

Public Consultation on Proposed Landscape Schedules

Variation to proposed District Plan: Priority Area Landscape Schedules.

Summary From Dr Julian Pedley for QDLC Hearing Panel October 2023

1. I live at 12 Morning Star terrace, Arthurs Point, 9371 Queenstown and have a financial interest and use of property, and frequently visit/stay at 13 Watties Track in Arthurs Point and 35 Essex Avenue in Arrowtown, where my children and grandchildren live. I have been blessed and privileged to have been visiting and living in this beautiful Wakatipu for 25 years.
2. So what is it about the area, particularly its landscapes that engenders those experiences of 'blessing' and 'privilege'?
3. I address the values and attributes of this landscape that are so important to me and are the principal reason why my wife and I have retired here in our 80's and will lay down our burdens and our bones here! Assuming of course, forest slash and landslide debris has not destroyed beautiful graveyards of the Wakatipu before then.
4. As I understand it, the purpose of this hearing (See Hearing Panel Directions para 3.2) is the IDENTIFICATION of the Landscape VALUES of ONL/ONF and the Landscape character/visual amenity values of Rural Character Landscapes RCL, so that those Values and Characters can/will be INCLUDED in the Schedules of the Proposed District Plan PDP as DIRECTED by the Environment Court.
5. As I understand it, the purpose of this Hearing is NOT to seek evidence from submitters as to what piece of land is in ONL/ONF or to seek decisions or recommendations from the Hearing Panel as to whether a particular piece of land lies or does not lie within an ONL/ONF/boundary.
6. The ONL/ONF landscapes that I refer to in particular are those that surround Arthurs Point and both sides the Shotover River from the Morning Star Reserve area, and Edith Cavell Bridge and around the Shotover Loop down to Big Beach. The Shotover Loop land includes the land at 111 and 163 Atley Road and has been confirmed this year by QLDC as being ONL/ONF following a Panel Hearing by independent Commissioners. It is now subject to an appeal in the Environment Court.
7. The Landscape Values and Attributes that are most important to me are :-
 - Scenic Beauty. The Superb sublime, panoramic scenic beauty of the Shotover River and River Gorge and its surrounding cliffs, bluffs and hills and mountains is an endless and constant pleasure and I have included photos taken from our Watties Rack property. Certainly one of New Zealand's most internationally renowned scenes and river gorge settings. This scenic beauty has been/ is an inspiration to many artists and professional photographers
 - Unforgettable and memorable. The view from Gorge Rd I first saw in 1984 and when I returned to Queenstown in 1999/2000 was the first scene I wanted to share with my wife, and our good fortune was that the land at 13 Watties track was available and we bought it asap. We were informed whole panoramic view was in ONL/ONF and protected as such.
 - Quietness, Peacefulness, tranquillity, a river gorge and only 5 minutes from central Queenstown. We regarded it as paradise found.

- Wildness and seeming remoteness even though so close to Queenstown is a constant pleasant surprise.
 - Dark night skies, unpolluted by artificial light from homes, street lighting or traffic make for amazingly beautiful night skies and excellent star gazing
 - Recreational Opportunities such walking, cycling, kayaking, , paddleboarding and boating are increasingly opening up along the river and around the Arthurs point ONL/ONF. They are very important for me and the family, good for both body and soul.
 - Other important values to me of the ONL/ONF I shall just list here: - Landform and Topography, Geology, historical background, forest, plant and vegetation cover.
8. There has been a recent removal of wilding pines from two thirds of the Shotover Loop land and the exposure of the buildings near the crest of the knoll in contravention of an Environmental Court order to maintain the pine tree screen of these buildings. These unfinished concrete buildings when viewed from Morning Star Terrace area of Arthurs Point appear to me as line of unfinished public toilets! An example of how easily the values of an ONL landscape are in danger of being degraded and a demonstration of what might be inflicted on the Arthurs Point community if ONL/ONF is not sufficiently protected. The knoll is now strewn with carbonising forest slash and debris already slipping into the river and its edges during heavy rain.
 9. That said, with or without the pine trees the land remains in ONL/ONF and its glacial topography and landform remains. Hopefully the trees will be replaced with NZ Native trees/vegetation and the land allowed time to restore and regenerate.
 10. The ONF/ONL values are highly sensitive to degradation and pollution particularly to inappropriate subdivision and building developments. The stewardship of these outstanding landscapes is increasingly important to overall wellbeing of the community and its economy. The Tourism goose laying golden eggs (the current Otago gold rush) has a noose around its neck and it is tightening! The noose in my view bears the label 'greed'. The soul of the Wakatipu is its Landscapes but 'what shall it profit a community or Council or Lawyer or Developer if they gain the whole world, but lose their own soul, for what can they give in exchange for their soul'
 11. In my view, there is no further capacity in the ONL/ONF landscapes at Arthurs Point to accommodate further subdivision and development without seriously compromising and irreversibly damaging this outstanding Landscape. It is suffering the death by a thousand cuts.