

BEFORE QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT COUNCIL

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991

AND in the matter of a submission to the Queenstown Lakes Proposed
District Plan

BY Jeremy Bell Investments Ltd

Submitter

STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF MICHELLE SNODGRASS (Landscape Architect)

Dated 1st April 2017

INTRODUCTION

1. My name is Michelle Snodgrass. I hold the qualification of Bachelor of Landscape Architecture with honours from Lincoln University, and I am a member of the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects and I gained my associateship in 2002. I am the Director of Michelle Snodgrass Landscape Architecture which I have been since 2013. Prior to this I worked For Baxter Design Group for 7 years, Scott Wilson in the U.K for 18 months, the Christchurch City Council for 5 years and the Department of Conservation for 2 years. I have been practicing as a landscape architect since 1995.
2. I have read the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses contained within the Environment Court Practice note of November 2014 and agree to comply with it. This evidence is within my area of expertise, except where I state that I am relying on information I have been given by another person. I can confirm that I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions expressed herein.
3. I have been asked to give evidence, on behalf of Jeremy Bell Investments Ltd, on the submission which is to include the proposed site within the Wanaka Airport Mixed Use Zone. Additional provisions and rules are proposed as part of the re-zoning. A landscape and visual assessments report was not prepared as part of the submission, hence my evidence will examine those effects.
4. My evidence is a broad brush landscape assessment of the potential proposal to rezone a site at the corner of SH6 and Mt Barker Road, from its current zoning of Rural General to a proposed Airport Mixed Use Zone. My evidence comprises the following:
 - Landscape baseline
 - Visibility baseline
 - Relevant planning frameworks – RMA, District Plan Objectives and Policies (Operative and Proposed)
 - The proposal
 - An assessment of the landscape and visual effects that would result from re-zoning the site

- Response to Ms Mellsops S42a report
 - Conclusion/summary
5. There are two attachments to my evidence:
- a. Appendix A – Context Plan
 - b. Appendix B – Proposed Structure Plan

LANDSCAPE BASELINE

(Refer Appendix A)

6. The site is an “L” shaped piece of land located at the intersection of Wanaka-Luggage Highway (SH6) and Mt Barker Road. It is approximately 14.54ha in area and is located at the base of an escarpment face of a low terrace, and adjacent to Wanaka Airport.
7. The site consists of outwash gravels from valley glaciers which have been deposited during the last glaciation and then shaped into a series of shallow, broad open terraces via the fluvial action of dropping river and lake levels. The site is contained on the south eastern and south eastern sides by the escarpment face of a low terrace. The surrounding landscape is also glacially and alluvially formed with the fan gravels and alluvium of the low terrace and alluvially shaped terraces dropping down to the Clutha River to the north east.
8. The site is relatively flat to gently sloping and drops from its highest point roughly at the south eastern end of the site, around to the western end of the site on Mt Barker Road. The escarpment, that the site abuts, is partially within the proposed zone change area. It has a pastoral grass cover for the majority of the site which is punctuated at the toe of the escarpment by a loose line of willow trees at relatively equal distances from each other. A water race is located at the approximate toe of the escarpment. The site is fenced externally with deer fencing and contains the tourist activity ‘Have a shot’. ‘Have a shot’ is located at the intersection of SH6 and Mt Barker Road and includes archery, clay bird shooting, a rifle range, battlefield, golf range, mini putt, jackpot hole ‘n’ one and croppool (giant pool table played on the ground) . Deer fencing and shade cloth on high poles occurs on the south eastern and northern sides of the golf driving range which is located on the SH6 part of the site. The main building is located in the centre of the ‘Have a shot’ site, is approximately 5m high and coloured a dark khaki.
9. To the immediate north of the site is the Wanaka Airport development of large hangar type buildings, roads and carparks, a sealed runway and open pastoral land within the Wanaka Airport designation. Further to the North West and adjacent to the airport land is a zone of Rural Visitor land. This parcel of land is yet to be developed and is consented to comprise 11 hangar buildings and landscaping to largely screen views of the development.

10. I understand that QAC have purchased the Windermere Property for future airport expansion and as such this land is likely to be eventually developed for airport use.
11. To the west, on the northern side of Mt Barker Road is Rural Zoned land of open paddocks with mature conifer tree planting in broken groups along SH6. Immediately west and south, and adjacent to the site is Criffel Station. The existing homestead and associated outbuildings and tree planting is located a short distance along Mt Barker Road, at the base of the escarpment. Criffel Station provides visitor and tourist activities in the form of a farm shop, farm tours, accommodation and events.
12. An existing hay barn and row of mature conifers marks the western end of the proposed zone.
13. To the south east of the site is Lake Mc Kay Station, also Rural General and farmed land. The escarpment landform which forms the southern boundary to the site extends south west along Mt Barker Road to Mt Barker, and south along SH6 to the outskirts of the township of Luggate. A group of conifers planted at the base of the escarpment, within the Lake McKay Station land mark the extent of the site
14. The landscape character of the surrounding landscape is largely pastoral and natural with the exception of the airport and Rural Visitor Zone land. The rural character is created by pastoral farming including conifer shelterbelts, dwellings and farm sheds. The natural character is expressed in the largely unmodified topography of the escarpment face and low terrace, and open shallow alluvially created terraces. The scale of the landscape is large with expansive vistas to the mountain ranges that ring the Upper Clutha basin. Views tend to focus externally to the mountain ranges and open plains. To the north, east and west the escarpment landform limits views to the south and south west.
15. The context of the site is predominantly rural with the exception of the Wanaka Airport, the Rural Visitor zone, 'Have a Shot site' and Criffel Station which is a node of development centred on the airport, and the provision of visitor and tourist activities.
16. Overall the landscape of which the site is a small part is pastoral with wide, open views across the plains to the mountain ranges to the north, east and south east, and is confined by steep topography on the south and west, with the exception of the Wanaka Airport, and Rural Visitor Zone which is a small node of visitor activities centred on the airport located within and dominated by large scale rural and natural landscapes. The site is well tucked into the toe of the escarpment and visually dominated by the airport development and the escarpment landform which partially encloses the site and is at a much larger scale. The glacial formation of this landscape is clearly legible due to the sharp change between the plains, escarpment and mountains, the minimal development and minimal vegetation cover. Its appreciation by observers is also due to the fact that it is adjacent to SH6 and Mt Barker Road and is experienced at close range as a foreground landscape.

17. The site is zone Rural General under the Operative District Plan, and the landscape classification has not been determined specifically for the site. It has been determined as a Visual amenity Landscape, along with the escarpment face, and high terrace, and the broader landscape as far as Mt Barker and the Clutha River in *“Report to Queenstown Lakes District Council on appropriate landscape classification boundaries within the District, with particular reference to Outstanding Natural Landscapes and Features”* by Read Landscapes 2014. A number of consents – RM050861, RM071034, RM80825, RM080940, and RM081129 have assessed the landscape in the vicinity of the airport as Visual Amenity Landscape. The site is part of a much larger Visual Amenity Landscape and generally displays the same landscape characteristics of open grazed paddocks, shelterbelts and groups of trees, sheds and occasional dwellings, with the exception of the ‘Have a Shot’ tourist activity which has a character more akin to that of the Airport and adjacent properties where tourist based activities occur. In the proposed District Plan, the site is shown as within the Rural Landscape (“RLC”, Map 18a). This is confirmed in the section 42A landscape report.
18. Wanaka airport is the first point on the State Highway 6 to Wanaka Township after leaving Luggate where an observer experiences a node of built form, indicating that a town of some size is not far away. The airport is an informal gateway that marks entering the rural Wanaka hinterlands that form the landscape setting of the town where the escarpment meets the terrace that rises up from the outskirts of Luggate Township.

VISIBILITY BASELINE

19. The site is visible from a visual catchment that includes Mt Barker Road, SH6, Ballantyne Road, Stevenson Road, Kane Road and roads within the current Wanaka Airport development.
20. Visibility into the site is reasonably limited and is viewed in the context of the existing Wanaka airport development. The shallow terrace formation of the plains, and existing tree planting, around the site and Wanaka airport generally screen the site from large distances of SH6. The airport buildings themselves also screen the site from wider viewpoints. The topography of the escarpment also limits views into the site from the wider landscape and prevents views of the mountain ranges when adjacent to the site. Visibility across the site is limited to the site itself while views to the north, north west and north east are open and expansive. For the length of the frontage of the site views are directed out of the plains to the north, west and south east.
21. The site is not visible from the Clutha River.

SH6

22. From SH6 the site is visible from the point where the road rises from the plains north west of Luggate up onto the terrace the Wanaka airport, and site, are located on, until a viewer has passed Mt Barker Road, when travelling to Wanaka. The site, including the flats at the toe of the escarpment, is visible from SH6 north west of the site at approximately Stevenson Road travelling away from Wanaka, until the viewer passes the site at the entrance to Lake McKay Station. The topography of the shallow terraces and groups of tree planting within properties north of Mt Barker Road currently screens the site and toe of the escarpment. Mid slope and above of the escarpment is visible from further north on SH6 until a viewer has passed the site.

Ballantyne Road

23. The mid and upper slopes of the site are visible from Ballantyne Road for approximately the first 900m until topography and existing trees between Ballantyne Road and the site screens views.

Mt Barker Road

24. The site is visible on Mt Barker Road travelling west from the intersection with SH6 until a viewer has passed the site. It is visible when travelling east from approximately the Criffel Station homestead until the intersection with SH6.

Stevenson Road

25. The site is visible from the western end of Stevenson Road for a distance of approximately 190 from the intersection with SH6. Trees on the Windermere property screen views from this point onwards.

Kane Road

26. The site is visible from a section from sections of Kane Road for a distance of approximately 3.5km. The mid to upper slope of the escarpment is visible above the existing Wanaka airport buildings, and the southern end of the site, including the flats and escarpment, is visible across the airport runway. This is at a distance of approximately 4.5km.

27. Views are limited to where the site fronts SH6, Mt Barker, SH6 and a section of Kane Road. The distances at which the site is viewed are minimal on an Upper Clutha, or District wide scale, and the site is not visually prominent. The impact of those views is for a short distance because of the sites location adjacent to the Wanaka Airport, and because of its visual association with the escarpment.

RELEVANT PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT

28. There are statutory considerations when proposing to rezone a parcel of land that are specific to landscape and amenity related effects. The parts of the RMA that are relevant to this site are:

Part 2: Purpose and Principles,

Section 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:

(b) the efficient use and development of natural and physical resources

(c) the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values

(f) maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment

29. Following the Supreme Court's *King Salmon* decision and the subsequent decisions of the Environment Court, I shall assume that landscape considerations arising from Part 2 of the Act are encapsulated by the policy framework of the Proposed District Plan and do not require separate consideration.

QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT COUNCIL PROPOSED PLAN

30. The zoning of the site under the Proposed District Plan is Rural Zone. The accompanying landscape classification is Rural Landscape Classification (RLC) as the site is part of the much larger rural landscape of the plains of the Upper Clutha. The predominantly natural form of the escarpment adds to the natural and pastoral character of the base of the Criffel mountain range.

31. The following goals and objectives from the Strategic directions chapter of the Proposed District Plan are relevant to this assessment:

Goal 1: Develop a prosperous, resilient and equitable economy.

Objective 3.2.1.4 Recognise the potential for rural areas to diversify their land use beyond the strong, productive value of farming, provided a sensitive approach is taken to rural amenity, landscape character, healthy ecosystems, and Ngai Tahu values, rights or interests.

Goal 5: Our distinctive landscapes are protected from inappropriate development.

Objective 3.2.5.2 Minimise the adverse landscape effects of subdivision, use or development in specified Rural Landscapes.

Objective 3.2.5.3 To direct new subdivision, use or development to occur in those areas which have potential to absorb change without detracting from landscape and visual amenity values.

32. Section 6 of the Proposed District Plan provides direction regarding landscape and amenity issues. The relevant provisions in relation to the assessment of the potential landscape and amenity effects of the proposed zone change are as follows:

6.3.1 Objective- The District contains and values Outstanding Natural Features, Outstanding Natural Landscapes, and Rural Landscapes that require protection from inappropriate subdivision and development.

Policies:

6.3.1.5 Avoid urban subdivision and development in the Rural Zones

6.3.1.11 Recognise the importance of protecting the landscape character and visual amenity values, particularly as viewed from public places.

6.3.0 Objective – Avoid adverse cumulative effects on landscape character and amenity values caused by incremental subdivision and development.

Policies:

6.3.2.2 Allow residential subdivision and development only in locations where the District's landscape character and visual amenity would not be degraded.

6.3.2.3 Recognise that proposals for residential subdivision or development in the Rural Zone that seek support from existing and consented subdivision or development have potential for adverse cumulative effects. Particularly where the subdivision and development would constitute sprawl along roads.

6.3.2.5 Ensure incremental changes from subdivision and development do not degrade landscape quality, character or openness as a result of activities associated with mitigation of the visual effects of proposed development such as screening planting, mounding and earthworks.

6.3.4 Objective – Ensure subdivision and development does not degrade landscape character and diminish visual amenity values of the Rural Landscapes (RLC).

Policies:

6.3.5.1 Allow subdivision and development only where it will not degrade landscape quality or character, or diminish the visual amenity values identified for any Rural Landscape.

6.3.5.2 Avoid adverse effects from subdivision and development that are:

- *Highly visible from public places and other places which are frequented by members of the public generally (except any trail as described? In this Plan); and*
- *Visible from public roads.*

6.3.5.3 Avoid planting and screening, particularly along roads and boundaries, which would degrade openness where such openness is an important part of the landscape quality or character.

Encourage any landscaping to be sustainable and consistent with the established character of the area.

Have regard to the adverse effects from subdivision and development on the open landscape character where it is open at present.

6.3.8 Objective – *Recognise the dependence of tourism on the District’s landscapes*

Policies:

6.3.8.2 *Recognise that commercial recreation and tourism related activities locating within the rural zones may be appropriate where these activities enhance the appreciation of landscapes, and on the basis they would protect, maintain or enhance landscape quality, character and visual amenity values.*

33. To summarise, the landscape related objectives and policies of the Proposed District Plan set out to maintain a high level of rural and natural amenity of the districts Rural Zoned landscapes. Development is seen as having the potential to degrade that high value by changing the landscape so that it changes the elements that contribute to its rural character and visual amenity.
34. The policies and objectives of Sections 3 and 6 of the Proposed QLDC District plan seek to minimise the effects of development on the districts rural landscapes by directing development to where it can be absorbed without detracting from landscape and visual amenity values and without resulting in sprawl. Section 6 also recognises the dependence of tourism on the Districts landscapes, and that development may be appropriate where it protects, maintains or enhances landscape quality, character and visual amenity values.
35. The amenity values of the site and surrounding landscape are the pastoral character, intactness of the escarpment face and views over the plains to the mountain ranges beyond. The extent of the views is limited by the escarpment.
36. The amenity provided by the escarpment is the evidence of its geological formation, its intactness and the low scale vertical edge it provides to the Upper Clutha plains.

37. The pastoral character is the dominant landscape character of the wider landscape and extends towards the Cardrona and Clutha Rivers, and due to the plains topography allows expansive views towards the encircling mountain ranges.
38. The pastoral character of the immediate area is already significantly influenced by the airport development and the 'Have a Shot business'. This presents an opportunity to locate additional development in a well confined area that is already characterised by non-pastoral buildings.
39. The ability of the site to absorb change without negatively affecting landscape and visual amenity values of the escarpment and expansive plains landscape is very much dependent of protecting views to the wider landscape, and maintaining the integrity of the escarpment.

THE PROPOSAL

(Refer Appendix B)

40. The proposal is to rezone the site from its existing Rural General Zone under the Operative District Plan to Wanaka Airport Zone under the Proposed District Plan, with proposed Objectives, Policies and Rules which would further define the nature of future development on the site. Extra provisions and rules specific to the site have been proposed and are to be read in conjunction with the Airport Mixed Use Zone provisions of the Proposed District Plan. A structure plan has also been prepared to further define use of the site. The proposed Policies, Objectives and Rules will be described in detail by Mr. Brown.
41. It is my understanding that the ultimate result of the proposed area of WAZ will be a development that includes the following aspects:
 - An amenity planting strip along SH6 and Mt Barker Road to provide a high amenity entrance to the rural hinterlands of Wanaka, while preserving views to Roy's Peak. The proposed standards for the zone require the APS be planted in native and deciduous exotic species of trees with a mature height of not more than 10m.
 - Vehicle access to all buildings via one point on SH6, and a number of points on Mt Barker Road.
 - Future buildings would be 7 m high at the easternmost end of the zone, and 10m in the centre fronting SH6 around to Mt Barker Road and the western end of the zone. A 12m high block is proposed in the centre back of the Mt Barker part of the site.
 - Views between buildings of the toe of the escarpment.
 - Maintenance and protection of the mid and upper slopes of the escarpment.
 - 75% building coverage
 - Buildings will an LRV of less than 36% and in colours of natural greens, greys and browns.
42. The additional provisions and rules proposed to be added to the WAZ have been prepared in order to preserve open views to the mountains, preserve views to, and maintain the

intactness of the escarpment landform and to provide amenity planting. A structure plan has been proposed which includes the following features:

- A1– 7m maximum height
- A2– 10m maximum height
- A3– 12m maximum height
- LP Landscape Protection Area on the toe of the escarpment (landscape retained or enhanced)
- APS Amenity Planting Strip and minimum 5m and 10m building setback.

43. The form of the Structure Plan is a narrow strip of development that sits at the toe of the escarpment below the man made marker of the water race, and is defined on the other side by building setbacks off the surrounding roads. The proposed LP and building setbacks provide a 'breathing space' between the escarpment and future buildings allowing the escarpment to remain topographically intact and distinct from the developable area.

44. The proposed 10m maximum height of Area 1 has been specified to match the existing height of development within the airport, and to maintain the dominance of the landform over the built form. The reduce height of A3 is a response to the proximity of the edge of the terrace and to maintain the dominance of the terrace edge and eastern views to the wider landscape.

45. Area A3 has been located at the toe of the escarpment where a maximum height of 12m will approximately coincide with the change from active management of the land in the form of grazing to a less managed and more natural face of the escarpment. This will result in the natural part of the escarpment, the mid and upper slopes, remaining intact visually and physically and retaining its prominence over development on the terrace.

46. Recessive colours have been proposed for the buildings. While the colours will not make the buildings less visible, they will fit the buildings into the colours of the receiving landscape and maintain a rural built amenity.

47. An amenity planting strip and building setback is proposed to maintain wider views to the landscape and provide an enhanced visual amenity of tree and shrub planting.

LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

48. Landscape effects are those effects on the landscape as a resource, namely its landscape character and the components that make up that character, rather than visual issues. In this case the extent of the landscape resource is the RLC on the terrace between the toe of the escarpment and the Cardrona and Clutha Rivers.
49. The main landscape issues relating to the rezoning of this site are its landscape and visual effect on the pastoral landscape of its broader setting, its effect on the geomorphology of the escarpment, and the effect on the experience of entering the rural hinterlands of Wanaka.
50. The landscape effect of the proposed WAZ will be substantial in that it will form a significant and immediately apparent part of the scene that changes the site's character. However, I am of the opinion that the change in character will be to the site only. It will not affect landscape character beyond the node of tourist activities centres on the airport, nor will it change the pastoral and rural character the surrounding landscape outside of that node.
51. The proposed zone will not become the dominant feature of the surrounding landscape, nor will the elements of escarpment or pastoral character become subordinate to the new zone. Rather it will fit into and consolidate an existing node of development, and be contained by the escarpment landform.
52. The landscape can absorb the change to the character because of the existing modified character of the 'Have a Shot' site, Criffel Station visitor activities, and the dominant context of the Wanaka airport and Rural Visitor zone node of activities. The existing hay shed and conifer trees at the western end of the site provide a rural character end to the proposed zone, as do the trees on Lake Mc Kay Station. The proposed APS will aid in providing visual containment of the zone and containment of the landscape effects to the site.
53. The land use context of the site and resulting landscape around the intersection of SH6 and Mt Barker Road is a mixed node of visitor activities, airport related activities, and farmed land. This node is small particularly compared to the large scale landscape of rural plains and enclosing mountain ranges. The Wanaka airport to the north is a dominant element at the intersection. Rural visitor zoning to the North West extends and consolidates that development, although this is not evident to an observer as the land has not yet been developed for this purpose. The wider landscape outside of this node is entirely rural in character and displays pastoral characteristics of open grazed paddocks, tree planting, and where visible, dwellings. The site is tucked into the toe of the escarpment landform, at the existing activity node and does not spread out over the plains, nor is it located out on the terrace with no enclosing topography.

54. Section 6 of the Proposed District Plan emphasises the importance of the efficient use of the landscape while maintaining the quality of the landscape and its visual amenity values as described in Objective 6.3.4 and policy 6.3.5.1. In my opinion rezoning of the site can meet the intention of Section 6 because of the objective of maintaining and protecting the visual amenity provided by the escarpment, and enhancement via the landscape amenity strip proposed for the site, and proposed rules specific to the tree planting which will provide seasonal change, scale and softening of views of buildings. The enhanced amenity provided by the APS will also have a positive landscape effect on an observer's experience of entering the rural hinterlands of Wanaka by providing a pleasant treed aesthetic without screening views over the broad and open landscape to the north, west and east.
55. The landscape focussed objectives and policies of 'Chapter 21: Rural' of the Proposed District Plan reference the landscape chapters of the Proposed District plan, in this case Chapter 6: Landscapes. There are no landscapes explicitly specified under Section 6 as being unsuitable for development. However landscapes that have little capacity to absorb development or change where the development degrades the qualities of the landscape are considered sensitive and therefore potentially unsuitable. The Outstanding Natural Landscapes and Outstanding Natural Features are particularly sensitive to degradation and are generally unsuitable for development except under exceptional circumstances.
56. Rural Landscapes zoned land is more suitable for development providing the landscape character or visual amenity values are not diminished or degraded.
57. In my opinion the effects on the landscape and visual amenity of the proposal satisfies both Chapter 21 and Chapter 6. The qualities of the landscape of the site are the visual amenity provided by the views to the wider landscape and mountains and the foreground views to the escarpment. The landscape effect of the proposed zone on the escarpment will be to retain its natural form and pastoral character thereby maintaining its landscape quality and evidence of glacial and alluvial formation. The visual amenity of the clear evidence of that process will be maintained and experienced by viewers of SH6 and Mt Barker Road.
58. Views of the wider landscape and mountain ranges will be reduced by the proposal for the distance of the frontage of SH6. This reduction will be to the small amount of open space seen beyond the site when travelling on SH6, particularly in a westerly direction. The pleasantness of the wider landscape of mountain tops and views to the plains will not be effected from Mt Barker Road as the proposed zone will not screen those views.
59. I have been asked to compare the relative capacities of the site and the land on the northern side of the runway of Wanaka Airport for development.
60. The land between the runway and the Clutha River is part of the same terrace that runs from the toe of the escarpment on the subject site, to the edge of the escarpment above the Clutha

River. The land is largely flat, and broadly open and pastoral in character and consists of open pasture with conifer windbreaks to the north and north west of the runway. Views are open and expansive to the Hawea moraine, Grandview Mountains and Mt Maude. This area does not have any enclosing topography or natural features to define or contain development.

61. Locating buildings of the same scale and height as that proposed on the northern side of the current runway would result in a group or line of large scale buildings visually and physically isolated from the current node of development on the southern side of the runway, which is located in close proximity to SH6 and the escarpment. An observer may appreciate that the buildings are part of the airport complex and associate their function with the current airport development.
62. The effect on visual amenity would be to interrupt the open expansive views with large scale structures and break the continuous and open character, and strongly horizontal line of the terrace edge. Development would indicate obvious human activity and change the character of the landscape from one where the airport sits at the edge of the open terrace in close proximity to an enclosing/defining landform where it does not dominate the wider landscape to one where the evidence of human activity and modification is prominent, spread over a wider area, and changes the character. In my opinion this could result in a substantial adverse effect on the character of the landscape in the vicinity of the site. The presence of large scale airport buildings on the northern side of the runway would form a significant and immediately apparent part of the scene that affects and changes its overall character from a largely pastoral one to one where an industrial like character is dominant.
63. Rezoning the subject site WAZ, as I have described previously, would have a less adverse landscape outcome. The landscape effects would be moderate in that while the change to the landscape would form a visible and recognisable new element within the overall scene and would be readily noticed by an observer, the change would be small scale, located at an existing node of tourist related development and be contained by a low escarpment that provides a pastoral backdrop.

THE VISUAL EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSED ZONE CHANGE

64. Visual effects are the effects that an activity may have on specific views and the visual amenity experienced by viewers. In the case of the proposed zone change it is the effect on views from SH6 and as the entryway to the rural hinterlands of Wanaka, Mt Barker Road, Ballantyne Road and Kane Road. The visual amenity effect is the difference between the landscape character of the proposed zone and the broader landscape character.
65. The visibility baseline section of this report describes the potential views of the site from the above listed viewpoints. The degree of visibility of the proposed zone change would be no greater than that of the existing site in terms of the locations that it is visible from. Future

buildings, carparks and associated infrastructure would be visible from those same locations. At all viewing locations the buildings of the proposed zone would be viewed with, and as part of, the node of development at the intersection of SH6 and Mt Barker.

66. The potential visual effects brought about by the proposal in relation to the above viewpoints is discussed as follows. Height poles were erected on site temporarily to aid in assessing the visual effects of the proposed zone. From SH6, 10m high buildings would be approximately the same height as the existing concrete power poles that run along the toe of the escarpment. As viewed from SH6, buildings at 10m from the existing ground level would be approximately just over half way between the roof of the existing hay shed and the fence line where grazing of the paddock adjacent to Mt Barker Road finishes, and the ungrazed grass of the escarpment begins.

SH6

67. Buildings, carparks and amenity planting will be visible from SH6. There will be a reduction on views of the toe of the escarpment, and maintenance of the upper slopes of the escarpment. There will be a small change to views over the plains as views across the site are already limited by the escarpment. The presence of buildings will reduce what is visible by a small degree over and above what is viewed above the existing 'Have a shot' development.

68. The visual effect will be moderate.

Ballantyne Road

69. No change to the current views. There will be nil visual effect.

Mt Barker Road

70. Buildings, carparks and the amenity strip will be visible from Mt Barker Road. There will be a reduction in views of the toe of the escarpment, and maintenance of views of the mid and upper slopes of the escarpment to the mountain ranges. There will be no effect on the expansive views over the plains as the new zone is tucked into the base of the escarpment where views are limited by the escarpment.

71. The 10m APS and building set back will aid in preserving the rural road corridor view shaft by setting buildings back from the road corridor.

72. The visual effect will be moderate.

Stevenson Road

73. There will be no change to the degree of visibility in terms of length along the road. Future buildings, carparks and cars will be visible and softened by the amenity planting strip. The mid and upper slopes of the escarpment will be maintained.

74. The visual effect will be slight to moderate.

Kane Road

75. Buildings and amenity planting in section A3 and part of section A2 will be visible where it extends east past the current buildings on the airport site. The airport can extend into the eastern end of the designation as a controlled activity, which will also likely provide partial screening of the eastern end of the proposed zone. The mid and upper slopes of the escarpment will remain visible. The remainder of the site, and future development will be largely screened by the existing and any future airport buildings.

76. The effect on the visual amenity of the proposed zone change will be a minor and localised reduction in pastoral character of the surrounds. The site is small and contained and the effect restricted to the existing development node. The effect on the visual amenity provided by the escarpment will be moderate, as experienced from SH6 when passing the site as foreground views of the escarpment will be reduced of the toe. Views of the upper slopes and horizontal line of the top of the escarpment will be maintained.

77. There will be a new visual amenity provided by the proposed Amenity Planting Strip which will add a softening of the buildings and a pleasant treed aesthetic to this section of SH6 and Mt Barker Road, while maintaining views of the mid and upper slopes of the escarpment and limited views of the toe of the escarpment.

RESPONSE TO QLDC SECTION 42A REPORT

78. I have read Ms Mellsop's report on the proposed rezoning and I understand that she is of the opinion that the site has capacity to absorb sensitively designed commercial or recreational tourism development as far as the equivalent distance of airport buildings on SH6. Ms Mellsop has identified that extent from title plans, as the actual airport buildings extend further to the east by approximately another 240m. This then leaves the easternmost end of the proposed zone as unsuitable, in her opinion, for development as it would detract from the openness, pleasantness and coherence of rural views particularly for people traveling east on SH6. I would note that buildings could continue east along the SH6 frontage of the airport designation as a controlled activity until a point approximately midway along the A2 area of the proposed new zone.

79. I disagree with Ms Mellsop on the effect of extending the rezoning area to the easternmost end of the site. The escarpment that forms the southern extent of the site continues eastwards until the edge of the terrace that the site and airport is located on. From this point the escarpment continues in a south easterly direction forming the western extent to the edge of the Luggate Township and environs. Views then, when travelling east on SH6 are restricted to the south by the landform while to the east and north they are open to the Lindis Range.

These views are open, pleasant and rural. The current views to the south side of SH6 are also pleasant and rural, and limited by the escarpment. The existing conifers at the toe of the escarpment on Lake McKay Station also reduce views of the escarpment landform at this point.

80. The potential of buildings to extend into the easternmost end of the airport designation would limit views across the terrace to the Lindis Range, resulting in a view shaft that is concentrated more on views out to the Dunstan Range.
81. In my opinion, the effects of the proposed zone at the easternmost end of the site will not impede views, or effect the visual amenity of the wider landscape to a significant degree. The proposed 7m maximum height building height at the eastern end of the proposed zone, location of the zone and building setback will narrow the view shaft to a slight to moderate degree. The openness, pleasantness and coherence of rural views will be maintained. An observer travelling east of SH6 will still have open, pleasant, coherent views of a rural landscape. Development at the easternmost end of the site will extend the effect of built form past the perceived current extent of the airport, to a very small degree and it will have a slight visual effect, but only for a short distance, and this effect will not alter the visual amenity of the wider landscape.
82. In my opinion the effect on visual amenity of the development at the easternmost end of the site will be substantial for the site only as it will reduce the openness of views to the escarpment, but I am of the opinion it will have a minor effect on the wider views of the landscape, and visual amenity because the development will not obstruct expansive views to the wide, open, pleasant rural landscapes to the north and east.
83. I agree with Mr Barr's analysis that development of the site would be highly visible and there is no certainty that this could be avoided, remedied or mitigated. But I do not agree that highly visible buildings are unacceptable in this environment given that the existing airport and Have a Shot buildings are already highly visible in views from SH6.
84. To mitigate the visibility of the proposed development to the degree that it is not highly visible would likely require earthworks and planting to create an almost continuous and solid screen. The effect of the mitigation would be more adverse and negative than the visual effect of the proposed zone as it would also likely screen any views of the escarpment landform and views out over the terrace landscape beyond Mt Barker Road and possibly introduce a landform that is not naturally occurring on this site. In my opinion the proposed Amenity Planting Strip would remedy the visual effects of the rezoning by softening views of development while still maintain partial views of the escarpment formation.

CONCLUSION

85. To summarise, the site is part of a Visual Amenity Landscape in the operative District Plan and a Rural Landscape in the Proposed District Plan. The extent of the VAL includes the escarpment and terrace and the plains at the base of the mountains as far as the Clutha and Cardrona Rivers. The site itself has a landscape character that is generally in harmony with the greater landscape character as it displays some of the same landscape elements that make up that character – pastoral grazed land, and predominantly natural topography. This character is modified by the existing ‘Have a shot’ tourist activity development which is more akin to the character of the immediate, adjacent Wanaka airport and Rural Visitor zone.
86. The site is proposed to become a Wanaka Airport Zone with its own specific policies, objectives and rules in addition to those already contained within the Proposed District Plan Airport Mixed Use Zone provisions. A structure plan is also proposed for the new zone.
87. The proposed policies, objectives and rules seek to create a development which is largely absorbed by the landscape through building design controls, maintenance and protection of the escarpments natural values and a new visual amenity via an Amenity Landscape Strip. The site forms part of an existing node of visitor and tourist activities within an expansive pastoral landscape. The proposed zone, and in particular the area of development is very small in scale in comparison and contained by the escarpment landform.
88. The proposal will change the character of the site from pastoral with a small area of modification to semi-urban, but in a form expected to be consistent with development on the opposite side of the road. The visual effects of the proposed zone change are likely to soften as planting within the Amenity Planting Strip matures. Built form of the same and lesser height, and recessive colours will assist in fitting the development into the receiving landscapes character.
89. Overall I consider that the landscape and visual effects of the proposed zone can be absorbed by the surrounding landscape without degrading landscape quality. There is a positive landscape effect in that the natural values of the escarpment will be protected and could be enhanced, and a positive visual effect of a new amenity in the form of tree planting along the road frontages.
90. For all of these reasons I do not think the site needs to be zoned Rural for the landscape issues to be appropriately managed. With the controls set out in Mr Brown’s evidence, my opinion is that the site can be zoned as proposed by JBIL whilst achieving the landscape objectives and policies set out in section 6 of the Proposed Plan.

