

FORM 5
SUBMISSION ON PROPOSED DISTRICT PLAN
Clause 6 of Schedule 1, Resource Management Act 1991

To: Queenstown-Lakes District Council

Submitter Details:

Name of submitter:

Jeremy Bell Investments Ltd.

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1. This is a submission on the Proposed Queenstown Lakes District Plan.

2. Trade Competition

The submitter could not gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission.

3. Omitted

4. The submission addresses the following points and provisions within the Proposed District Plan:

The Rural Zone as it applies to land legally described as Lots 1-3 DP 300397 and Section 32 BLK VI TARRAS SD (all within CFR 2455 Otago). The wider site measures 1769.9438ha however the proposed submission relates to the land identified on the attached map which measures approximately 93.2 hectares.

In particular:

- i) The proposed District Plan Plan Map 18 – Wanaka Rural, Hawea Flat and Proposed District Plan Map 11 - Mt Pisa.
- ii) The proposed allocation of the Rural Zone to the area on the attached map.

5. Our submission is:

- i. The subject site is owned by Jeremy Bell Investments Ltd. This site is zoned as Rural as identified on Planning Map 18 and 11 of the Proposed District Plan and has majority landscape categorization as ONL.
- ii. We **oppose** the proposed zoning of our properties as entirely Rural zone identified on Planning Map 18 – Wanaka Rural, Hawea Flat and Proposed District Plan Map 11 - Mt Pisa.
- iii. We seek that the land identified within the outlined area of the attached map be re-zoned in part as Rural Lifestyle zone (71.2ha) with a dedicated no build area (22ha) where these areas are more sensitive to landscape matters. This is supported by Mr Ben Espie - Landscape Planner, to which his Landscape Assessment Report is attached to this submission and has influenced the parameters of the proposed zone and no build areas identified in the attached map.
- iv. We consider that this area would make rural living opportunities with high amenity values. The subject area can be appropriately developed to a minimum lot area of one hectare, providing the average lot size is not less than 2 hectares and for the purpose of calculating any average, any allotment greater than 4 hectares, including the balance, is deemed to be 4 hectares. The viability of this is

- additionally supported in terms of Natural Hazards and Servicing review in the attached report by John McCartney, Senior Engineer of Hadley Consultants Ltd.
- v. We consider that the proposed change in zoning, (in addition to the no build area as identified on the attached map), will have no more than minor effect on the wider environment. As such, we also propose that adverse effects on the environment may be managed through the use of Controlled Activity consent processes.
 - vi. We submit that the proposed zoning achieves the purpose of the Resource Management Act – the sustainable management of natural and physical resources.

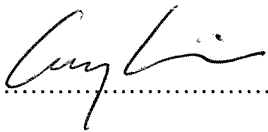
6. We seek the following decision from the local authority:

- i. Adopt the Rural Lifestyle proposed provisions within Chapter 22 and Chapter 27 as they relate to the area identified in the attached map “Proposed Rural Lifestyle Zone Location Map”.
- ii. Amend proposed Planning Maps 18 and 11 to change the zoning of the specific area identified within ‘Appendix 1: Proposed Rural Lifestyle Zone Location Map’ to that of Rural Lifestyle and corresponding ‘No Build Area’.
- iii. That the land identified in the attached graphic be re-zoned to Rural Lifestyle zone with a minimum lot area of one hectare providing the average lot size is not less than 2 hectares and for the purpose of calculating any average, any allotment greater than 4 hectares, including the balance, is deemed to be 4 hectares.
- iv. That the land identified as ‘no build’ within Appendix 1 – Proposed Rural Lifestyle Plan, Criffel Station Wanaka, be adopted within Planning Map 18 and 11 where relevant for the purposes of landscape protection.
- v. Amend rule 22.4.3.3 to change the activity status for a building platform for a residential unit from Discretionary to Controlled Activity status.
- vi. Delete Rule 22.5.3 (maximum building size 500m²).
- vii. Amend Rule 27.4.1 so that subdivisions within the Rural Lifestyle zone that comply with all of the relevant standards are a controlled activity.

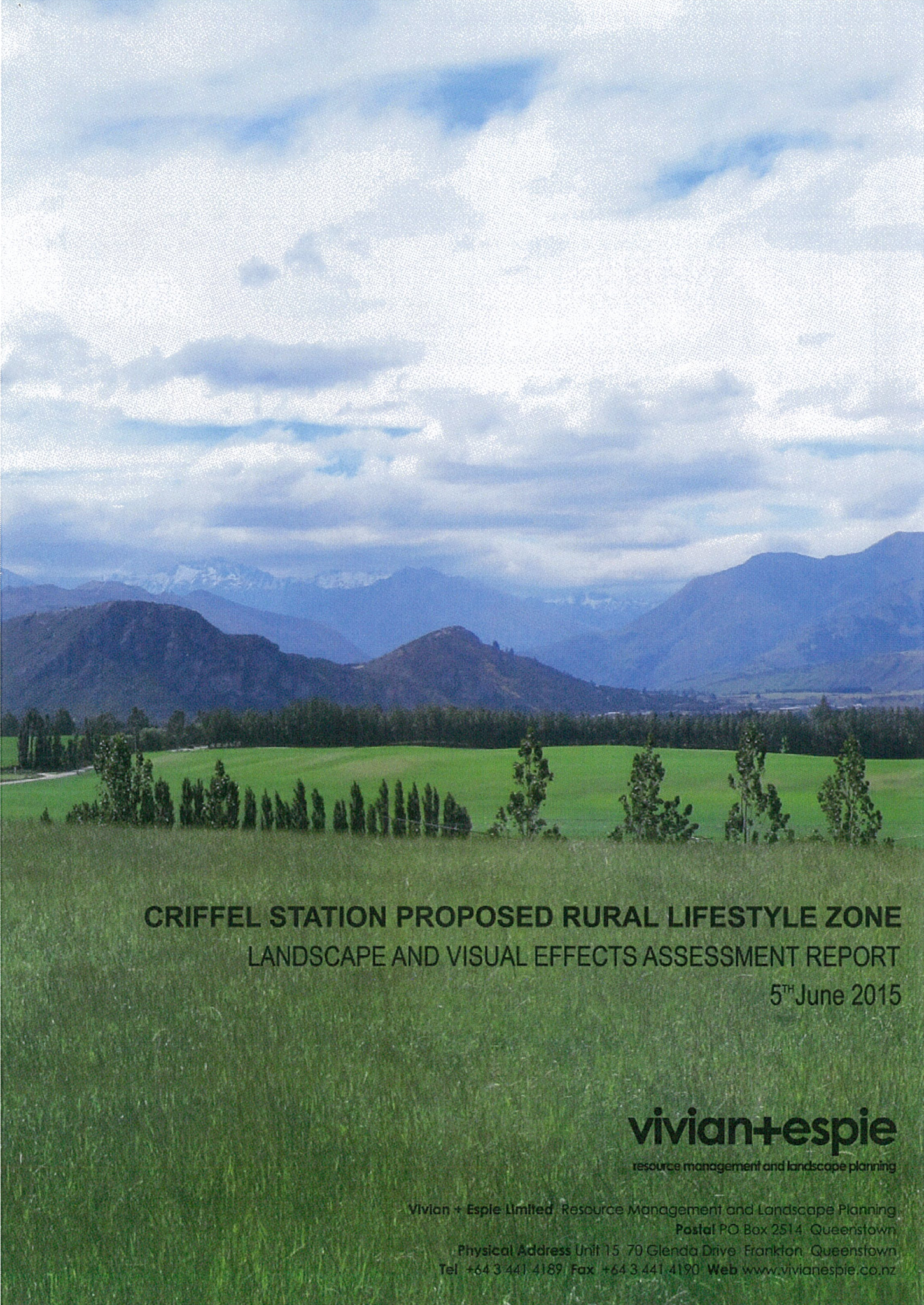
7. **We wish to be heard in support of our submission.**

8. **If others make a similar submission, we will consider presenting a joint case with them at a hearing.**

Signature of submitter
(or person authorised to sign
on behalf of submitter)



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**CRIFFEL STATION PROPOSED RURAL LIFESTYLE ZONE
LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS ASSESSMENT REPORT**

5TH June 2015

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resource management and landscape planning

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INTRODUCTION

1. This report identifies and quantifies the landscape and visual effects likely to arise from a proposal to rezone an area of the Rural General Zone (RGZ) of the Operative Queenstown Lakes District Plan (the Plan) to Rural Lifestyle Zone (RLZ). The site of the proposed zone is within Criffel Station, which is a large farming property located on the northern slopes of the Criffel Range. The proposed area of RLZ is approximately 71.2ha in area and is located on a north facing terrace above the floor of the upper Clutha Basin.
2. The area of RLZ is proposed to be created by way of a submission on the Queenstown Lakes District Council's (QLDC) District Plan Review. I understand that the purpose of this review is to update and amend the current District Plan such that it provides for the District's resource management needs for the upcoming decade.
3. The methodology for this assessment has been guided by the landscape related Objectives and Policies of the Operative District Plan, by the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment produced by the UK's Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment¹, and by the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects "Landscape Assessment and Sustainable Management" Practice Note².

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

4. The details and layout of the proposed activities are set out in other documents that accompany the relevant submission. I will not repeat that information here, other than to make the following summary points that are relevant to an assessment of landscape issues:
 - It is proposed to create a RLZ approximately 71.2ha in area within a specific part of Criffel Station, as shown on Figure 1 of this report. More detailed plans of the proposed area of zoning are attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

¹ Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment; 2013; 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – 3rd Edition'; Routledge, Oxford.

² New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects Education Foundation; 2010; Best Practice Note 10.1 'Landscape Assessment and Sustainable Management'.

- The proposed area of RLZ is located over two terraces south of Mount Barker Road. The proposed area of RLZ is east of an existing area of RLZ that is located at the toe of the Criffel Range and accessed from the western end of Mount Barker Road. These two areas of zoning do not join and will not be seen alongside each other.
- A building restriction area approximately 22ha in area is proposed within the proposed RLZ. The building restriction area comprises of a steep escarpment face, gullies and significantly vegetated areas.
- The proposed RLZ is to be primarily accessed via Smith Road and a limited amount of access is anticipated to be provided directly from Mt Barker Road at the western end of the proposed zone. Smith Road is a gravel road that presently only provides access to the farm dwellings and structures within Criffel Station. An existing access point from Mt Barker Road accesses a farm building at the western end of the proposed RLZ that is currently used for functions (wedding receptions etc).
- An additional zone standard is proposed to be included to the effect that the maximum number of building platforms within the zone shall be 25.

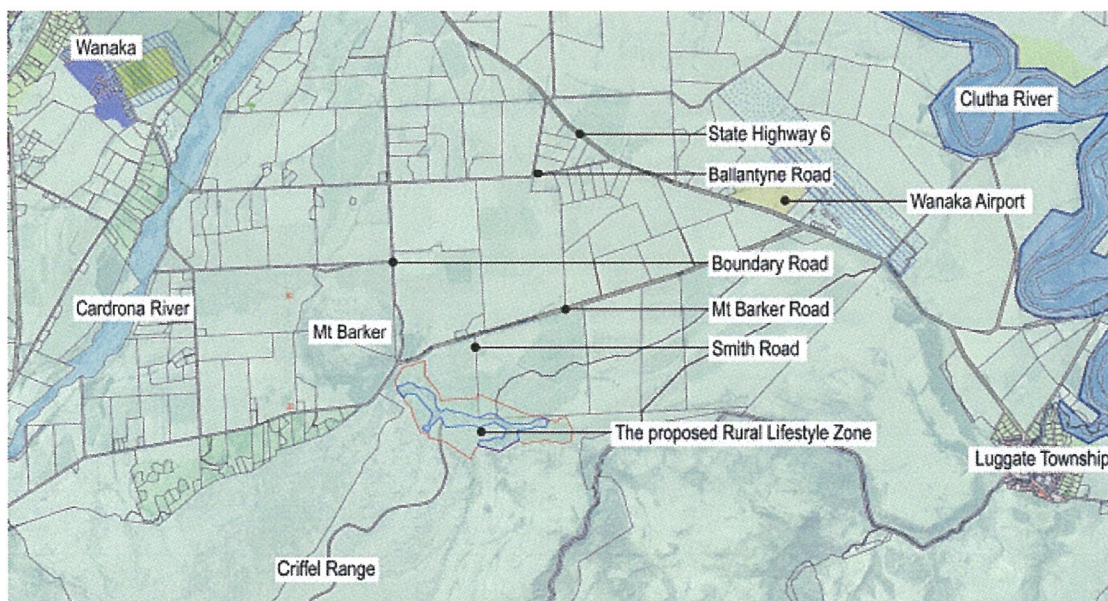


Figure 1: The location of the proposed RLZ within Criffel Station.

5. The proposed RLZ will enable controlled activity subdivision into a maximum number of 25 residential lots, which may (under the Operative District Plan) have a minimum size of 1ha with an overall average size of 2ha. At the time of a subdivision being applied for, the Council will have control over the design of the subdivision in relation to a number of matters including lot layout, access, building platform location and servicing.
6. It is my understanding that the ultimate result of the proposed area of RLZ will be development that includes the following aspects:
- A maximum of 25 residential building platforms which will develop for rural living use including dwellings, gardens and curtilage activities.
 - Vehicle access being primarily from Smith Road with a limited amount of access from Mt Barker Road at the western end of the zone.
 - A network of internal vehicle access ways. Three farm access tracks currently link the upper terrace to the lower area. It is anticipated that these will most likely be the alignments that are used for future internal roads.
 - The escarpment face will remain free of buildings. I understand that this area may be owned in common by future lot owners, or it may form part of the 25 rural living lots themselves. In either event, I understand that landscape treatment is a matter of Council control as the time of subdivision. I would expect (and recommend) that the Council use its control to ensure suitable management of the escarpment (exclusion of weeds, uniform treatment, etc).
7. Overall, the flatter terrace areas within the zone will develop the pattern of rural lifestyle areas such as the Riverbank Road area or the area west of Mt Barker Road. Such areas are generally green, treed and somewhat compartmentalised. The escarpment face that separates the two terrace areas will remain undeveloped.

STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

8. The parts of the Resource Management Act that are relevant to the consideration of the landscape and amenity related effects of the proposed zone change include:

6 *Matters of national importance*

In achieving the purpose of this Act, all persons exercising functions and powers under it, in relation to managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources, shall recognise and provide for the following matters of national importance:

- (b) *The protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development:*

7 Other Matters

In achieving the purpose of this Act, all persons exercising functions and powers under it, in relation to managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources, shall have particular regard to-

- (c) *The maintenance and enhancement of amenity values*
 (f) *Maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment*

9. Section 4 of the Plan deals with matters that are relevant to the district as a whole. Section 4.2 of the Plan provides district wide guidance regarding landscape and amenity issues. Logically, all other sections of the Plan shall be compatible with Section 4. I include the most relevant of these Section 4 provisions as Appendix 2 to this report. However the District Plan Review that is currently in process may well amend these provisions. Therefore, my assessment of the proposed zoning is not specifically structured around these provisions, it is largely an assessment from first principles with reference to the above sections of the Act.

THE EXISTING LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

10. I describe the existing landscape context with reference to the landscape baseline (the existing situation in relation to landscape character) and the visual baseline (the existing situation in relation to views and visual amenity).

The landscape baseline

11. Criffel Station contains a relatively large catchment of the northern slopes of the Criffel Range. In total, the station takes in approximately 900ha of land located between the ridgeline that the Criffel Diggins Track is located on and Luggate Creek. The Station also takes in the terraces and flats located at the toe of the Criffel Range south of Mount Barker Road and west of SH6.

12. I produced a landscape and visual effects assessment report regarding subdivision in the eastern part of Criffel Station in February 2014³ (my 2014 report). My 2014 report describes the landscape character of the northern slopes of the Criffel Range as follows:

*"The mountainous slopes of the Criffel Range meet a number of terraces that rise up from the basin floor. These terraces and their associated escarpment faces are visually distinguishable from the rugged mountain slopes and they are of different geomorphology and geology to the mountain slopes. They have deeper, more fertile soils and therefore have been modified by farming much more than the mountain slopes. It is visually apparent that they are utilised for agricultural crop production and other farming purposes that are similar to those that occur on the floor of the Upper Clutha Basin."*⁴

*"The lower terrace is at a similar elevation to Mt Barker Road. The upper terrace comprises of a large area of verdant paddocks and is separated from the lower terrace by a steep escarpment face that is up to 40 metres in height."*⁵

13. The proposed RLZ is located on two terraces located immediately south-east of Mt Barker. The upper terrace extends from approximately Knob A3KV (shown on Appendix 4) to the ridgeline that the Criffel Diggins Track is located on. The lower terrace is practically part of the floor of the Upper Clutha Basin as it is at a similar elevation to Mt Barker Road. However the western end of this terrace, near the southern toe of Mt Barker, it is separated from Mt Barker Road by an escarpment face.

14. South and east of the upper terrace is Knob A3KV that stands approximately 562 masl, similar in height to Mt Barker, and is separated from the Criffel Range by Luggate Creek. It is visually apparent that this hill has been managed in a similar manner to the upper slopes of the Criffel Range. When viewed from the surrounding areas it is difficult to distinguish this hill from the Criffel Range.

*"The overall character of the northern slopes of the Criffel Range landscape, the values associated with it and their significance are that of a relatively dry and tussock dominated open landscape that is for the most part only utilised by high country farming. Appreciation of these slopes can be gained from the wider reaches of the Upper Clutha Basin and the surrounding elevated areas"*⁶

15. In summary, the terraces located at the toe of the Criffel Range have been modified over a number of decades for farming purposes. These terraces and the values associated with

³ Vivian+Espie Ltd; Paul Smith; 13th February 2014; Criffel Station – Land Use and Subdivision Proposal – Mt Barker Road, Wanaka – Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment Report.

⁴ Ibid. Paragraph 7

⁵ Ibid. Paragraph 11

⁶ Ibid. Paragraph 8.

them evidently differ from the slopes of Criffel Range and have much in common with the floor of the Upper Clutha Basin.

The landscape category line

16. Criffel Station is contained within the Rural General Zone and therefore is subject to the Plan's landscape categorisation process in accordance with Part 5.4.2.1 of the Plan. Categorising the landscapes of a district into outstanding natural landscapes and landscapes that are not both outstanding and natural is an exercise that must obviously be done at a very large scale.
17. I am aware of maps and reports made public by the Council setting out their position regarding the landscape categorisation of the relevant area that is proposed to be formalised by the District Plan Review. The Council's information shows the landscape categorisation line separating the Outstanding Natural Landscape – District Wide (ONL(DW)) from the Visual Amenity Landscape (VAL) is it runs through the site. This line stems from an assessment of landscape categorisation within the Upper Clutha area.
18. To summarise, a report produced by Dr Marion Read⁷ outlines her opinion of the location of the landscape categorisation line along the northern toe of the Criffel Range. Dr Read's assessment of this landscape categorisation line was reviewed by Ms Anne Steven⁸. Ms Steven opined the landscape categorisation line to be located differently to Dr Read. Dr Read produced a "Post Review Amendments Report" which took into consideration Ms Steven's assessment. In this report Dr Read concluded that she did not accept Ms Steven's position on the location of this line. The Council has adopted the recommendations of Dr Read.
19. Dr Read's report describes the landscape categorisation line from the District boundary east of Luggate township to west of Mount Barker as stated below and as shown on Appendix 3 of this report:

"In my opinion the boundary of this ONL should follow the base of the Pisa Range from the District boundary skirting around behind Luggate along the boundary of the residential zoning and then follow the true right bank of Luggate Creek. It should cross the creek to the south of the knob 'A3KV' to incorporate the bluff

⁷ Read Landscapes; Dr Marion Read; 1st April 2014; Report to Queenstown Lakes District Council on appropriate landscape classification boundaries within the District, with particular reference to Outstanding Natural Landscapes and Features.

⁸ Anne Steven Landscape Architect; Anne Steven; June 2014; Peer Review of Landscape Assessment - Outstanding Natural Landscape of the Upper Clutha Part of the Queenstown Lakes District - For the Queenstown Lakes District Council.

system beyond its left bank within the ONL. The line should then follow the southern and western edge of the north facing terrace until the vicinity of Mount Barker is reached. This incorporates the farmed terraces within the ONL(DW) and is consistent with the Environment Court's decision in the Bald Developments case."⁹

20. My 2014 report assessed the landscape categorisation of Criffel Station and briefly describes the distinguishable characteristics that define the location of the landscape categorisation line as stated below.

*"This boundary line shown on Appendix 8B – Map 1 of the District Plan does not extend east to the immediate vicinity of Criffel Station since this vicinity has not been examined in detail by any past Environment Court proceedings."*¹⁰

*"I consider that there are significant distinguishable characteristics between the Criffel Range mountainsides and the terraces that are immediately adjacent to the floor of the Upper Clutha Basin. These terraces share many characteristics with the basin floor. Overall, I consider the landscape category boundary extends east along the toe of the mountain range and along the upper edge of the terraces as is shown on Appendix 2 of this report."*¹¹

21. The landscape categorisation line as shown on Appendix 2 of my 2014 report is shown on Appendix 4 of this report. I disagree with Dr Read's landscape categorisation line for the following reasons:

- The northern slopes of the Criffel Range are of a relatively dry, tussock-dominated, extensively managed, open landscape. This landscape character differs to that of the terraces that have been utilised for more intensive agricultural purposes for many decades. The landscape character and the activities that occur on these terraces are identical to those of the floor of the Upper Clutha Basin.
- The location of Dr Read's landscape categorisation line is somewhat contradictory in relation to the justification set out in her report for the following reasons:
 - Dr Read's line ascends/descends the escarpment face immediately east of Smith Road in a way that does not relate to landform. Dr Read's line does not consistently follow the toe or the top of the escarpment.

⁹ Ibid. Paragraph 3.7.5.1.

¹⁰ Ibid. Paragraph 10.

¹¹ Ibid. Paragraph 12.

- The terrace that Dr Read considers to be part of the ONL(WB) is a relatively small part of the overall terrace system located at the toe of the Criffel Range. Dr Read considers the remainder of this relatively large terrace to be part of the VAL.
 - Dr Read's line bisects a flat paddock area of the terrace, in a way that is unrelated to landform, so as to include a bluff system immediately west of Knob A3KV.
 - The bluff system has similar landscape characteristics to much of Knob A3KV, however Dr Read does not include Knob A3KV in the identified ONL.
22. Taking into account all of the above, I consider that the landscape categorisation boundary line should be drawn as shown by the red line on Appendix 2 of this report. Therefore the proposed zone is located within the VAL.
23. In summary, the vast, open, rugged, steep, extensively farmed mountain slopes of the Criffel Range have a landscape character that is consistent with an ONL categorisation. The flat, verdant, intensively farmed terraces and valley floor within Criffel Station have a landscape character that is consistent with a VAL categorisation.
24. The landscape character of the site and its constituent parts are potentially affected by the proposed re-zoning, as is the landscape character of the broader landscape.

The visual baseline

25. The proposed RLZ is potentially visible from an identifiable visual catchment or zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV). The ZTV comprises of the southern part of the Upper Clutha Basin roughly delineated by Mt Barker Road, SH6, Ballantyne Road and Morris/Boundary Road, as can be seen on Appendix 4. The ZTV includes the private land within this area and the public roads.
26. Observers within the ZTV that are potentially visually affected by the proposal include:
- Users of Mt Barker Road.

- Users of State Highway 6
 - Users of Ballantyne Road and Morris/Boundary Road
 - Occupiers of private land generally within the area bounded by Mt Barker Road, SH6, Ballantyne Road and Morris/Boundary Road
27. The visual effects of the activities enabled by the zone will be discussed in relation to these various potential observers subsequently.

THE LANDSCAPE EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSAL

28. When describing effects, I will use the following hierarchy of adjectives:
- Nil or negligible;
 - Slight;
 - Moderate;
 - Substantial;
 - Severe.
29. Landscape effects are the effects that an activity may have on the landscape as a resource in its own right. Landscape effects relate to landscape character and the elements and patterns that make up that character, rather than visual issues. I have considered these effects with reference to the relevant statutory considerations.
30. The character of the site and the landscape in which it sits has been discussed above. The proposed RLZ is located over two terraces currently used for agricultural and pastoral grazing purposes and an escarpment face which is less managed. Two small valleys cut through the upper terrace. These valleys contain willows, poplars and some remnant native shrub species. At a broader scale, the site sits within a dramatic landscape of high natural character (as can be seen on Appendix 5, Viewpoint Location 1). The proposed RLZ will bring about a rural living pattern across the terraces of the site. The proposed zone will be surrounded by the existing farm activities within Criffel Station.
31. The subsequent subdivision and development that will occur within the proposed RLZ has been described in paragraph 6 above and will allow for a maximum number of 25 building

platforms. Future development will bring about a considerable density of rural living activities that includes dwellings, associated structures, access ways, fences, amenity planting, lawns, busyness and the presence of people. I consider these activities will ultimately have similar characteristics to the other RLZs of the District such as Dalefield (Dalefield Road, Mountain View Road and Littles Road area) and the western end of Mt Barker Road, as examples.

32. The proposed zone is contained by the surrounding rural landscape and agricultural land uses. The southern, eastern and western edges of the RLZ on the upper terrace are contained by the steep slopes that form the northern toe of the Criffel Range. The north-western corner is contained by the edge of an escarpment that descends down to Mt Barker Road. The northern edge of the zone has been formulated to allow for a small number of dwellings to be located in a non-prominent part of the lower terrace at the toe of the escarpment and allow for the majority of this terrace to remain as part of the operational farm. This northern boundary also follows an existing fence line.
33. Future development will bring about a reduction to the agricultural activities within this portion of Criffel Station. Throughout the District it is apparent that small scale agricultural or pastoral activities occur within RLZs as there is a need for owners and occupiers to economically manage their properties. This often takes the form of horse or alpaca grazing or some cropping operation. Management of these future properties may include such small-scale farming activities. Future properties on the periphery of the proposed RLZ may also lease portions of their land to Criffel Station to be managed as part of the larger surrounding farming operation. In general, I consider that the proposed RLZ will retain some agricultural and/or pastoral elements as part of the overall rural living landscape pattern that will develop.
34. Future dwellings, access-ways and associated domestic outdoor activities will add to the reduction of the agricultural character within this portion of Criffel Station. I consider that future development of this type will have similar characteristics to the RLZ located on the northern slopes of Criffel Range west of the site. These activities, even though they are likely to include small-scale farming activities, will alter the current agricultural landscape character to a rural living character.

35. Future development as provided for by the proposed zone will not alter the escarpment face. As discussed above, it is likely that the three existing access-ways that ascend this escarpment will be upgraded to an appropriate standard. These upgrades will have a negligible effect on the landscape character of the site.
36. Mt Barker Road runs east to west between SH6 and the Cardrona River. The eastern half of Mt Barker Road is located to the immediate north of Criffel Station and accesses a small number of properties. The western end of Mt Barker Road is a no exit road. Primary users of Mt Barker Road are local residents. I consider the proposed zone area and its immediate surrounds are a relatively infrequently occupied and somewhat peripheral corner of the Upper Clutha Basin. The landscape character change will be relatively contained, will be of a moderate scale and will not affect the character of the broader basin area.
37. The Plan makes it clear that the community value the character of the ONLs above the character of other landscapes. Notwithstanding this, visual amenity and rural character are valued generally throughout the rural lands of the District. In general terms, rural living areas can sit comfortably within VALs, provided that location, visual effects and other matters are appropriate. Throughout the District many rural living areas sit within VALs in a way that does not degrade the character of the broader VAL itself. In this regard, I consider that the character of the proposed zone location is not as sensitive to the specific change that is proposed as other locations would be.
38. In summary, the proposed zone will be well contained by surrounding topographical boundaries and agricultural patterns. The proposed zone will allow for future development that will ultimately change the current agricultural landscape character of the zone area to a rural living character. The rural living character will allow for some agricultural activities to occur; however these may differ from the current agricultural activities. The location of the proposed activities is not as sensitive or as valued in terms of landscape character as other locations. Overall, I consider that a node of rural living development enabled by the proposed zone will have a moderate effect on landscape character. Rural, pastoral character will be decreased, but in a relatively contained and sympathetic way.

THE VISUAL EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSAL

39. Visual effects are the effects that an activity may have on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people. Again, I have assessed these effects with reference to the relevant statutory considerations.
40. Paragraph 29 sets out the observers that gain potential views of the proposed RLZ that may be affected by the proposal. Proposed and existing provisions will enable Council control at both subdivision and building stages. The outcomes of the proposed zone are discussed in my paragraph 6. I discuss the visual effects brought about by the proposal in relation to potential observers below:

Users of Mt Barker Road

41. Mt Barker Road runs east to west between SH6 and Cardrona River and runs to the immediate north of Criffel Station. An escarpment face is immediately south of Mt Barker Road as it runs to the west of Smith Road. This roadside escarpment provides visual separation between this part of Mt Barker Road and the proposed zone area. East of Smith Road the roadside escarpment flattens out and becomes more setback from the road. Generally speaking, the escarpment screens the proposed zone from road users west that are of 247 Mt Barker Road (the Morris property), as is shown on Appendix 4.
42. Visibility of the site can be gained adjacent to, and east of, the Morris property, as can be seen on Appendix 4, Viewpoint Locations 2 and 3. The escarpment face and taller vegetation surrounding the gullies are the most visually prominent features of the site. Visibility of the site is intermittent from this stretch of Mt Barker Road due to a number of shelter belts and mature vegetation located on the lower terrace.
43. Construction activity and some future dwellings, in the short term, will be visible. In the long term, I consider amenity trees associated with the future dwellings' outdoor living areas will soften and partially screen visibility of future development. Amenity vegetation will most likely differ from the existing vegetation within the site. This vegetation has the potential to bring about a visual increase of domestic elements.
44. Visibility of an upgrade to the Smith Road/Mt Barker Road intersection and the zone access point on Mt Barker Road to the west of the zone area will be experienced by road users that are within their close proximity, as can be seen on Appendix 4, Viewpoint

Location 4. An increase in vehicle movements will also result from the proposed zone and will be visually apparent.

45. Users of Mt Barker Road currently experience a relatively quiet country road, views from which are characterised by large paddocks delineated by shelterbelt plantings, scattered farm cottages, gravel access-ways and amenity planting and the open surrounding hillsides of Mt Barker and the Criffel Range. No particular frequented viewpoints or stopping locations are situated on this road. The proposed zone will bring about an increase in traffic on Mt Barker Road, which will affect the visual experience of road users.
46. In summary, I consider that the visual amenity as experienced from Mt Barker Road will change in a relatively slight way. The road itself will be busier and two minor upgrades to intersections will take place. Some houses on the relevant terrace will be visible at distances of between 1.2 and 4.2 kilometres. The area of rural living development will appear as a low-density sweep of rural dwellings set amongst maturing vegetation in a location that is not prominent or dominant and is well removed from the viewer. The essential elements of the visual amenity of Mt Barker Road will remain.

Users of State Highway 6

47. A stretch of SH6, between Ballantyne Road and Mt Barker Road, gains visual access to the proposed zone, as can be seen on Appendix 4, Viewpoint Location 1. Portions of the upper terrace are the parts of the zone area that are most easily seen from this stretch of road. The lower terrace is not visible from this stretch of road.
48. Visibility of some future dwellings and initial construction activity located on the upper terrace will be visible in a similar manner to that gained from Mt Barker Road, as discussed above. In the long term, amenity planting associated with future dwellings will reduce the amount of visible built form. Vegetation within the Upper Clutha Basin, as can be seen from this stretch of SH6 (shown on Appendix 4, Viewpoint Location 1) is a wide variety of amenity plantings, conifer hedge rows, clumps of poplars and the like. I consider that future tree planting within the upper terrace of the zone area (which the Council will have control over) will largely blend in with the surrounding vegetation on the floor of the Upper Clutha Basin. However, I consider that particularly colourful or visually unusual tree planting would draw the eye to the relevant area and should be avoided.

49. SH6 is a primary route between Wanaka, Wanaka Airport, Luggate and through to Cromwell. SH6 travels through varying areas of landscape character including small areas of residential and commercial development, broadly open pastoral paddocks and enclosing hillsides. The proposed RLZ will bring about a slight increase in use of the Morris Road/SH6 and Mt Barker Rd/SH6 intersections. There are no particular viewing areas or stopping points on the relevant stretch of SH6.
50. The views to the proposed zone change area from SH6 are at distances of between 2.8 and 4.4 kilometres. The lower part of the zone change area is not visible but the upper terrace can be seen. The building restriction area of the escarpment is the most visible part of the proposed zone. Generally, due to relative elevations, the surface of the terrace area is not visible, however, buildings upon it would be, in a similar way to existing buildings on the Morris and Feint properties.
51. From the relevant stretch of SH6, the proposed zone area will ultimately visually read as a treed sweep of buildings at the toe of the Criffel Range. While the open slopes of the Criffel Range are a prominent part of views from SH6, the zone change area is small and relatively inconspicuous in these views. With reference to the Viewpoint Location 1 photographs of Appendix 4, built form and associated vegetation will appear as a thin horizontal sliver that visually touches the trees of the basin floor. It will be visually backed by the open mountain slopes. The increase in development and vegetation along the upper terrace will bring about a reduction to the open and natural character of the toe of the slopes of the Criffel Range and this will be evident in the views from the identified stretch of SH6. However, given the visual context of the zone change area in these views (as can be seen on Appendix 4, Viewpoint Location 1), I consider that this visual effect will be of a slight degree. Views and visual amenity that are experienced from this highway will very largely remain as they currently are.

Users of Ballantyne Road and Morris/Boundary Road

52. Boundary Road runs north to south between Ballantyne Road and Mt Barker Road. Morris Road extends north of the Boundary Road/Ballantyne Road intersection. Ballantyne Road runs east to west between Wanaka Township and SH6, as can be seen on Appendix 4. Mt Barker screens the site from the western half of Ballantyne Road; potential visibility of the site is gained west of Boundary Road.

53. The topography within this part of the Upper Clutha Basin is of large rolling undulations through pastoral paddocks. Shelterbelts and roadside plantings are also frequent throughout this area. The topography and vegetation significantly reduce views towards the proposed zone area. Visibility of future development within the proposed zone would take the form of relatively brief glimpses through vegetation over rolling hills, as can be seen on Appendix 4, Viewpoint Locations 5 - 8. Future vegetation within the proposed zone will further soften visibility of built form. These roads are not as highly used as SH6 but are generally more used than Mt Barker Road.
54. With reference to the photographs from Viewpoint Locations 5 – 8, there are generally numerous layers of mid-ground and foreground trees between a viewer and the zone area, although sometimes clear views to the zone area are available. Future trees within the proposed zone would add another layer of vegetation. These layers of vegetation are visually difficult to distinguish from one another to viewers travelling these roads.
55. In practical terms I consider that visibility of future development from these roads will be intermittent and relatively difficult. Some distant dwellings will be visible from some points and will appear as being at the base of the mountain slopes. In these views the visible buildings will be adjoined to horizontal bands of vegetation in the mid-ground and will be softened by future vegetation within the zone change area. To users of these roads, future visual evidence of the proposed zone will be peripheral and a small part of the broad landscape vistas that are enjoyed. Effects of visual amenity will be slight.

Occupiers of private land within the area bounded by Mt Barker Road, SH6, Ballantyne Road and Morris/Boundary Road

56. The private land located within the area roughly contained by Mt Barker Road, SH6, Ballantyne Road and Morris/Boundary Road provides for visibility of the zone change area that is similar to views that are experienced from these roads themselves, which has been discussed above and is illustrated by Appendix 4, Viewpoints 1-8.
57. The properties within and adjacent to these roads range in size between approximately 4ha to approximately 120ha in area and are within the RGZ. Topography is rolling and undulating and shelterbelts and other mature trees are common. Therefore, views to the zone change area will be blocked from some viewpoints within this area and will be

available from others. The general composition of views in the direction of the zone change area is illustrated by the photographs of Appendix 4.

58. As can be seen from Viewpoints 5 and 6 of Appendix 4, the scale of visual effect will be relatively small. Development associated with the proposed RLZ would be a small part in the overall composition of these views, which would remain dominated by the open and natural mountain slopes. Again, foreground and mid-ground vegetation will be such that a horizontal sweep of future rural living land use would visually touch and be contiguous with the patterns of the basin floor, while being distinct from the mountain slopes.
59. Occupiers of these properties, particularly those in high use areas such as adjacent to dwellings, farm cottages and barns are more sensitive to visual changes than transient road users. From some dwellings, the zone change area will be within pleasant views to the south that take in the Criffel Range. These views are likely to be enjoyed more frequently and regularly than views from the public roads. They are also likely to be more valued, albeit that they are in a southerly direction, whereas outdoor living areas are likely to be oriented to the north. Views from the open agricultural parts of these properties are also likely to be enjoyed less regularly.
60. Future development within the proposed RLZ will, in the short term, include the visibility of construction activities and some future dwellings. In the long term, amenity trees associated with the future dwellings' outdoor living areas will soften and partially screen visibility of future development. In an overall consideration, I find that the visual effects of the proposed zone when experienced from the relevant private properties will be of a slight degree when seen from open agricultural areas and of a moderate degree when seen from dwellings and outdoor living areas.

Summary

61. In summary, the proposed development will be visible from short stretches of SH6 and Mt Barker Road. Brief glimpses of the proposed development will be intermittently gained along Ballantyne Road and Morris/Boundary Road. The proposed development will be visible from the private land contained within these roads. In the short term, the initial construction of the proposed zone and a small number of future dwellings will be visible from these stretches of road. In the long term, amenity tree planting and the like will further screen future dwellings. This vegetation will bring about an increase in domesticity to the

site. Overall, views and the visual amenity currently experienced from these surrounding public places will largely remain as they currently are. Visual effects will be of a slight to moderate degree.

CONCLUSIONS

62. An area of RLZ is proposed at the toe of Criffel Range. It is located west of an existing RLZ that is also located on Mt Barker Road at the toe of Criffel Range. I understand that the details of the proposed zone mean that the development that ultimately results from the zone will:

- consist of up to 25 dwellings that will be situated on two terrace landforms.
- be primarily accessed via Smith Road, although a limited amount of access will be provided via an existing access way from Mt Barker Road.
- Maintain the escarpment face within the zone free of buildings.

63. In relation to landscape character, the proposal will change the character of the two terraces from a pastoral and agricultural landscape character to a rural living character. The rural living character of the zone will continue to allow for some agricultural activities to occur, however these may differ from the current agricultural activities. The proposed zone area is well contained by topographical boundaries and is less sensitive and less valued in terms of landscape character than the adjacent steep mountain slopes. Overall, I consider the proposed zone will have a moderate effect on the character of the landscape.

64. In relation to visual effects:

- Future development within the proposed zone will be potentially visible from short stretches of both Mt Barker Road and SH6.
- Relatively brief glimpses of future development will be potentially gained through vegetation and over rolling hills from Ballantyne Road and Morris/Boundary Roads.
- In the short term, initial construction and some dwellings on the upper terrace will potentially be visible from the abovementioned stretches of road.
- In the long term, it is likely that amenity tree planting and vegetation will screen the majority of future built form. Amenity planting will bring about a slight increase in the domesticity of the site. Overall future development when visually experienced

from these surrounding public places and adjacent private land will have a slight to moderate degree of adverse effects.

65. Overall, I consider that the landscape and visual effects of the proposed zone have been well mitigated and, if further rural living zones are to be provided in the upper Clutha area, there is considerable logic to the proposal in terms of landscape planning.

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