

Request for Rezoning through the Proposed District Plan Process

Sunshine Bay Limited

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vivian+espie
resource management and landscape planning



1. Introduction

Further to our correspondence and initial meeting in November 2019, Sunshine Bay Limited have now completed research work on a residential development concept for the block of land adjoining the Sunshine Bay urban area, Queenstown. We are pleased to provide this complete package of material for consideration by the Council's Planning and Strategy Committee meeting in June 2020. It is recognised that should the Committee enable consideration of the rezoning through the Resource Management Act (RMA) process, further design and analysis will be undertaken and reported on as part of the section 32 assessment and public notification processes obligated by the RMA process.

A recent Environment Court Consent Order (Attachment [A]) removed the Outstanding Natural Landscape (ONL) classification from the majority of the aforementioned Sunshine Bay block. In our most recent discussions, it was identified that receiving this enabling decision from the Court was a key matter for Council's further consideration of the urbanisation of this site as part of the Proposed District Plan review.

In addition to this overview report, we have completed and attach the following reports for your consideration:

- Geotechnical and hazard assessment – Geoconsulting Ltd (August 2019)
- Geotechnical and hazard assessment (specific rockfall focus) – Geoconsulting Ltd (May 2020)
- Transportation assessment – Stantec
- Infrastructure / Servicing report – Civilised Ltd (including modelling of road alignments, water and wastewater modelling)
- Landscape and visual effects assessment – Vivian+Espie Ltd
- Ecological assessment – Wildlands Consulting Ltd.
- Ecological mitigation and offsetting options - Wildlands Consulting Ltd.
- Statement on recognising cultural values – Vivian+Espie Ltd
- Indicative master plan and development concept package – Boffa Miskell Ltd

2. Overview – The Site

The site is directly adjacent to the urban area of Sunshine Bay. The land is legally described as Lot 1 DP 397058 (the Record of Title is in Attachment [B]). The land measures 6.47 hectares.

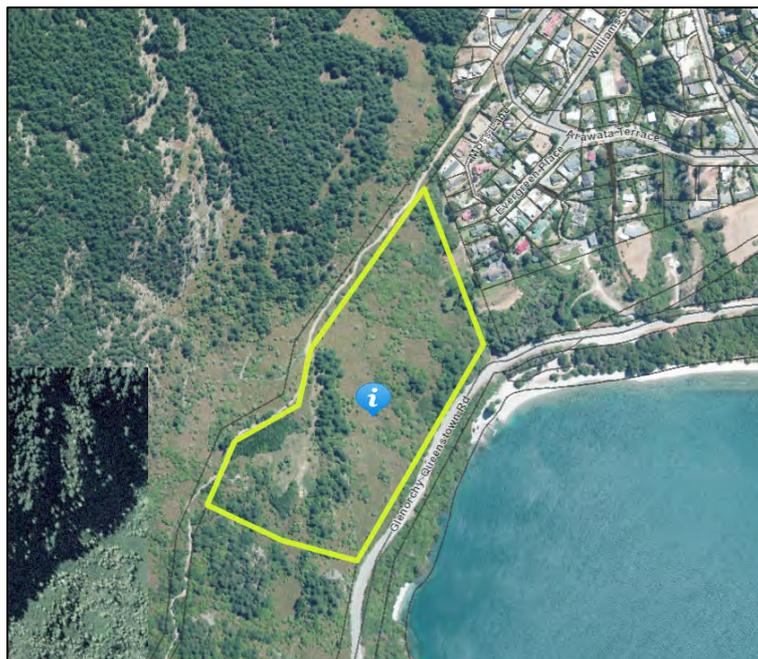


Figure 1: Site location

To the north-west of the site, an unformed legal road is present, which contains the Arawata Track. Power lines supplying Glenorchy are also present in this location. To the north-east of the site, another unformed legal road separates the site from the existing low-density residential development of Sunshine Bay. The Glenorchy-Queenstown Roads runs topographically below the site.

3. Background to Landscape Category

A Consent Order from the Environment Court was issued on 23 September 2019 (ENV-2018-CHC-56 – Attachment [A]) redefining the ONL line as agreed by independent landscape experts on behalf of QLDC and the owner of the Sunshine bay site. The resulting ONL landscape line closely aligns with the Operative District Plan position and is shown in Figure 2 below:

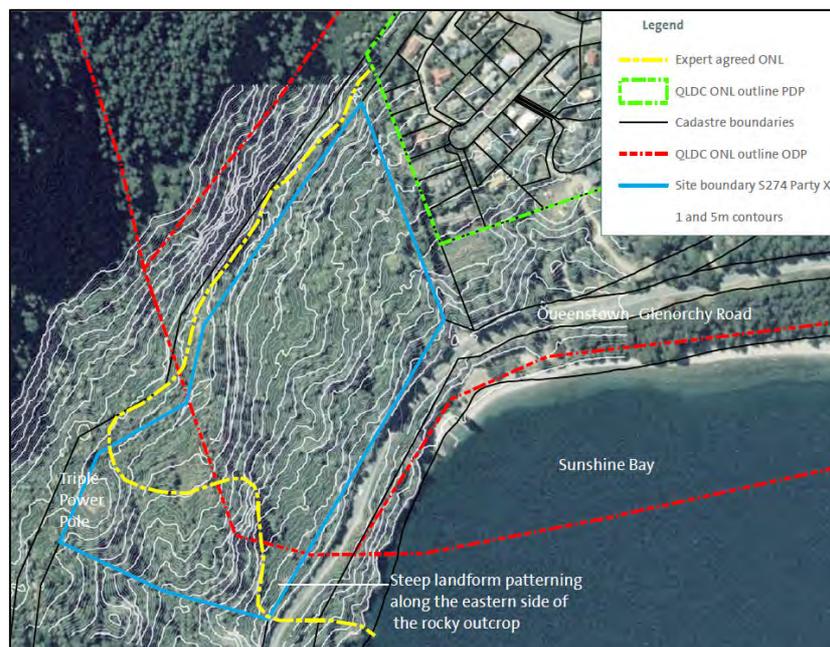


Figure 2: ONL line (yellow) from Environment Court Consent Order

The majority of the site is not ONL, and is classified as a Rural Character Landscape (RCL).

4. The Concept

4.1 Overview

Urban designers, in collaboration with planning, transport and engineering experts, have led the preparation of an indicative master plan for the site for a predominantly residential development. Queenstown has traditionally had some of the most unaffordable housing in the country, a product of its popularity, growth and topography which makes increasing the supply of land for housing challenging. The proposal is able to provide a meaningful contribution towards housing supply adjacent to the existing Queenstown urban area. The indicative master plan is Attachment [C], and is shown in Figure 3 below. The indicative master plan preserves the ONL line and also accommodates substantial revegetation in the balance area:



Figure 3: Indicative Master Plan

As Figure 3 illustrates, the site is accessed from Arawata Terrace via the existing legal road corridor and a new T intersection with Arawata Terrace. Provision is made for pedestrian access to be maintained to access the Arawata Track. The development concept sleeves the existing Sunshine Bay urban area with a single row of detached dwelling typologies, before moving towards finer grained unit and terrace style development, and a few areas that could accommodate low rise apartment buildings. The proposed layout enables use of the site gradient for under-croft parking while maximising views across the lake toward The Remarkables.

4.2 Proposed Zoning approach

With regard to the possible zoning approach, the owner envisages working closely with QLDC at the section 32 assessment stage to determine the most appropriate zoning for the site. We envisage an urban zoning, most likely Medium Density Zoning (250m² minimum lot size, up to three units per site) to enable a predominantly residential development. We would endeavour to minimise changes to the PDP framework and avoid numerous bespoke provisions. A structure plan in the Subdivision and Development chapter, or the use of Building Restriction Areas, could also help provide certainty for Council that the nature of development proposed is what will be delivered.

4.3 Parks and Reserves

One key benefit of the design is the ability to connect the Sunshine Bay track to the Arawata Track through the site. Currently these tracks are not connected, and a track user wishing to continue from Queenstown towards Glenorchy would need to take a lengthy and steep detour via the public road network to travel from one to the other. The proposal provides the ability to create an attractive trail connecting the two tracks via an adjoining Council reserve at a more modest gradient. This trail connection could be vested as a Local Purpose Reserve – Connectivity.

The owner intends incorporating further reserve spaces at the detailed design stage. The opportunity may or may not exist for a 3000m² Local Park, notably by virtue of topographical constraints. At this stage of considering a rezoning request, the detailed subdivision layout has not been developed, and this is a matter for further consideration. The site directly adjoins a large public reserve shown in the image below, and the proposed trail will connect this reserve to the development.



Figure 4: Proximity of existing reserves

4.4 Contribution to the Queenstown Lakes Community Housing Trust.

The owner is committed to providing 5% of the developed land area to the Queenstown Lakes Community Housing Trust. This contribution is consistent with private plan changes made under the Operative District Plan. This commitment is normally secured through a Stakeholder Agreement.

5. Background Work Undertaken

5.1 Geotechnical Review

Two geotechnical assessments have been undertaken by Geoconsulting Limited. An initial report (Attachment [D]) was followed by a more detailed assessment of the potential for rockfall hazards (Attachment [E]). Assessment has included test pits to assess ground conditions where access was available and extensive site searches for boulders.

The report acknowledges that natural hazards are present, with liquefaction, settlement of compressible soils and rockfall representing the most likely threats. With regard to rockfall it can be concluded that the likelihood of blocks reaching the site is either rare or unlikely, with one exception that can be removed. As with all of urban

Queenstown, the risk is most likely to be realised during severe earthquake shaking or rainstorms. Mitigation measures are feasible and can be detailed once development proposals are more developed and the site has been cleared to facilitate access. Overall, the reports conclude that residential development of the property is feasible from a geotechnical perspective subject to some mitigation measures being in place.

5.2 Three Waters Servicing and Infrastructure Review

The infrastructure / servicing report has been prepared by Civilised Ltd and is appended as Attachment [F]. The report considers water supply, wastewater disposal, stormwater runoff, power supply and telecommunications. It includes the results of modelling of the water supply impact by Mott MacDonald, and the wastewater impact by Hydraulic Analysis Limited.

The report confirms it is feasible to provide the necessary development infrastructure to service the proposed future development of the land. Upgrades to the water and wastewaters systems are required. There are no issues with providing a power supply, telecommunications or disposing of stormwater. Engagement with Aurora has been undertaken to ensure any effect on the existing power lines can be managed.

5.3 Ecological review

The ecological survey of the site has been undertaken by Wildland Consultants and is appended as Attachment [G]. The report notes the site is currently dominated by relatively young regenerating indigenous broadleaved forest and bracken fern land vegetation. The indigenous forest vegetation was found to have relatively low diversity, and is typical of similar forest vegetation elsewhere on the lower slopes above Lake Wakatipu. Schist bluffs at the site are more diverse, and while modified have significant representative value and provide habitat for one locally uncommon plant species. Some areas are dominated by exotic conifers and exotic deciduous broadleaved trees, and the conifers in particular threaten the persistence of indigenous plant species on the schist bluffs.

The report concludes that there is scope to mitigate, offset, and compensate for adverse effects on indigenous vegetation and habitats through clearance of exotic trees and forest, particularly exotic conifers and willows, and planting of appropriate locally-sourced indigenous species in any areas of remaining bracken fern land to hasten its succession to broadleaved forest. As the indicative master plan shows, future development avoids the very high value bluff habitat.

Ecological mitigation and offsetting options were therefore specifically considered in a further report, appended as Attachment [H]. A combined approach of wilding conifer and weed control, extensive high-density planting of undeveloped areas, and predator controls is proposed. The report concludes that these actions would be sufficient to fully mitigate the adverse ecological effects generated by the proposed urban development.

5.4 Transport review

The transport assessment of the site has been undertaken by Stantec and is appended as Attachment [I]. A concept design for the new intersection linking Arawata Track to Arawata Terrace has been developed and provides sufficient space to accommodate the tracking of a medium sized rigid truck. Although the new development will increase the volume of movements on Arawata Terrace and Fernhill Road, these roads currently carry low volumes of traffic and have sufficient capacity to accommodate the additional movements with no noticeable effects on intersection performance.

5.5 Recognition of cultural values

The site has been recently identified in Stage 3 of the Proposed District Plan as being within a Wahi Tupuna area. The owner has engaged with iwi on the proposal and submitted on the proposed provisions. The ability exists for the cultural values associated with the Punatapu Wahi Tupuna to be recognised and celebrated through urban environments, for instance, through the likes of street and place names, architectural interpretations, interpretation panels and ecological mitigation. The statement on recognising cultural value is appended as Attachment [J].

5.6 Landscape assessment

As noted above the independent landscape experts prepared a Joint Witness Statement for the Environment Court on the landscape values of the site. This ultimately determined where the ONL and Rural Character Landscapes were found. The Joint Witness Statement and associated images are included with Attachment [K]. The indicative master plan contains development to that part of the site that is not identified as an ONL, with the exception of the proposed trail that connects the Sunshine Bay and Arawata Tracks.

A landscape assessment has also been undertaken that considers the landscape and visual effects of the proposed change of zone and urbanisation of the non-ONL part of the site (Attachment [K]). The assessment concludes that the area to the south of Sunshine Bay is considerably less sensitive to landscape change than the vast majority of locations within the rural parts of the district, and is suitable for urban/suburban development. This is primarily because:

- It is immediately adjacent to an urban area, being the suburb of Sunshine Bay. Specifically, it adjoins the low residential streets of Arawata Terrace, Moss Lane and Evergreen Place.
- It is located in a relatively contained part of the landscape and is only observed from a relatively small and localised visual catchment.
- It is located on land that is of limited productive value.
- It is not part of, and can be visually separated from the ONL. It is an isolated piece of RCL land.

6. Summary

The reporting undertaken confirms the site is suitable for residential development. Subject to mitigation and some upgrades of infrastructure, there are no impediments having considered the geotechnical, infrastructure, ecology, transport and landscape assessment reports summarised above. The site is currently zoned Rural and could provide a meaningful contribution to the supply of residential housing to the Queenstown market, in a location able to absorb the effects of residential development.

Due to the Proposed District Plan not currently being operative, the option of a private plan change is not possible. We are seeking that Council include urbanisation of the site within a future stage or variation to the Proposed District Plan. We envisage a structure plan led approach, setting out the key roads and identifying areas to be rezoned and those areas subject to a building restriction. Examples of this approach area already apparent in Chapter 27 of the PDP (Subdivision and Development) for Coneburn and West Meadows. We envisage utilising the existing zoning and planning framework as much as possible to keep the PDP simple and easy to use while reflecting some of the bespoke characteristics of the site.

We respectfully request the proposal be given the opportunity to proceed through the section 32 and notification process so that the merits of the rezoning proposal may be formally tested through the Resource Management Act process.

Yours faithfully



Blair Devlin
DIRECTOR / SENIOR PLANNER

- Attachment **[A]**: Environment Court Consent Order ENV-2018-CHC-56, 23 September 2019
- Attachment **[B]**: Record of Title
- Attachment **[C]**: Indicative Masterplan – Boffa Miskell
- Attachment **[D]**: Geotechnical Review - Geoconsulting Ltd
- Attachment **[E]**: Geotechnical Review - Rockfall Hazard
- Attachment **[F]**: Infrastructure / Servicing report has been prepared by Civilised Ltd
- Attachment **[G]**: Ecological report – Wildland Consultants Ltd
- Attachment **[H]**: Ecological mitigation and offsetting report – Wildland Consultants Ltd
- Attachment **[I]**: Transportation assessment – Stantec
- Attachment **[J]**: Statement on Cultural Values – Vivian+Espie
- Attachment **[K]**: Landscape and visual effects assessment – Vivian+Espie