities, can both promote or weaken overall wellbeing.

7.10 The Section 32 report identified Objective 3.2.1 *'The development of a prosperous, resilient and equitable economy in the District'* as relevant. I also consider the following Strategic Objectives that sit within this overarching objective are relevant to the plan change:

3.2.1.1 The significant socioeconomic benefits of well designed and appropriately located visitor industry places, facilities and services are realised across the District.

3.2.1.6 Diversification of the District's economic base and creation of employment opportunities through the development of innovative and sustainable enterprises.

- 7.11 Strategic Objective 3.2.5 is *'The retention of the District's distinctive landscapes'*, and sitting under this is Strategic Objective 3.2.5.8 which relates to the Wakatipu Basin Rural Amenity Zone and is:

Within the Wakatipu Basin Rural Amenity Zone:

- a. the landscape character and visual amenity values of the Basin and of its Landscape Character Units, as identified in Schedule 24.8 are maintained or enhanced; and*
- b. the landscape capacity of each Landscape Character Unit and of the Basin as a whole is not exceeded.*

- 7.12 While I acknowledge Strategic Objective 3.2.5.8 applies to the Wakatipu Basin Rural Amenity Zone, and not directly to THRZ, I consider that it is important contextually to this plan change, because THRZ was previously zoned Wakatipu Basin Rural Amenity Zone in terms of the decisions version PDP and the existing Hills Resort Zone was considered to satisfy the intentions of Strategic Objective 3.2.5.8 as part of the section 32AA evaluation that evaluated the change in zoning of the Site to THRZ as part of the PDP. I also note that within PDP Chapter 24 Wakatipu Basin, Landscape Character Unit (LCU 22)¹⁵ includes references to The Hills Golf Resort (although not THRZ from a statutory planning perspective), and the majority of this LCU comprises the subject land. Therefore, while THRZ is a separate zone to the Wakatipu Basin Rural Amenity Zone, there is a relationship between the two zones in terms of how development in THRZ zone could affect landscape character in the other.

¹⁵ PDP Chapter 24 Wakatipu Basin Zone. Schedule 24.8 Landscape Character Units. LCU 22 The Hills. URL Link [Proposed District Plan - Queenstown Lakes Proposed District Plan](#)

7.13 In the context of evaluating this plan change and consideration of whether the change achieves, THRZ Objective 47.2.1 also seeks that maintenance of landscape character is achieved for not only The Hills Resort Zone but also the surrounding environment, which is for the most part the zoned Wakatipu Basin Rural Amenity Zone (including in some locations its sub-zone the Lifestyle Precinct).

7.14 As noted in the Section 32 evaluation report, PDP Chapter 6 Landscapes does not apply to THRZ (a special zone) by virtue of Policy 6.3.1.3 which states:

Provide a separate regulatory regime for the Gibbston Valley (identified as the Gibbston Character Zone), Rural Residential Zone, Rural Lifestyle Zone and the Special Zones within which the Outstanding Natural Feature, Outstanding Natural Landscape and Rural Character Landscape categories and the policies of this Chapter related to those categories do not apply unless otherwise stated.

7.15 The context behind this exemption, from a PDP framework perspective, are that bespoke zones such as a special zone (including THRZ) must, therefore, in order to have satisfied section 32 of the RMA at the time of their promulgation, have satisfied the relevant PDP Strategic Objectives and Policies, and any applicable policies in order to become a special zone.

7.16 In this context, the role of bespoke methods such as Structure Plans, rules and mitigation elements, including those deployed in the THRZ such as the Landscape Amenity Management Areas (**LAMA**) and SPA are critical to the success of a zone in terms of achieving not only the objectives of that Zone, but the relationship of that Zone to the wider environment and its role in the PDP framework. In this case, the Structure Plan in PDP Section 47.7 and associated methods section 47.1.4 are critical to achieving the single objective (47.2.1) of The Hills Resort Zone, which is (with my emphasis in bold):

*An **integrated golf resort development that principally provides for a range of visitor industry related activities**, while also providing for **limited residential activity**, all of which are **located and designed** with particular regard to **maintaining the landscape character and amenity values of the Zone and surrounding environment**.*

7.17 Therefore, while I generally agree with the matters identified in the section 32 evaluation, I consider the above provides additional context of the role that the THRZ provisions, including its Structure Plan, plays in terms of maintaining landscape values of not only the Zone but the wider environment, and that achieving Objective 47.2.1 is not isolated to only activities and effects within THRZ. In my view, it is appropriate for these matters to be taken into account in terms of evaluating the plan change and whether the proposal achieves Objective 47.2.1.

7.18 In addition to the PDP Strategic Issues 1 to 6 identified and discussed above, for ease of reference, I list below the PDP Strategic objectives and policies, and other provisions that are not located within THRZ that I consider are of critical importance to the PPC.

Strategic Objective 3.2.1¹⁶

The development of a prosperous, resilient and equitable economy in the District. (addresses Issue 1)

Strategic Objective 3.2.1.1

The significant socioeconomic benefits of well designed and appropriately located visitor industry places, facilities and services are realised across the District.

Strategic Objective 3.2.1.6

Diversification of the District's economic base and creation of employment opportunities through the development of innovative and sustainable enterprises.

Strategic Objective 3.2.5.8

Within the Wakatipu Basin Rural Amenity Zone:

¹⁶ Also identified and evaluated in the Requestor's s32 evaluation report.

- a. *the landscape character and visual amenity values of the Basin and of its Landscape Character Units, as identified in Schedule 24.8 are maintained or enhanced; and*
- b. *the landscape capacity of each Landscape Character Unit and of the Basin as a whole is not exceeded.*

7.19 Landscape Chapter 6 Policy 6.3.1.3¹⁷

Provide a separate regulatory regime for the Gibbston Valley (identified as the Gibbston Character Zone), Rural Residential Zone, Rural Lifestyle Zone and the Special Zones within which the Outstanding Natural Feature, Outstanding Natural Landscape and Rural Character Landscape categories and the policies of this Chapter related to those categories do not apply unless otherwise stated.

7.20 Definition of resort¹⁸

Means an integrated and planned development involving low average density of residential development (as a proportion of the developed area) principally providing temporary visitor accommodation and forming part of an overall development focused on onsite visitor activities.

8. SUBMISSIONS

- 8.1 The plan change request was notified on August 15, 2025, and received 21 submissions. Submitter #19 Lachlan and Maggie Drummond formally withdrew their submission. This occurred prior to the summary of decisions requested being notified and their submission was not included in that summary.

¹⁷ Also identified and evaluated in the Requestor's s32 evaluation report.

¹⁸ Also identified in section 2.2 of the Requestor's Section 32 evaluation and in the Requestor's CI 23 response.

8.2 The 20 remaining submissions were allocated into 70 identified decisions sought, also referred to as summary of submissions points. Of these, the following 12 submitters support the plan change with no modifications sought:

- (a) Dublin Nominees Ltd #1;
- (b) Peter and Linda McBride #3;
- (c) Jennifer Humphrey #5;
- (d) Hamish Blake #6;
- (e) Warren and Lisa Bates #7;
- (f) Pete Campbell #8;
- (g) Rebecca and James Hadley #9;
- (h) Sam and Toni Monk #10;
- (i) John Guthrie #11;
- (j) Roger Monk #12;
- (k) Cameron Wilson #14; and
- (l) Mike Davies #21.

8.3 Some of the above submissions have identified specific aspects of the proposal which they support. While these particular aspects are acknowledged, I have not discussed them further unless another submitter or a view from Ms Gilbert or Mr Facey or myself has provided an opposing view.

8.4 Only one further submission (**FS**) was made, by Iris Weber and Dave Gibson (also an original submitter). Their FS was in support of the submission by Draper (#13) in relation to submission point #13.12 and #13.13 and building heights and building coverage. A general summary of matters raised by submitters opposing or seeking changes are:

- (a) Graeme and Jane Todd (#2) and Derek and Anna Brown (#4) in relation to visibility of the proposed Activity Area SG and enlargement of AA4 as viewed from their residence at Advance Terrace;
- (b) Simon Dan (#15), whose matters of concern can be generally summarised as seeking greater screening in relation to views from the proposed trail into his house, and traffic safety issues;
- (c) Queenstown Trail Trust (#16) who seek amendments associated with trail connectivity, access and formation;
- (d) Andrew Brinsley (#17) has concerns with traffic safety on Hogans Gully Road;
- (e) Sandra and George Page (#18) who oppose the location of Activity Areas S1 and S2, and noise from helicopters;
- (f) Iris Weber and Dave Gibson (#20) raise concerns with the visibility of the proposed new Home Sites from Hogans Gully Road and Speargrass Road area and road safety issues associated with the new Hogans Gully Road access.

8.5 The following image identifies the location of opposing submitters who I have identified as residing in the area (e.g excludes the Queenstown Trails Trust).

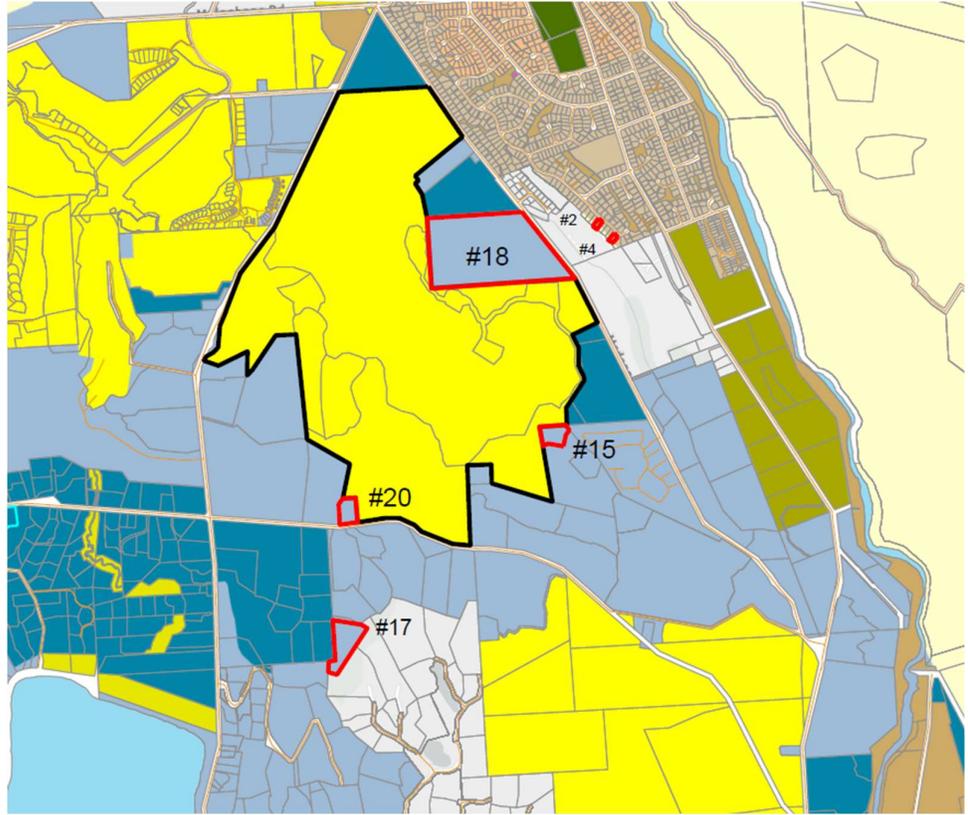


Figure 2. Annotated PDP Zone map illustrating the location of submitters who oppose or seek changes, referenced by submitter number. The black solid line delineates THRZ from Millbrook Resort Zone (north) and Hogans Gully Resort Zone (South). Surrounding pale blue colour is the Wakatipu Basin Rural Amenity Zone, and the dark blue is the Lifestyle Precinct sub-zone

- 8.6 Below I address procedural matters in respect of the submission of James and Janene Draper (#13) and Sandra and George Page (#18). In the sections that follow I address thematic issues, and in doing so comment on the relevant submissions.
- 8.7 For completeness, I have not identified any submission which ought to be struck out in terms of section 41D of the RMA.

James and Janene Draper Submission

- 8.8 The submission of James and Janene Draper #13 focused on the introduction of several homesites as viewed from Hogans Gully Road and their property at 110 Hogans Gully Road. A letter from Brown and Company Planning Consultants (the Requestors Planning Agent) was received on 15 January 2026 which identified that agreement had been reached between the Requestor and the Drapers and as a

consequence several amendments were made to the proposal, with amendments to proposed provisions relating to the Home Sites 9, 10, 11 and 16, and limiting access from the proposed eastern Hogans Gully Road access to use by only Home Sites 9-16. The letter states that their submission was to be withdrawn on that basis.

8.9 I understand that the Hearings Administrator has not yet received notice from the Drapers themselves that their submission has been withdrawn.

8.10 Therefore, I have taken into account the proposed amended provisions as identified in the letter from Brown and Company. I understand that this letter has since been filed with the Council’s Planning Administrator (on 21 January 2016) and made available to the Hearings Panel.

Sandra and George Page Submission

8.11 As a preliminary matter, Submitter Sandra Page #18 contacted Council officers on or around 20 January 2026 to alert them to her concerns that a part of her submission had not, in her view, had the summary of decision sought correctly summarised, and to confirm that her husband George was also a signatory to their submission.

8.12 The relevant part of the Pages’ submission is submission 18.2. The summary of decision sought, which was prepared by Council officers and reviewed by me states:

That the proposed staff accommodation is sited 50 metres back from the submitters property boundary at 148 McDonnell Road, and blends into the environment as best as possible.

8.13 The relevant part of the submission states the following (adopting the Council’s submission form template):

Specific Provisions	Support or Oppose	Reason for Your Views	Decision Sought

S2 – Staff Accommodation	Amend	<p>This area (S2) is close to our driveway boundary. We note it is proposed to provide staff accommodation for 50. When we gave consent to the previous owner R Monk on 01/04/1995 for the subdivision of this land, it was subject to no building or structure being erected closer than 50 metres to his boundary.</p> <p>Due to a Council error, this condition was not actioned (copy of written consent and CivicCorp letter 08/07/2003 is attached). This came to our attention when the buildings in S1 were constructed.</p>	<p>As there should be a 50m distance for any buildings from our boundary, that the proposed staff accommodation is sited further back from the current allowable distance and blends into the environment as best as possible. Also steps taken to ensure our privacy and enjoyment of our property keeping in mind the number of people who will be residing in one area.</p>
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8.14 I consider that the summary of the decision requested accurately reflects what the submission states.

8.15 I have not discussed this matter with Mrs Page directly. I understand from discussions held with Mrs Page and Council officers that her concerns are that what the submission intended to request was that the accommodation be sited further back from the current allowable distance, which is defined by the location of Activity Areas S1 and S2 (if buildings are located outside of these areas they would require a non-complying activity consent pursuant to Rule 47.4.7). While Mrs Page does not know precisely the setback of buildings in Area S2 from their boundary, Mrs Page identified that the setback they need to abide by for their property in the Wakatipu Basin Rural Amenity Zone is 15 metres, and it appears that the proposed setback for buildings in AA and S2 (being the extent of AA S2) is in the order of 7 metres to 8 meters from the Pages' property boundary adjacent to their driveway.

8.16 Therefore, while a greater setback of buildings in Area S2 from their boundary is sought by Mr and Mrs Page, Mr and Mrs Page do not necessarily think it needs to be as much as 50 metres from their boundary.

8.17 From my review of the existing THRZ Structure Plan and the provisions of PDP Chapter 47, AA S2 (and AA S1) already exists and are not proposed to be modified.

I do not consider there is scope available to Mr and Mrs Page to request these changes.

8.18 Mr and Mrs Page also seek that buildings in AA A2 which are located in proximity to their property boundary, have their maximum permitted heights reduced so that they are not visible from their property. Again, AA A2 already exists on THRZ Structure Plan and provisions in PDP Chapter 47, and the relevant provisions are not proposed to be modified by this plan change. I therefore do not consider there to be scope for the Page's to request this amendment.

8.19 For completeness, I note that the Page submission also refers to a previous resource consent granted in 1999 and written communication from Civic Corp, a company contracted at that time to undertake consent authority duties on behalf of the Council. Based on the submission itself, and the documents provided with the submission, I understand that the Pages provided written approval on the basis that buildings would have a 50 metre setback from their common boundary, however consent was granted for a building to be built much closer to their boundary and is now located within AA S1, being the existing service building used by THRL. The Panel will appreciate that the conditions applicable to that resource consent are a separate matter to the rules that apply in relation to setbacks in THRZ under the PDP. The PDP setback provisions were subject to a public notification and hearing process.

8.20 In summary, I consider that submission points 18.1 and 18.2 should be rejected.

9. IDENTIFIED ISSUES, EFFECTS AND ANALYSIS

9.1 This section of my evidence addresses what I consider to be the key substantive matters to be addressed, including as raised in submissions that seek changes or outright refusal of the plan change. I have, grouped my discussion in the following topics:

- (a) Landscape, including visual effects as a subset of landscape effects;
- (b) Traffic and access;

- (c) Trails;
- (d) Noise, pertaining to effects associated with Helicopter landings;
- (e) The issue of whether the rearrangement of residential activity renders the activity more akin to separate of node of rural residential activity rather than the portion of residential activity associated with a resort zone; and
- (f) An assessment of the provisions sought to be added or amended not otherwise discussed in the preceding topics.

9.2 The Requestor's assessment of effects (**AEE**) and its supporting information addressed the matters relevant to the plan change. I agree with the AEE in terms of effects associated with geotechnical matters and infrastructure and consider that any effects can be appropriately managed through existing provisions, such as the matters of control for access and cycleway formation in Rule 47.4.1, and for buildings where anticipated within relevant Activity Areas or Homesites in Rule 47.4.4. I have not identified a need for any new provisions associated with the plan change in relation to geotechnical or infrastructure issues, and these matters were not raised in submissions.

10. LANDSCAPE INCLUDING VISUAL EFFECTS

10.1 I refer to and rely on Ms Gilbert's evidence on landscape matters which is **Appendix 2** to this report. I infer that unless otherwise stated to the contrary in Ms Gilbert's evidence, Ms Gilbert has accepted the findings of the Requestor's landscape assessment.

10.2 I have categorised the landscape related issues by way of matters raised by submitters.

New SG Area and enlargement of AA4

10.3 Derek and Anna Brown (#4.1) seek that the proposed location of the SG Activity Area is rejected. Graeme and Jane Todd (#2.1) also seek the same, or that alternatively this area is relocated to Area C.

10.4 Derek and Anna Brown (#4.2) and Graeme and Jane Todd (#2.2) seek that the enlargement of AA4 is rejected.

10.5 These submitters reside at 10 Advance Terrace (Todd) and 18 Advance Terrace (Brown), as shown in Figure 2 above. The concerns held by these submitters are about adverse effects of the SG Activity Area and enlargement of AA 4 in views from their properties.

10.6 I refer to and rely on Ms Gilbert’s assessment set out in her evidence. Ms Gilbert considers that the adverse visual effects associated with these activity areas will be low, because of:

- (a) the diminishing influence of distance along with the relative elevation of the Arrowtown escarpment viewers to the SG AA and AA A4;
- (b) the proposed provisions to manage building height, coverage, colours and materials, which I infer are predominantly through Rule 47.4.3 and LAMA requirements and Rule 47.4.4 relating to matters of control associated with buildings;
- (c) the moderating influence of the golf resort context and broader, visually complex and engaging outlook within which these development changes will be seen; and
- (d) the visual mitigation benefits that can be reasonably expected to accrue as a consequence of the proposed LAMA strategies associated with these activity areas.

10.7 On this basis I consider that the proposed AA SG and the proposed AA 4 enlargement are appropriate in terms of effects on these submitters, and recommend these submissions are rejected.

Hogans Gully Road and Speargrass Valley Catchment

10.8 Iris Weber and Dave Gibson (#20) say that:

“Broadly, we believe the high standard of design and proposed Landscape Amenity & Structural Planting areas will help to nest the proposed changes

into the landscape. External effects are mostly addressed by the proposed landscaping and design controls, but more mitigation is necessary to reduce additional traffic, noise & light pollution.”

10.9 They make specific requests for additional mitigation measures, including landscape / visual related measures as discussed below.

10.10 The submitters request an increase in the visual screening of the eight new HSs in the south-eastern portion of the plan change area, and the protection of the existing poplars on the Boxer Hill Trust land to the west of the site. The same submitters’ FS requests the reduction of building height to protect rural character and amenity values and seeks the adjustment of HS building coverage to appropriately mitigate visual impacts.

10.11 Iris Weber and Dave Gibson (#20) note that the poplars are outside the plan change site, but on land owned by the Requestor. They say that:

“legal mechanism is necessary to ensure protection of [the trees] for life and adjacent planting of new trees (taller than 5 metres). If not possible then additional planting by the House Sites”. (#20.6).

10.12 Effectively, I understand the intention of the submission is to increase the visual screening of the eight new HSs in the south-eastern portion of the plan change area and protect the existing poplars on the Boxer Hill Trust land to the west of the site (or in the alternative, to require additional planting on the plan change site).

10.13 Ms Gilbert’s assessment of this submission reiterates that the existing poplar trees are not located on the THRZ zoned land and cannot be relied on to be retained (although as per the submission I note the poplar trees are on land owned by the Requestor). Ms Gilbert addresses this submission as part of her overall assessment on landscape effects, particularly in terms of effects associated with the eight new Home Sites (HS 9-15) located within the Speargrass Valley Catchment. Ms Gilbert’s conclusions are that the additional Home Sites collectively have the potential to not ‘maintain the landscape character of the THRZ and the surrounding area’ as required to be achieved by Objective 47.2.1 and could result in more than minor adverse landscape effects.

- 10.14 Therefore, the concerns expressed by Submitter #20 are supported in so far as Ms Gilbert also makes additional landscape recommendations to Home Sites 9, 10, 12, 15 and 16, the associated LAMA, and to reconfigure the SPA strategy to include three open, elevated flatter areas to achieve a more coordinated landscape outcome.
- 10.15 I consider that these amendments are able to be applied and would achieve more effective visual mitigation and filtering of views of these Home Sites which would assist to achieve Objective 47.2.1 and Strategic Objective 3.2.5.8. I also consider that these measures are not dissimilar to the landscape management methods already deployed, and that from a section 32AA perspective these measures / amendments are effective and efficient, and that benefits of the additional landscape management outweigh costs associated with additional LAMA areas and planting and/or reduced building heights.

General Landscape Matters

- 10.16 Simon Dan (#15.7) seeks what he considers to be “*minor amendments to protect my amenity*”. He is concerned that the alignment of the indicative public trail through THRZ PPC will compromise privacy for 214 McDonnell Road. Mr Dan supports additional screening, but he also seeks that views from his property to the mountains are not impacted by screening.
- 10.17 Ms Gilbert supports additional planting being added to the THRZ Structure Plan in the vicinity of the Dan property to provide screening between the trail and dwelling. On this basis, Ms Gilbert considers that adverse landscape related effects for this property will be low.
- 10.18 I consider that it is both effective and efficient to include additional planting on the Structure Plan, and part of the LAMA strategy, including any consequential standards, noting that accounting for this matter may not require any amendments to THRZ provisions with this a requirement of LAMA planting in Rule 47.4.2. I note that the boundary between THRZ and 214 McDonnell Road has an established clipped conifer hedgerow. However, I do not know if the hedgerow is on the submitter’s property or within the THRZ. **Figure 3** below illustrates 214 McDonnell Road and the hedge.



Figure 3. Submitter Dan's property outlined in yellow with an existing golf cart track visible on the adjoining THRZ land and the existing hedgerow on / adjacent to the Submitter's property.

- 10.19 Iris Weber and Dave Gibson (#20) seek that there should be no lighting on internal roading or at the entranceway of the proposed Hogans Gully Road access, in keeping with the rural character of the road and its neighbours (#20.5).
- 10.20 Existing THRZ Rule 47.4.1 requires controlled activity consent for access and the walkway/cycleway. The matters of control include (a) entrance design and lighting, and (c) Edge and berm treatment (including footpaths if required) and lighting. Rule 47.5.13 requires (as a permitted activity standard) that light spill is directed away from adjacent roads and properties and that no activity shall result in greater than 3.0 lux outside THRZ. I consider that there are sufficient existing provisions in place to manage effects related to internal roads and entranceways, including for any new access such as the eastern Hogans Gully Road access. I also note that as now included as part of the proposal, the proposed eastern Hogans Gully Road access is limited to serve not more than 7 residential units (HSs 9-16) which means that the associated design of this access should be of a rural nature and not be required to be built to high specifications.
- 10.21 For the above reasons I do not recommend any amendments in response to this submission, and I recommend that the relief sought in submission point 20.5 is rejected.

11. TRAFFIC AND ACCESS

11.1 I refer to the evidence of Mr Facey which is in **Appendix 3** to this report. Mr Facey's evidence has focused on discrete matters associated with the plan change, and in particular the proposed eastern Hogans Gully Road access.

McDonnell Road Access

11.2 The McDonnell Road access is proposed to be moved 50m southwards. Submitter Simon Dan (#15.5) seeks that the proposed amendment to the road location in the structure plan is rejected and that the existing road location remains as it is. While I mention this matter here, I understand from Mr Dan's submission his concerns are more with the internal road location near his property at 214 McDonnell Road, rather than with the access point onto McDonnell Road. Mr Dan may wish to clarify this.

11.3 I refer to the traffic assessment prepared by Carriageway Consulting provided by the Requestor as part of the Clause 23 further information response, which supports the location of the vehicle crossings. Mr Facey's evidence has also assessed the proposed McDonnell Road access and agrees with Mr Carr that the location of the access on McDonnell Road is appropriate. I rely on those two expert reports and support the location of the accesses as shown on the proposed Structure Plan.

Hogans Gully Road

11.4 Submitters raised the following matters:

- (a) Iris Weber and Dave Gibson (#20.1) seek that the overall application is approved subject to amendments that include mitigation provisions regarding access through Hogans Gully Road, planting associated with the proposed Home Sites and heavy traffic movements associated with earthworks. They also seek that the proposed access to eight homesites is restricted in perpetuity so that only homesites nine to 16 can use the Hogans Gully entrance (#20.3) and that that the road surface on the Hogans Gully Road accessway be at noise minimisation quality (#20.4).

- (b) Iris Weber and Dave Gibson also seek that Council create a consent condition to limit access to Hogans Gully Road for heavy traffic associated with the development of the associated groundworks to create the new land parcels (#20.9).
- (c) Andrew Brinsley (#17.1) seeks that full consideration of road engineering issues on Hogans Gully Road to cater for cyclists is given a high priority to the point that gazetted speed be reduced by Council. Iris Weber and Dave Gibson (#20.2) seek that the Council reduce the speed limit on all of Hogans Gully Road to 40 kilometres per hour and make the road a shared bike and car road.
- (d) Mr Brinsley seeks that the access to the “proposed sites” (which I understand to be the new HSs proposed to be access via the new Hogans Gully Road access) come via the main entrance on McDonnell Road (#17.2).

11.5 When considering the above,¹⁹ I note that the plan change now includes the following new proposed rule 47.5.23, as proposed in the Brown and Company letter dated 15 January 2026:

Use of eastern access road from Hogans Gully Road

- (a) *The eastern access from Hogans Gully Road shall provide access to House Sites 9 – 16 only and shall not be used as a through-road for vehicles from other parts of the Zone*

11.6 I understand that Mr Facey has no concerns with this proposed rule. The Requestor has proposed this rule to alleviate the Drapers’ concerns and that this may also alleviate the concerns of the Weber, Gibson and Brinsley submissions in so far that the intensity of the use of access will be restricted. However, I note that the proposed Structure Plan has not been modified and this shows the roading access from the eastern Hogans Gully Road access remains connected with other Activity Areas. However, I understand that it is expected that Homesites 9-16 be able to access the wider resort and also have golf cart access. Therefore, while the

¹⁹ Noting that I have addressed the landscape / visual elements of the Weber and Gibson submission above.

Structure Plan shows connections (in a general sense), I am satisfied that at the time of development and resource consent for Home Sites 9-16 this rule can be implemented through either a design solution, a proposed condition of consent, or a combination of both, and no amendments are required to be made to the Structure Plan.

11.7 If the Panel agrees to proposed rule 47.5.23, the reference to 'House Sites' should be updated to 'Home Sites', consistent with the remainder of PDP Chapter 47 THRZ.

11.8 There should also be a related policy for this rule, for guidance at the time of a resource consent (in the event this rule is not complied with). I have not identified an existing policy in THRZ provisions that would be of assistance in a resource consent application.

11.9 I therefore recommend the following amendment to Policy 47.2.1.14, on the basis of my understanding that the matter relates to visual amenity effects associated with traffic generation rather than the capacity of the access from a traffic safety perspective:

47.1.1.14 Landscape and Amenity

Maintain the landscape character and visual amenity values of the Zone, including the values described in 47.1.3, by:

...

(d) restricting the use of the eastern access from Hogans Gully Road to Home Sites 9-16 only.

11.10 I note that the plan change now (as modified by the letter from Brown and Company dated 15 January 2026) proposes to limit the use of the eastern Hogans Gully Road access to HS 9-16 which is consistent with that part of the submission from Ms Weber and Mr Gibson, and Mr Brinsley.

11.11 In the absence of evidence from the Submitter on the noise effects resulting from increased vehicle movements, I am not persuaded that surface treatment of Hogans Gully Road is justified so that it provides better noise minimisation. I recommend submission #20.4 be rejected.

- 11.12 Mr Facey has assessed the sight distance of the eastern Hogans Gully Road and recommends that the access is located 35 metres eastwards to improve sight distance to the east.
- 11.13 As noted above, Mr Brinsley (#17.1) seeks that full consideration of road engineering issues on Hogans Gully Road to cater for cyclists is given a high priority to the point that gazetted speed be reduced by Council. Iris Weber and Dave Gibson (#20.2) seek that the Council reduce the speed limit on all Hogans Gully Road to 40 kilometres per hour and make the road a shared bike and car road.
- 11.14 The plan change process does not empower the Council to make changes to posted speed limits. I understand that this process must occur through other legislative processes outside the RMA 1991 and the ability for the Hearings Panel to make recommendations relating to this matter, and for the Council to ultimately accept or reject the plan change. In this context, the request is out of scope. I do acknowledge that this matter is of concern for submitters, however, the increase in the use of Hogans Gully Road is small, and a walking/cycle trail is shown connecting Hogans Gully Road to McDonnell Road. I do also note that Mr Faci's evidence does not support the current proposed location of the new Hogans Gully access.
- 11.15 I also do not recommend any provisions that would preclude construction vehicles from utilising Hogans Gully Road, as sought by Iris Weber and Dave Gibson (#20.9). I do not consider it would be practicable, nor justifiable to preclude heavy vehicle use onto Hogans Gully Road. I note the Carriageway Consulting traffic report prepared for the Requestor does not identify that heavy vehicles should be precluded using Hogans Gully Road. I note that Mr Facey considers that heavy vehicle activity on Hogans Gully Road associated with construction activity can be addressed by way of construction management plans. I do not consider any amendments to THRZ provisions are necessary to address this matter, and that Submission #20.9 be rejected.
- 11.16 For these reasons, I do not recommend making any further changes to the plan change as a consequence of these submissions.

11.17 In summary, subject to the modification to Policy 47.1.1.14 and the relocation of the eastern Hogans Gully Road access eastwards as recommended by Mr Facey, I consider the roading and access effects of the plan change are appropriate.

12. TRAIL - WALKWAY/CYCLEWAY

12.1 Mark Williams on behalf of the Queenstown Trails Trust (#16) seeks the following:

- (a) That the proposed pedestrian and cycle right of way of Lot 4 DP 516022 proposed as part of the plan change is approved (#16.1);
- (b) That an additional easement from the southernmost corner of the property and heading west over Lot 4 DP 516022 and Lot 6 DP 392663 to enable a connection into the Ayrburn Heritage Precinct is included into the Plan Change request (#16.2);
- (c) Conditions for the provision of these trails and their construction are included (#16.3); and
- (d) That the trail/s should be formed in accordance with the Council's grade 3 trail standards, generally in the location on the attached plans to the Plan Change (#16.4).

12.2 I support submission point 16.1 in terms of the walkway / cycleway trail being shown on the Structure Plan. No direct amendments are required or recommended in this regard.

12.3 In relation to submission point 16.2, Lot 4 DP 516022 comprises the southern part of THRZ, and Lot 6 DP 392663 is understood to be also owned by the Requestor, being the Boxer Hills Trust land identified above that is subject to an unresolved Environment Court appeal. The submitter has included a map in their submission of an indicative trail location.

12.4 I support the identification of a trail over this land and note that it may achieve the intent of Mr Brinsley's submission which raises safety concerns on Hogans Gully Road from the new eastern Hogans Gully Road access. I also note that the Requestor is comfortable with the walkway/cycleway being shown on the

Structure Plan on land outside THRZ itself, as clarified in its Clause 23 Response to further information.

- 12.5 I consider that submission points 16.3 and 16.4 should be addressed via the subdivision consent process: from my experience these matters will be assessed and imposed by way of consent conditions at the time of resource consent. I do not support any specific provisions added to the PDP associated with the construction and formation of the cycleway / walkway. I do note Rule 47.4.1 requires the accesses and walkways/cycleways to be established in accordance with the Structure Plan, and this may satisfy Mr Williams' request around construction.
- 12.6 For these reasons I support in part the above submission of Mr Williams for the Queenstown Trails Trust and recommend points 16.1 and 16.2 be accepted and 16.3 and 16.4 be rejected.
- 12.7 Simon Dan (#15.6) requests that the track location in the Structure Plan is located to ensure as much separation as possible from the submitter's property boundary at 214 McDonnell Road.
- 12.8 The notified provisions propose to amend Rule 47.5.2 to refer to the walkway/cycleway location 'indicatively' shown on the Structure Plan, as does the legend on both the existing and the proposed Structure Plan, which reflects that flexibility is sought as to the final location and information available made through the detailed design process. I also note that Policy 47.2.1.4 currently refers to the provision of walkway and cycleways through the Zone in the locations 'generally shown on the Structure Plan'. I am not aware of any provisions in the PDP which provide guidance of the location of trails and property boundaries.
- 12.9 This matter has been addressed above, and Ms Gilbert and I recommend additional planting on the boundary interface with Mr Dan's property. Therefore, I support this submission and recommend submission point 15.6 is accepted in part, at least in terms of additional landscape screening to manage potential adverse effects on Mr Dan's property.

13. NOISE INCLUDING HELICOPTER ACTIVITY

- 13.1 The notified amendments to the Structure Plan identify a new Activity Area H (Helipad), which is where helicopter landings and take-offs will be permitted pursuant to existing Rule 47.4.35 and subject to a maximum of 25 flights per week as limited by Rule 47.5.9. Proposed AA H is located immediate south of AA C, which is the location where helicopter landings are currently permitted by the existing provisions (Rules 47.4.35 and 47.5.8).
- 13.2 Mr and Mrs Page who reside at 148 McDonnell Road seek that the existing no fly Zone over the submitters' property at 148 McDonnell Road is upheld (#18.3). I understand from the submission that as part of an agreement with the landowner at the time of the site THRZ is on (which I have not seen), it was agreed with Mr and Mrs Page that helicopters would not fly directly over their property.
- 13.3 THRL's AEE²⁰ states that the site has been subject to a previous noise assessment relating to helicopter noise: Marshall Day Acoustics prepared a Helicopter Noise Assessment in 2015 in support of a submission for rezoning during the District Plan review process. The helicopter landing area assessed in that report (and subsequently formalised by way of the provisions in the operative THRZ) was located just to the south of the existing clubhouse. That assessment found that noise emissions from helicopter activity can readily comply with a noise control of 50 dB L_{dn} at all nearby sensitive receivers.
- 13.4 The AEE²¹ states that the use of the site for helicopter take-off and landings is unchanged from the original assessment (in terms of likely frequency of flights, approach/departure routes, craft specification, and sensitive receivers) and the location of the helipad not significantly altered, the previous assessment remains relevant and can be relied upon.
- 13.5 I have not seen that noise assessment as part of this request, and I consider it would be helpful to be provided by THRL to verify the statement in the AEE.

²⁰ Document K, section 5.

²¹ Ibid.

13.6 I agree with the AEE that the location of proposed AA H is very close to the existing AA C area and that given this centrally positioned location within THRZ and Structure Plan relative to the location of Mr and Mrs Page's property, my view is that the adverse effects are likely to be the same as the current provisions allow, and are therefore, appropriate. As noted above I consider it would be helpful that the noise assessment prepared by Marshall Day identified in the AEE is provided.

13.7 Figure 4 below is an excerpt of the proposed Structure Plan with my annotations identifying the approximate location of the Page's dwelling. This illustrates that helicopter activity within proposed AA H will be slightly further from the Page's dwelling than what is currently permitted within the helicopter activity located within AA C.

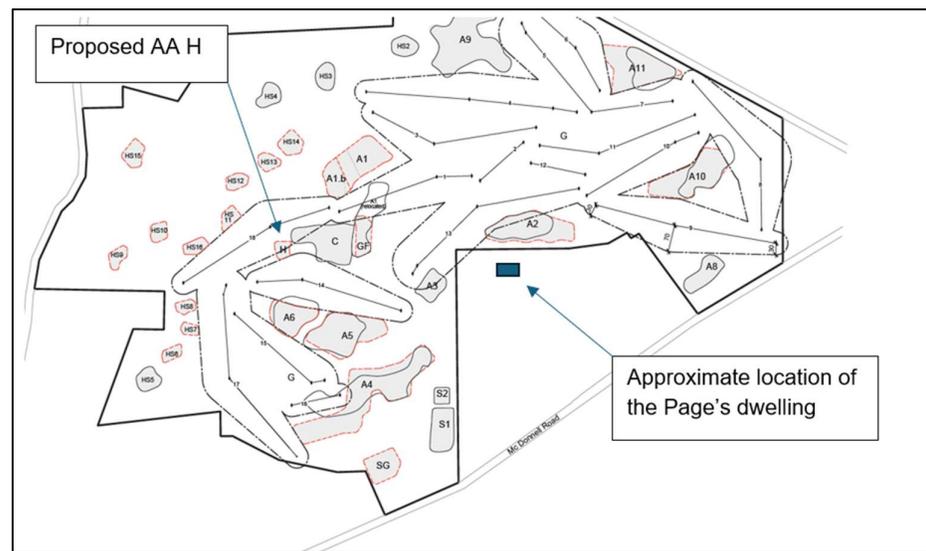


Figure 4. Excerpt of the proposed Structure Plan and the approximate location of the Page's dwelling relative to Activity Areas C and H.

13.8 For these reasons I recommend that submission point 18.3 is rejected.

14. IS THRZ STILL AN INTEGRATED RESORT OR IS IT RURAL RESIDENTIAL HOUSING?

14.1 Relevant to Objective 47.2.1, and the PDP definition of resort, is that the proposed zone is an integrated and planned development. The PDP definition of resort is:

Means an integrated and planned development involving low average density of residential development (as a proportion of the developed area) principally providing temporary visitor accommodation and forming part of an overall development focused on onsite visitor activities.

- 14.2 The purpose statement in section 47.4.1 also states that the purpose of the Zone is *“to enable high quality on-site visitor activities and resort facilities, within a golf course setting and with a predominance of open space”*, noting that residential activities is also included in this statement in the first paragraph.
- 14.3 The Requestor acknowledged the dispersal of residential activity in page 25 of the section 32 evaluation report²² and considered this in the context of the definition of resort, and relied upon the proposal and THRZ remaining consistent with the definition of resort primarily on the basis that the quantum of residential activity was not changing, being limited to 66 residential units by Rule 47.5.16.
- 14.4 The Councils’ request for information (Clause 23 of Schedule 1 of the RMA) dated 11 December 2024, by way of the subheading *‘Section 32 Evaluation – Function of the amended THRZ as a resort zone’*,²³ raised the potential implications of adding the new Home Sites at the cost of removing an existing nine-hole golf course, while acknowledging the amount of residential activity and visitor accommodation activity is not proposed to be changed. In addition, some Activity Areas which currently provide for only visitor accommodation would, under the plan change proposal, also offer residential activity. A golf offering is understood to be an important part of the purpose of THRZ, as per the Zone’s purpose statement (47.1) cited above.
- 14.5 Points 25, 26 and 27 of the request asked the Requestor to consider:
- (a) whether the proposal is a shift away from the concept of a resort zone;

²² Updated Section 32 Evaluation dated URL Link: <https://www.qldc.govt.nz/media/xckfw20l/l-updated-section-32-evaluation.pdf>

²³ Clause 23 of Schedule 1 of the RMA 1991. Request for further information, Page 12. URL Link: <https://www.qldc.govt.nz/media/1uul3j1i/2024-12-11-clause-23-rfi-the-hills.pdf>

- (b) whether the new (dedicated) residential activity elements Homesites 6-15 are integrated with the golf resort; and
- (c) whether consideration would be given to staging residential activity development with visitor accommodation and/or visitor industry development of the zone, or any other methods to ensure that implementing the THRZ framework still principally provides a resort offering rather than the potential for parts of the plan change to result in rural residential development tacked onto a golf course.

14.6 The Requestor's response to these matters²⁴ was that in terms of the dispersal of residential activity, the location of the proposed new Home Sites may appear, when viewed on an aerial image or on the Structure Plan, to be distant and disconnected from the location of the golf course, but in practice it is an easy walk (or golf cart ride) from the Clubhouse and golf course to the new Home Site locations, and that landscape character would be maintained (as set out in the information provided by the Requestor's landscape experts).

14.7 In respect of staging, the Requestor's response was that:

- (a) this is not a matter relevant to the change sought by the Request;
- (b) there is no existing requirement for a set level of visitor accommodation to be established prior to residential units being constructed, or vice versa;
- (c) the plan change does not propose to alter the proportion of visitor accommodation and residential activity from what is provided for by the operative provisions; and
- (d) TTHRZ was found to meet the definition of "Resort" as part of its original promulgation, and redistribution of possible locations for the residential component of the resort development does not alter this assessment.

²⁴ Response of the Requestor to a request for further information, dated 15 May 2025, Page 13. URL link: <https://www.qldc.govt.nz/media/jgvmsp2n/rfi-response-letter-15may25.pdf>

- 14.8 I do not agree with this response. While THRZ does not currently have any staging provisions to ensure that residential activity is undertaken sequentially to ensure it remains proportionately low to onsite visitor related activities, at the time THRZ was promulgated it was not proposed to remove the recently established 9-hole golf course and distribute eleven dedicated homesites into an open space area, which has been identified by Ms Gilbert as a separate landscape catchment to the majority of the resort. I consider that the response from the Requestor does not provide adequate justification for not further contemplating the integrity of THRZ as a resort zone.
- 14.9 Ms Gilbert has raised concerns that, from a spatial perspective, the dispersal of residential activity into the southern rolling hills of THRZ, replacing parts of AA G and the 9 hole golf course results in a rural residential pattern of development which, further exacerbated by the access onto Hogans Gully Road, creates the potential for a perception that Home Sites which read as rural living sprawl and more associated with the Speargrass Valley visual catchment, than being integrated into the resort.
- 14.10 I note that the current Structure Plan has five separate Home Sites, three of which contain existing dwellings that were established and landscaped prior to the promulgation of THRZ. The balance of the remaining residential units permitted in THRZ are distributed across Activity Areas A2, A3, A4, A6, A7, A8, A9, A11 by Rule 47.4.11 where visitor accommodation activity is also permitted in these areas.
- 14.11 Some of these activity areas are located near the boundaries of THRZ, such as AA 9, and AA 11. AA 4 is understood to be visible from McDonnell Terrace and surrounding environs such as Advance Terrace and could comprise a mix of both residential activity and VA, or just residential activity on its own. In this context, I acknowledge that there is already the potential in the operative THRZ provisions for residential activity to be somewhat dispersed and that in those activity areas, there is no minimum quantum of visitor accommodation. There is instead an overall maximum of residential units as restricted by operative Rule 47.5.16, which

is 66 across the zone, and a total of 150 units (inclusive of VA and residential units) as required by Rule 47.5.15²⁵.

14.12 I note that of the other resort zones introduced as part of the PDP (notified in 2015) have staging provisions. The Gibbston Valley Resort Zone has staging rules relating to the formation of two underpasses across State Highway 6 prior to the completion of buildings in certain activity areas which provide for visitor accommodation and residential activity (Rule 45.5.3), and landscaping and productive planting requirements to be undertaken at the time certain activity areas are developed (Rule 45.5.2).

14.13 The Hogans Resort Zone, located nearby to the south of THRZ, is similar to THRZ in that its focus is on a golf resort and mix of visitor industry activity and residential activities, and has the following staging related provisions:

(a) Policy 48.2.1.4 which states: *Require that development is staged to ensure that the visitor industry facilities, including the golf course and related facilities (maintenance facilities, clubhouse and driving range), and visitor accommodation facilities in Activity Area VA, are established prior to further built development.*

(b) Rule 48.5.2 which requires staging of development activity as follows (with non-compliance requiring a non-complying activity resource consent) (a description of the purpose of each activity area are provided in footnotes for reference).

<i>The golf course and built development within the Zone shall be sequenced as follows:</i>	
Stage	Works
Stage 1	(a) <i>Establishment of the maintenance facilities in Activity Area M²⁶ (including associated landscape mitigation) and access roading and resort infrastructure;</i>

²⁵ Non-compliance with these rules requires resource consent to be obtained as a non-complying activity

²⁶ Maintenance / Service (M) Activity Area as described in the Purpose Statement section 48.1.2 URL Link: [Proposed District Plan - Queenstown Lakes Proposed District Plan](#).

	<p>(b) Construction of the golf course in Activity Areas PG²⁷ and EG²⁸ and the Clubhouse in Activity Area C²⁹, and associated golf related infrastructure and roading;</p> <p>(c) Construction of the driving range in Activity Area PG and the associated buildings in Activity Area DR³⁰, and associated infrastructure and roading.</p>
Stage 2	(d) Construction of at least 16 Visitor Accommodation Units in Activity Area VA ³¹ .
Stage 3	(e) Construction of the Visitor Accommodation / Residential Units in Activity Areas VAR1 – VAR9 ³² .

14.14 Effectively, Hogans Gully Resort Zone Rule 48.5.2 requires the development of the maintenance building, golf course and ecological planting, a Clubhouse, and 16 visitor accommodation units prior to the construction of visitor accommodation or residential units in the VAR Activity Areas, which function similarly to THRZ’s Home Sites.

14.15 The obvious difference between THRZ and the Hogans Gully Resort Zone is that THRZ is already developed in terms of the existing 18-hole golf course, maintenance buildings and the Clubhouse and carpark area, whereas the Hogans

²⁷ Pastoral / Golf Course (PG) – this Activity Area occupies the wider, open, elevated terraces of the Zone and provides for part of the golf course, surrounding pastoral land and the driving range and golf academy.

²⁸ Ecology / Golf (EG) – located within the narrower, enclosed and incised gully and rocky outcrop areas within the Zone’s upper terraces, and this Activity Area provides for part of the golf course and expansive areas for ecological protection and enhancement.

²⁹ Club House (C) – located centrally within the Zone and adjacent to and overlooking the 18th fairway and green. It provides for a range of commercial activities associated with the golf course and resort operations, including resort reception, golf services, visitor accommodation, restaurant and bar and administration.

³⁰ Driving Range (DR) – located in the northeast of the Zone adjacent to the main entrance from McDonnell Road, to contain buildings for a driving range and golf academy, and associated carparking and access. Topography (including required new earth mounding) and vegetation will ensure that structures and activities within this Activity Area will not be visible when viewed from McDonnell Road.

³¹ Visitor Accommodation (VA) – located centrally, adjacent to the Club House and the 18th hole, to provide for visitor accommodation units.

³² Visitor Accommodation / Residential (VAR1 to VAR9) – located in pockets within the upper terraces of the Zone where built development can be absorbed into the landscape and the rural context, to provide for visitor accommodation and residential , activities as part of the Resort development. Specific numbers of units are enabled in each of these Activity Areas, based on their absorption capability within the landscape. A total of 60 visitor accommodation / residential units are enabled within Activity Areas VAR1 – VAR9. Topography (including required new earth mounding) and vegetation will ensure that structures and activities within these Activity Areas will not be visible when viewed from surrounding roads.

Gully Resort Zone land was not developed at the time of the formation of the Hogans Gully Resort Zone into the PDP.

- 14.16 That said, I consider that there is the potential for the plan change to not achieve Objective 47.2.1, and for its consistency with the PDP's definition of 'resort' to be compromised by the proposal which enables the creation of 11 new homesites without any assurance that dedicated visitor accommodation activity will be established first. While I appreciate that the Requestor is underway with design and consenting for golf related activities as set out in the above description on the environment, there is the potential for these consents to not be implemented and a focus to be placed on residential activity only. I acknowledge that this is unlikely to be the intention of the Requestor, but plan provisions generally need to take into account the potential for ownership changes.
- 14.17 For these reasons I recommend the introduction of a staging rule which requires certain dedicated visitor industry related activities to be developed prior to development on Homesites 5-16. For example, a staging rule could be added to Chapter 47 which requires a minimum number of visitor accommodation units in A1, A3, A6 or AA C. I have identified these activity areas because residential activity is a non-complying activity within them pursuant to Rule 47.4.12, as proposed to be modified by the Requestor. These areas are identified as dedicated visitor accommodation development areas.
- 14.18 I recommend that the minimum quantum of visitor accommodation units associated with a staging rule is 14. The reason for this is because I consider it is a proportionate quantum of visitor accommodation activity relative to the new Home Sites.
- 14.19 The proposal involves eleven new Home Sites dispersed into the open space (AA G), this equates to a portion of 17% of the permitted 66 total residential units. The provisions (via Rule 47.5.15) allow a total of 150 units in the zone inclusive of visitor accommodation units and residential units (but excluding staff accommodation in Areas S1 and S2). Assuming the full uptake of residential activity is used, this equates to 84 visitor accommodation units, and 17% of this figure is 14 units. This is considered a proportionate amount of dedicated visitor accommodation to be developed prior to the proposed dispersed homesites.

14.20 Therefore, I recommend the following policy and rule:

- (a) Policy 47.2.1.4A sitting within the 'Structure Plan and Resort Development' sub-heading:

Require that development of residential activity in Home Sites 6-15 are staged with visitor accommodation activity to ensure that the Zone principally provides for visitor industry facilities, with a low average density of residential activity.

- (b) Rule 47.4.10A sitting within the 'Visitor Accommodation' subheading:

Rule	Visitor Accommodation	Activity Status
47.4.10	<i>There shall be no less than 14 Visitor Accommodation units constructed within any of A1, A3, A6 and C prior to any building in HS 6 to 16</i>	NC

14.21 A related matter is that the Requestor seeks to amend Rules 47.4.11 and 47.4.12 by making residential units permitted in AA 5 and AA 10 which is currently a non-complying activity, and making residential units a non-complying activity in AAs 3, 6 and C. The changes are set out in Tables 2 and 3 of the Requestor's AEE. I do not oppose these amendments, and do not consider these changes to result in THRZ no longer resulting in an integrated or planned development.

14.22 In summary, I hold reservations with the re-distribution of residential activity away from the larger Activity Areas which residential units are currently directed to locate in. I consider that this concern can be alleviated with a staging rule that ensures the new residential development in this area to be developed in a way that is commensurate to the establishment of further visitor accommodation and will ensure that residential activity is low as a proportion of the overall development focused on onsite visitor activities.

14.23 From a section 32AA perspective I consider that the costs of this are confined to the persons developing THRZ (i.e the Requestor) and do not remove any development opportunities but require a dedicated portion of visitor

accommodation use before homesites 5-16 can be development. Benefits are that THRZ would continue to achieve Objective 47.2.1 and the intentions of the PDP as it relates to resort zones.

15. OTHER AMENDMENTS TO THE PDP PROVISIONS

15.1 The following section discusses the remaining amendments to provisions sought by THRL, where those have not been discussed in the preceding assessment. For avoidance of doubt, where I have not discussed a provision, I agree with the notified version of the provision.

Existing Rule 47.4.1

15.2 I note that THRL seek that the tolerance of 30 metres for an access is removed. This is presumably because the new eastern access onto Hogans Gully Road is constrained as identified in the Carriageway Consulting traffic assessment undertaken for THRL. For the reasons discussed above as advised by Mr Facey and Ms Gilbert in relation to information of potential landscape effects, I agree that this tolerance should be deleted.

15.3 I agree with THRL's new limb (d) relating to legal mechanisms associated with public access to the Trail.

Existing Rule 47.4.3 and 27.7.22

15.4 Rule 47.4.3 provides the framework for establishment of a LAMA identified on the Structure Plan, and in doing so requires a controlled activity consent for the planting.

15.5 THRL seek that matter of control (b) relating to 'the approach to the establishment of the LAMA' and then text clarifying what 'establishment' means has been deleted and shifted to an advice note. I infer that a matter of control relating to 'the approach to the establishment of the LAMA' may not offer any further utility than the matters of control in limb (a). While the matter has been shifted to a note, which could be interpreted as not binding, in my view it remains directive text and I consider this to be appropriate.

- 15.6 Clause (c) is sought to be amended so that 'established' is replaced with 'completed' I do not have any issues with this approach.
- 15.7 I also support the equivalent amendment to subdivision Rule 27.7.22 (e), however I am uncertain of the amendment to limb (d)(ii) which seeks deletion of the reference to the completed LAMA or SPA activity/planting being audited by the Council no sooner than 6 months after completion. This may relate to the nuance that in a subdivision context auditing may be sought to occur earlier as part of the subdivision completion certification (Section 224(c) certification), in which case the change is likely to be practicable and appropriate. The Requestor may be able to explain the rationale for the amendment. In the interim, I do not support this amendment.
- 15.8 Matter (c) in Rule 27.7.22 is also sought to be deleted, with no replacement or relocation. This clause states: *Activity Area 4 and LAMA L4 may be established in stages (Sub Area L4.1, L4.2 and L4.3), as shown on the indicative LAMA design/layout plans in Section 47.8.* I understand that this removal is sought as a consequence of the revised Structure Plan, and this change is supported.

Proposed Rule 47.4.3A

- 15.9 Rule 47.4.3A introduces the framework for the structural planting areas, by way of a controlled activity consent, consistent with the LAMA establishment rule 47.4.3. I support the drafting in terms of provisions, subject to amendments being made to the Structure Plan in this area, as recommended by Ms Gilbert.

Existing Rule 47.4.5

- 15.10 Rule 47.4.5 is proposed to be deleted for reasons I understand to be justified by efficient drafting. The section 32 evaluation³³ referred to this deletion to use the plan change to fix existing typographical and drafting errors to improve plan usability, and it was clarified in the Requestor's Clause 23 response to further information request that this rule duplicated Rule 47.4.36³⁴. This rule identifies that a non-complying activity consent is required if buildings are proposed in areas

³³ Document 4, Section 32 Evaluation at page 29 'Benefits' evaluation.

³⁴ Clause 23 Response to further information by Brown and Company. Paragraph 21.

where a LAMA is required and have not been undertaken. It is an important rule in terms of managing the visual mitigation framework associated with anticipated development, and in general terms, in my view it makes a valuable contribution toward making that development appropriate as a controlled activity.

- 15.11 While I appreciate that not adhering to this activity would be covered by the 'default' Rule 47.4.36 which makes activities not identified in Table 2 a non-complying activity, I consider that Rule 47.4.5 ought to be retained because it provides clarification as to the consequences of not complying with Rules 47.4.3, 47.4.3A and 47.4.4. I consider that this aspect of the framework is distinguishable from more generic activities that are not otherwise specified, such as industrial activities. I do not agree with the section 32 evaluation or the Clause 23 response that this amendment improves plan usability.

Existing Rule 47.4.7

- 15.12 Rule 47.4.7 requires a non-complying consent for any activity except for those described in Rule 47.4.6 relating to activities in AA G. For the same reasons provided where I discuss Rule 47.4.5, I do not consider that Rule 47.4.7 should be deleted and recommend it is retained.

Existing Rule 47.4.10

- 15.13 The existing version of Rule 47.4.10 permits residential activity limited to staff accommodation in AA S1 and S2, provided that the residential activity be maintained in the same ownership as the owner of AA C and G, and cannot be subdivided or otherwise separated including leased. I understand that the intent of this rule is to act as a safeguard against the quantum of residential activity permitted for staff accommodation being not sought to be applied for residential activity generally, for instance as further Home Sites. While the part of the rule sought to be deleted could be perceived as being overly paternalistic, I consider that this existing requirement is important to avoid potential abuse of the intent of the rule and to ensure activities within the Zone accord with the definition of resort.

15.14 This matter was raised in the request for information made pursuant to Clause 23, and the Requestor explained in their response³⁵ that this requirement would not be feasible or practicable in terms of the Requestor managing the ownership model of the Clubhouse (AA C) or the Golf Course (AA G). I disagree and consider that the service areas and staff accommodation are directly linked to the operation of the resort. I note that the rule may better sit as a subdivision rule in Chapter 27 Subdivision and Development, however there is unlikely to be scope to make this change.

15.15 For these reasons I consider that existing Rule 47.4.10 should be retained in its current form.

Existing Rule 47.4.22

15.16 Rule 47.4.22 specifies that service activities are a non-complying activity where undertaken outside of AA S1 and S2. I understand that the request to delete this rule is for drafting efficiency. I consider that for the reasons I have provided above, the clarity provided in existing Rule 47.4.22 is more effective than drafting efficiencies associated with its removal and reliance on Rule 47.4.36 and recommend this part of the request is rejected.

Existing Rule 47.4.27 and 47.4.32

15.17 Rule 47.4.27 identifies that mining is a non-complying activity, and Rule 47.4.32 requires the same for industrial activities. In this instance, those rules are not as directly associated with a permitted standard and tend stand alone as their own activities. I support the deletion of these rules on the basis that Rule 47.4.36 would make these activities a non-complying activity.

15.18 The Requestor seeks amendments to Rule 25.5 which provides permitted earthworks volume limits. I note that amendments are proposed to accommodate the new Home Sites in Rule 25.5.10B.1 and the SPA is identified as exempt from earthworks volume limits. I initially thought that proposed area SG was not included, however I understand that this area and all others will be subject to 25.5.10B.3 and 'All Activity Areas' which provides a 500m³ permitted limit. While

³⁵ Ibid at paragraph 22.

not directly associated with the changes sought, it may be beneficial to amend this to state 'All Activity Areas not identified above'.

16. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 16.1 Subject to the matters identified above, and summarised below, I recommend that the plan be accepted with modifications.
- 16.2 Where I recommend further modifications associated with the plan change, I consider the assessment fulfils the requirements of Section 32AA of the RMA, in the context of the scale and significance of those changes.
- 16.3 The following is a summary of the particular modifications I recommend to the plan change, subject to these matters being satisfactorily addressed:
- (a) Amendments to the Structure Plan (and relevant plan provisions as necessary) to reduce the collective landscape effects of Home Sites 9-16, as recommended by Ms Gilbert, including reconsideration of building heights, and the LAMA and SPA strategy. This could also involve amendments to Height Rule 47.5.3 and any text related to landscape management.
 - (b) Additional planting in relation to Submitter Dan's (#15) property associated with visual mitigation of the walkway/cycleway. This would involve amendments to the Structure Plan.
 - (c) Amendments to Policy 47.1.1.14 to provide a causal link to new rule 47.5.23 associated with limiting the number of dwellings onto the eastern Hogans Gully Road access.
 - (d) The Structure Plan is amended so that the eastern Hogans Gully Access is located eastwards from its proposed current location.
 - (e) The Structure Plan is amended to show the walkway/cycleway trail over Lot 6 DP 392663 (the adjoining site to the southeast corner of the Zone (also referred to as the Boxer Hills Trust land)).

- (f) That a policy and rule is added to require visitor accommodation to be established prior to building in the new Homesites 6-16.
- (g) That Rule 27.7.22(d)(ii) retains the reference to auditing by the council no sooner than 6 months after completion, subject to clarification from the Requestor.
- (h) That the proposed deletion of the following existing rules is rejected:
 - i. 47.4.5 (buildings where the relevant LAMA has not yet been established);
 - ii. 47.4.7 (buildings in Activity Area G); and
 - iii. 47.4.22 (service activities).
- (i) That proposed amendments to Rule 47.4.10 that would remove the requirement for AA S1 and S2 being in the same ownership as AA C and AA G are rejected.
- (j) The Marshall Day noise assessment on helicopter landings is provided to confirm that the location of the new AA H is appropriate.



Craig Barr

13 February 2026

1. APPENDIX 1 – INFORMATION RELIED UPON

1.1 THRL’s documents I have used, or referred to, in forming my view while preparing this evidence are:

(a) THRL’s PC documents lodged on 17 October 2025 and updated 25 May 2025 as part of THRL’s Clause 23 of Schedule 1 RMA, response to a request for further information, including:

- i. Document 1: Request for Plan Change prepared by The Hills Resort Limited.
- ii. Document 2: Requested changes to the Proposed Queenstown Lakes District Plan, prepared by Brown and Company Planning Group.
- iii. Document 3: Assessment of Environmental Effects (AEE), prepared by Brown and Company Planning Group.
- iv. Document 4: Section 32 Report, prepared by Brown and Company Planning Group.
- v. Document 5: Master Planning Design Statement prepared by RBT Design.
- vi. Document 6: Landscape/Visual Assessment, prepared by Boffa Miskell Limited.
- vii. Document 7: Geotechnical Assessment prepared by geotago Ltd.
- viii. Computer Freehold Registers.

(b) The requestor’s Clause 23 Response (RFI Response Letter 15 May 2025) prepared by Brown and Company Limited, received on 15 May 2025 (**Clause 23 version**) including:

- i. A: Updated Structure Plan and Indicative LAMA plans (**Structure Plan and LAMA plans**).
- ii. B: Traffic Assessment prepared by Carriageway Consulting.

- iii. C: Overview of surrounding development context, prepared by Brown and Company Planning Group.
 - iv. D: Height Rationale.
 - v. E: Final Landscape Assessment, prepared by Boffa Miskell Limited (**Landscape Report**).
 - vi. F: Aerial Mapping (with Structure Plan layout including LAMAs, SPAs and contours).
 - vii. G: Visual Simulations and Methodology Statement, prepared by Boffa Miskell Limited (noting that this document is described as Photomontages and Methodology Statement) (**Visual Simulations**).
 - viii. H: Email correspondence with The Queenstown Trail Trust (**QTT**).
 - ix. I: Proposed District Plan provisions, prepared by Brown and Company Planning Group.
 - x. J: Request for Plan Change, prepared by Brown and Company Planning Group.
 - xi. K: AEE, prepared by Brown and Company Planning Group.
 - xii. L: Updated Section 32 Evaluation Report prepared by prepared by Brown and Company Planning Group.
 - xiii. M: Design Statement, prepared by RBT Design.
- (c) Letter from Brown and Company dated 15 January 2026 titled: *Re: The Hills Resort Zone – Private Plan Change – Submission No. 13 (James & Janene Draper)*, describing the withdrawal of the Drapers' submission and revisions to provisions relating to buildings on Home Sites 9, 10, 11 and 16, and a new rule relating to the use of Hogans Gully Road.