

**APPENDIX 6**

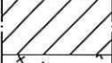
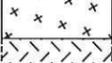
**DIAGRAM SHOWING INDICATIVE LOCATION OF SUGGESTED ROADSIDE  
PLANTING (RP) OVERLAY ON THE MILLBROOK STRUCTURE PLAN**

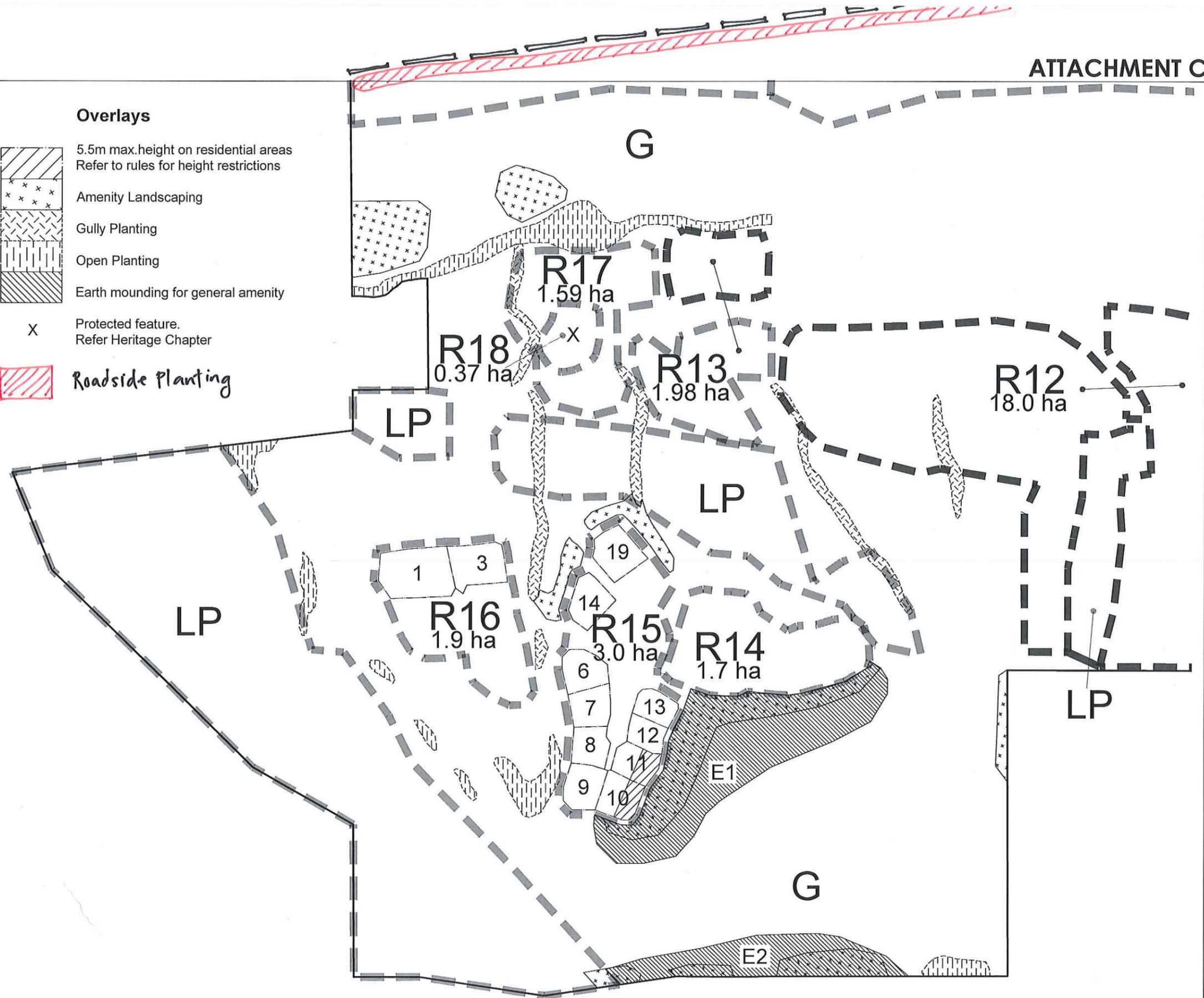


**Structure Plan Legend**

- R : Residential
- V : Village
- F : Recreational Facilities
- S : Resort Services
- G : Golf Course and Open Space
- H : Helipad
- LP : Landscape Protection
- Activity Area Boundary
- Indicative Residential Site Boundary
- Zone Boundary

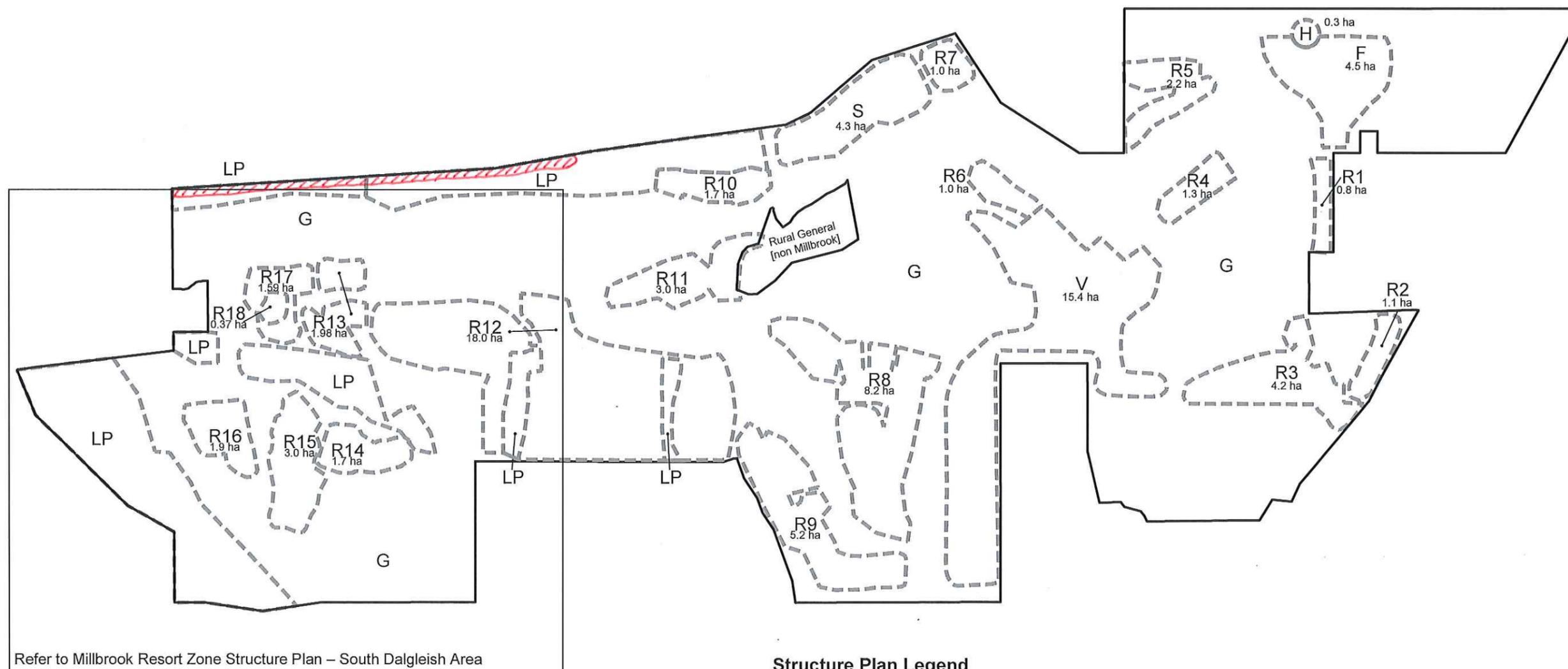
**Overlays**

-  5.5m max.height on residential areas  
Refer to rules for height restrictions
-  Amenity Landscaping
-  Gully Planting
-  Open Planting
-  Earth mounding for general amenity
- X Protected feature.  
Refer Heritage Chapter
-  Roadside Planting



MILLBROOK RESORT ZONE - STRUCTURE PLAN – SOUTH DALGLEISH AREA

REFERENCE 2423-SK65 - SCALE = 1:2000 AT A1 - 1:4000 AT A3 - 02 Dec 2016  
 J:\2423 - millbrook\_macauley\cad\2423-sk65 - millbrook\_dalglish farm - structure plan - south dalglish area.dwg - SK65



**Structure Plan Legend**

- R : Residential
- V : Village
- F : Recreational Facilities
- S : Resort Services
- G : Golf Course and Open Space
- H : Helipad
- LP : Landscape Protection

 Roadside Planting Overlay

Activity Area Boundary  
  
 Zone Boundary  


**MILLBROOK RESORT ZONE - STRUCTURE PLAN**

REFERENCE 2423-SK40 - SCALE = 1:5000 AT A1 - 1:10000 AT A3 - 02 Dec 2016  
 J:\2423 - millbrook\_macauley\cad\2423-sk40 - millbrook\_dalgleish\_farm - structure plan.dwg - SK40

**APPENDIX 7**

**MARION READ LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT AND GRAPHIC ATTACHMENT,  
DATED JUNE 2014**



**Wakatipu Basin Residential Subdivision and Development: Landscape  
Character Assessment**

**Marion Read  
Principal  
Read Landscapes  
June 2014**

## **Introduction**

This report has been commissioned by Queenstown Lakes District Council's (QLDC) policy team as a part of its District Plan Review process. It has been identified that the review of the existing rural zones and the landscape provisions within the District Plan is to be a significant part of this larger review process. Particularly, it is considered that the cumulative effects of development in the Wakatipu Basin have not been well managed. This report aims to examine the landscape of the Basin, determine areas in which further development could occur, areas in which further development would threaten the landscape character and quality of the Basin as a whole, and examine the means by which its future management could be more effectively undertaken.

## **Background**

The landscape management provisions of the Queenstown Lakes District Plan (the District Plan) were included in the District Plan as a direct consequence of an appeal to the Environment Court undertaken by a number of residents and organisations. The decision in the case (C180/99) established the landscape classification regime, objectives and policies and assessment matters by which the landscapes of the District has been managed since. This case, and the provisions based upon it, was based upon the analysis of the landscape of the Wakatipu Basin.

As the landscape management provisions of the District Plan have been implemented over the intervening years (since 2000) issues have arisen, particularly in regard to the management of development within the landscapes classified as Visual Amenity Landscapes. The 2009 District Plan Monitoring Report identified that the cumulative effects of development pressure within the Wakatipu Basin were not being effectively managed. It identified a disjuncture between the objectives and policies of the landscape categories identified within the Plan and the assessment matters and considered that these could more explicitly outline the desired landscape outcome, particularly for the Visual Amenity Landscapes.

The provisions of the District Plan with regard to landscape have two key characteristics. The first is that, like most planning documents in New Zealand, it is based on a picturesque aesthetic<sup>1</sup>. In essence this aesthetic is based on the assumption that a landscape should appear as a painting and be susceptible to the same analysis and critique. A consequence of the dominance of this picturesque aesthetic is that landscape is considered to be primarily a visual resource, or put another way, landscape is valued almost exclusively as scenery. This approach ignores the importance of landscape as place, and the central contribution that the character of the landscape makes to this

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<sup>1</sup> See Read, M. (2004). Planning and the Picturesque: A Case Study of the Dunedin District Plan and its Application to the Management of the Landscape of the Otago Peninsula. *Landscape Research*, 30(3), 337 – 359.

aspect. The Queenstown Lakes District Plan (the District Plan) landscape management provisions focus almost exclusively on managing the visibility of proposed development.

The landscape management provisions of the District Plan were based on the then best practice of the Landscape Architecture profession. The early training in this country focused strongly on ecology and on classical (picturesque) aesthetics and landscape assessment practice focused intensely on the visual, with some consideration given to ecology and to the promotion of healthy environmental systems. This approach derived from that developed by the American Forest Service whose primary goal was to avoid adverse effects on scenery of the clear felling of forests. In recent years the focus of the profession has changed slightly, largely stimulated by developments in Europe.

The prime driver of these developments has been the drafting and ratification of the European Landscape Convention (ELC)<sup>2</sup>. This Convention was ratified by Britain in 2006 and came into effect there in 2007. Its content is having an increasing influence on the practice of landscape assessment and landscape management in this country. The Convention defines 'landscape' as:

'an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors;'

and this definition has been widely accepted by practitioners in this country. It also, usefully, defines landscape management as"

'action, from a perspective of sustainable development, to ensure the regular upkeep of a landscape, so as to guide and harmonise changes which are brought about by social, economic and environmental processes;'

and landscape planning as:

'strong forward-looking action to enhance, restore or create landscapes.'

Member states of the European Union are required to implement the Convention and in Britain this has been achieved by the process of undertaking a national landscape character assessment. Every area of Britain, including urban areas, has been included in this process and these character assessments form the basis on which local government is expected to base their landscape planning and landscape management processes.

As a consequence of these changes the practice of landscape assessment itself has also undergone scrutiny and reconsideration in Britain. This has recently culminated in the third edition of the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' being published and adopted by the British Landscape Institute<sup>3</sup>. This document explains its relationship with the European Landscape Convention stating:

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/default\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/heritage/Landscape/default_en.asp)

<sup>3</sup> Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment. (2013). Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Routledge: Oxford.

The importance of the ELC definition is that it moves beyond the idea that landscape is only a matter of aesthetics and visual amenity. Instead it encourages a focus on landscape as a resource in its own right.

While not formally adopted by the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, it has been promoted by that organisation. It provides, what some of us feel, to be an answer to disquiet both within the profession and within the broader planning realm as to the robustness of landscape assessment practice. It does so by clearly separating the issues of landscape as a resource in its own right and as a visual resource. It is my intention to apply its framework and principles to this study so as to present a clear, consistent and robust approach to the management of the landscape of the Wakatipu Basin into the future.

The GLIVA approach to landscape assessment examines the potential effects of proposed development in terms of two principles. The first is that landscape is a resource in its own right. That resource can be identified and described through the process of landscape character assessment. Landscape character is defined as:

A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another.

Clearly this definition can be applied at many different scales, which is commensurate with the approach that landscapes can be nested, a theme which has been expressed in a number of Environment Court decisions regarding the Wakatipu. In terms of this definition, the landscape effects of potential development are those things which would disrupt (or enhance) that distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern.

Visual effects are defined as 'the effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity'.<sup>4</sup> These can be weighted according to the degree of sensitivity to change which people will experience with residents, recreational users of the landscape, and visitors desirous of experiencing scenery being the most sensitive groups. It is entirely possible, therefore, that a proposal could have significant adverse effects on landscape character but not significant visual effects. It is less likely, but also possible, that a proposal could have significant effects on visual amenity but not on the landscape resource.

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<sup>4</sup> ibid P98

## **Wakatipu Basin: Current Condition**

The first goal of this project is assess the condition of the landscape of the Wakatipu Basin to determine of its ability to absorb further landscape change. In order to fulfil this goal it is necessary to establish some principles on which to base the assessment.

### **Methods**

Firstly, it is considered that the Wakatipu Basin is a landscape character area in its own right. It is contained by significant mountains on all sides, and by significant rivers on three. Its original glacial origins are readily legible, and include moraine features and roche moutonnee. Its overall geomorphological pattern is one of a network of reasonably confined valleys interspersed with hummocky ridges and punctured by roche moutonnee. The majority of it retains a rural character typified by pastoral uses with open pasture of varying quality over most of the land area. Hawthorn hedges, Lombardy poplars, conifer shelterbelts and willows along waterways form the characteristic tree palette, with scattered remnant indigenous scrub present, mainly on steep and elevated landforms. This character is becoming less coherent as residential development spreads and intensifies in pockets.

In summary the following are considered to be the key characteristics of the Wakatipu Basin rural landscape:

- predominance of natural features over human made features
- high ratio of open space relative to the built environment and to the presence of trees
- significant areas in pasture, crops
- scattered indigenous vegetation
- presence of large numbers of farmed animals (sheep, cattle, deer, goats)
- low population densities relative to urban centres
- narrow, unsealed roads
- absence of urban infrastructure
- narrow range of tree species utilised for shelter
- amenity tree species restricted to the immediate vicinity of dwellings.

Conversely the major threats to rural character are:

- predominance of human made features, particularly buildings and structures
- high density of built form
- loss of pastoral/cropping activities;
- loss of indigenous vegetation
- lack of farmed species and preponderance of 'lifestyle' animals (horses, donkeys, llamas, alpaca)

- increased road formalisation by sealing, construction of kerb and channel, culverts etc
- presence of urban infrastructure (kerb and channel, sealed footpaths, street lighting)
- spread of amenity tree species across the landscape

The presence, or otherwise, and the quality of these characteristics was assessed for landscape units across the Basin. Landscape units, in this context are areas with similar character and generally, some degree of visual containment.

In order to undertake the assessment a desk top study was undertaken first in order to gain some familiarity with the following:

- geological foundations of the Wakatipu Basin
- hazard areas
- existing zoning
- consented development
- District Plan provisions.

Site visits to the Wakatipu Basin were then undertaken and a standardised landscape character assessment template was used as a basis for field notes.

It was found, in practice, that this template, taken from 'Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland'<sup>5</sup> was of limited value, but it did enable the determination of landscape character sub-areas, referred to in this report as landscape units, throughout the basin in a systematic manner. An evaluation of the rural character of these areas was then undertaken and these given a numeric score which enabled the ranking of these areas. The absorptive capacity of the landscape in each landscape unit was then assessed in terms of the vulnerability of the landscape character to further change, and the vulnerability of the visual amenity provided by and within that landscape character area to degradation by further development. In the latter case that means that landscape units adjacent to major roads are immediately more vulnerable as they have more viewers. A key assumption is that the maintenance of rural character and landscape quality is important for the tourism industry.

## **Results:**

### **General:**

The overall finding is that the level of rural character remaining within the Wakatipu Basin is variable ranging from high in a few areas to more or less extinguished in others<sup>6</sup>. The level of subdivision and development which has already been consented is such that a rural lifestyle character has already

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<sup>5</sup> Swanwick, C. (2002) Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland. The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage.

<sup>6</sup> This is not to say that these areas do not, arguably, provide high amenity for their occupants and visitors.

spread over much of the Basin. In many areas the density of dwellings approximates one every 4ha or so. The southern end of Morven Ferry Road, Jeffry Road, Eastburn Road and Glencoe Road on the Crown Terrace seem to be the only remaining unsealed roads in the Basin. Amenity trees have been planted in swathes in previously open pasture as well as in association with residential development in the Hawthorn Triangle, Dalefield and other parts of the Basin. These trees in all of these locations diminish the rural character of the landscape; diminish the openness of the landscape; and have a domesticating effect which will increase dramatically as they mature. This will alter the landscape character of much of the Basin.

Key to providing a remaining sense of rurality and of local character in the Basin are the outstanding natural landscapes which surround and enclose the it, and the outstanding natural features which puncture its floor. While some of these, notably Mount Dewar, the face of Coronet Peak, and the Crown Terrace escarpment are all heavily infested with wilding exotic trees, they nonetheless retain the predominance of natural features, high ratio of open space (without buildings), significant areas of vegetation, and low population densities which enable them to be seen as the rural context of the Basin. It is the case that the District Plan seems to have been effective in managing the spread of residential development in these areas. It appears that this is a result of the performance standard which requires development in these landscapes to be 'reasonably difficult to see'. In addition to these outstanding natural landscapes other, more rural, areas of the Basin floor also contribute the rural context to areas which have little remaining rural character within them.

**Recommendation:** Continue to ensure the protection of the Outstanding Natural Landscapes and Features of the Wakatipu Basin from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.

A summary of the results of the analysis on an area by area basis is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. It is to be noted that the analysis was not restricted to the Rural General zone, treating the landscape of the Basin Floor as a continuous unit. On the basis of this analysis I consider that there are a number of areas of the Basin in which future development could be focused without detracting from the landscape character and visual amenity of the Basin as a whole, and a number of areas which are extremely vulnerable.

**Areas for further residential development:<sup>7</sup>**

In my opinion future residential development within the Basin should be concentrated in the areas where it would have the least impact on the existing landscape character and visual amenity of the overall Basin landscape. Within the Basin these areas have mainly been identified because the level of existing development has diminished the rurality of the landscape character area already, and

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<sup>7</sup> Each area is identified by a number on the map attached as Appendix 2.

because the existing contribution to the overall visual amenity is already relatively low (while the local visual amenity may remain high). Areas currently zoned Rural General in which these criteria combine are the Hawthorn Triangle (area 9), Fitzpatrick Basin (area 6); Mooney Road (area 3); and Alec Robbins Road (area 20). It is my opinion that future development within the Wakatipu Basin should be encouraged to occur within these areas.

In the case of the Hawthorn Triangle that, while zoned Rural General, the level of subdivision which had been consented in that area already exceeds the allowable density of the Rural Lifestyle zone in some areas. In order to concentrate further development in this area a minimum lot size of 1ha in the area bounded by Lower Shotover, Domain and Speargrass Flat Roads should be considered. The surrounding margins of this area could be rezoned Rural Lifestyle, which would provide a transition between the density on the flat and that of the land retained as Rural General above. To a considerable extent this would simply acknowledge the level of development currently in place. This zoning should include: the area to the west of Domain Road to the edge of the river terrace escarpment (the boundary of the Outstanding Natural Feature of the Shotover River); and the area east of Lower Shotover Road, extending approximately to the 400m contour to the north of Slope Hill Road rising to the 420m contour in the vicinity of Springbank south of Slope Hill Road. This suggested zoning is illustrated on the map attached as Appendix 3.

**Recommendation:** Allow subdivision to 1ha in the area bounded by Lower Shotover, Domain and Speargrass Flat Roads as a permitted activity providing a suite of design controls were met covering the exterior appearance of the dwelling and the landscaping proposed.

**Recommendation:** Rezone the land on the margins of the Hawthorn Triangle Rural Lifestyle.

The Fitzpatrick Basin (area 6) incorporates an area of Rural Lifestyle zoning currently but is, in the main, Rural General. The boundary of the rural lifestyle area is entirely incoherent from a landscape perspective, protruding into an area of the basin floor. The basin is contained, with views into it obscured by the surrounding ridgelines. It is my opinion that the Rural Lifestyle zoning should be extended to incorporate the majority of this Basin, extending towards the top of the ridgeline which runs approximately along the southern side of Fitzpatrick Road and to the vicinity of the 440m contour along the north of the Basin. This zoning is illustrated on the map attached as Appendix 3. I consider that the portion of land between the Shotover River and this southern ridgeline should remain zoned Rural General (area 6a). This area has had its rural character compromised to a degree by the consenting of residential development within it, and has had its visual amenity compromised to a greater degree by this development also. I consider that it is close to the limit of its ability to absorb development.

**Recommendation:** Rezone the Fitzpatrick Basin Rural Lifestyle.

The Mooney Road Basin (area 3) is an area which is entirely contained and as a consequence the effects of development also can be contained within the valley. Development has tended to occur in elevated locations on both sides of the valley, possibly in part owing to the wet nature of much of the valley floor. It is considered, however, that this area has the capacity to absorb further residential development without adverse effects on the landscape of the Basin as a whole. The rezoning of this area as Rural Lifestyle would assist in focussing future development into this area. A requirement should be, however, that development within this landscape unity not be visible from either Malaghans Road or Speargrass Flat Road.

**Recommendation:** Rezone the Mooney Road basin Rural Lifestyle with the requirement that no new residential development should be visible from Malaghans Road or Speargrass Flat Road.

The area in Alec Robbins Road (area 20) to which this report refers is that which is bound by the escarpment of Morven Hill on one side, Hayes Creek to the west and State Highway 6 to the north. The more northern lots in this area are of Rural Residential size, even though they are zoned Rural General. The lots to the west of Alec Robbins Road are larger, but the development has been contained by the topography to the level terrace area, concentrating its domesticating effect. The open pasture to the west of Alec Robbins Road is not particularly visible from State Highway 6 and consequently does not make a significant contribution to the visual amenity of travellers on that road. It does provide a rural mid-ground to residents of Lake Hayes Estate in their views of Morven Hill. The rezoning of this area Rural Lifestyle would provide for further development possibilities without significant adverse effects on the character or visual amenity of the wider Basin and should be considered. This zoning is illustrated on the map attached as Appendix 3.

**Recommendation:** Rezone the land adjacent to Alec Robbins Road Rural Lifestyle.

**Areas in which further residential development should be avoided:**

There are a number of landscape units within the Basin in which the character and visual amenity of the area are both considered to be vulnerable to further change. Several of these areas are immediately adjacent to areas of intensive development and are thus seen as vulnerable to development pressure. Others are significant areas which contribute the majority of the remaining rural character to the Basin as a whole.

The Crown Terrace (area 17) as a whole is considered to be highly vulnerable to both character change and to the degradation of its visual amenity. It is a reasonably expansive and open area

which has, thus far, retained its rural character typified by large paddocks, shelter belts and agricultural activities. It is deeply cut by the Royal Burn, Swift Burn and other unnamed creeks and this feature, combined with the hummocky glacial deposits of the terrace edge, provides some topographical complexity which may provide some further absorptive capacity. Given, however, that there are some thirty consented but as yet undeveloped building platforms on the terrace, it is considered that further development is likely to have significant adverse effects on the landscape character, the visual amenity of the vicinity, or both. In addition, the presence of residential development along the rim of the terrace escarpment threatens to compromise the visual amenity of persons on the Basin floor, for whom the views of the Crown Range are important.

**Recommendation:** Avoid further subdivision and residential development on the Crown Terrace, either through specific provisions in the District Plan and/or by increasing the rigour of the relevant assessment matters including requiring that any further residential development should not be visible from locations on the Basin floor, and that the open, pastoral landscape character of the terrace must be preserved.

Malaghans Valley (area 2) is also considered to be a landscape unit which is highly vulnerable to changes in both its landscape character and to the visual amenity which it provides. It remains the most extensive area of pastoral land in agricultural production in the Basin (other than the Crown Terrace). In addition to these aspects of its character, its readily legible glacial deposits along the valley floor give it a high level of interest, and visual amenity. Sporadic residential development is located, predominantly, along the southern side of the valley, on the valley floor and, to a greater extent, on the north facing slopes of Malaghans Ridge. This creates pockets of domestication which detract from the rural character of the valley to a degree. In terms of visual amenity, however, their impact is lessened by the tendency to focus on Coronet Peak and its associated mountains. It is considered that the protection of the rural character of this landscape unit is of very high importance to the maintenance of the remaining rural character and visual amenity of the Basin.

**Recommendation:** Avoid further subdivision and residential development of the Malaghans Road landscape unit, either through specific provisions in the District Plan or by increasing the rigour of the relevant assessment matters including requiring that any further residential development should not be visible from locations in Malaghans Road, and that the open, pastoral landscape character of the valley must be preserved.

The Speargrass Flat Valley (area 12) is another area of the Basin in which the landscape character remains essentially rural. It has been compromised to degree by the planting of amenity trees along a portion of the road boundary and in swathes across the upper slopes on the northern wall of the valley. It remains relatively free of domesticating residential development, however, until the Rural

Residential Zone of North Lake Hayes is reached. Consented but as yet undeveloped sites on the northern ridge should not give rise to dwellings which are prominent from the valley floor. It is considered that the protection of the rural character of this landscape unit is of high importance to the maintenance of the remaining rural character and visual amenity of the Basin.

**Recommendation:** Avoid further subdivision and residential development of the Speargrass Flat Valley landscape unit, either through specific provisions in the District Plan or by increasing the rigour of the relevant assessment matters including requiring that any further residential development should not be visible from locations in Speargrass Flat Road, and that the open, pastoral landscape character of the valley must be preserved.

The Littles Stream Valley (area 7) is located to the west of the Fitzpatrick Basin. The upper reaches of the valley are visible from the vicinity of Hansens Road and Lake Johnston and the western from Arthurs Point. The lower reaches are more visually discrete. The area does contribute to the visual amenity experienced from those locations, however, and from properties within the valley itself. In terms of landscape character, the lower reaches have now been subdivided into lots in the vicinity of 4ha each. The higher slopes are in larger lots, and the removal of a block of Douglas fir is assisting in restoring the pastoral character of this area. It is considered, however, that both in terms of character and visual amenity this landscape character area is at the brink of its ability to absorb development. It is considered that the protection of the rural character of this landscape character area is of high importance to the maintenance of the remaining rural character and visual amenity of the Basin.

**Recommendation:** Avoid further subdivision and residential development of the Littles Stream Valley, either through specific provisions in the District Plan or by increasing the rigour of the relevant assessment matters including requiring that any further residential development should not be visible from locations in Littles Road, Arthurs Point and Hansens Road.

The Arthurs Point Basin (area 8) is located to the west and north of the Littles Stream Valley. It is an ice evacuated basin of some geological significance<sup>8</sup> and is contained within the Outstanding Natural Landscape (Wakatipu Basin). It is enclosed by steep cliffs to its east, steep escarpments to the north and west, and the Shotover River to the south. The floor of the basin is undulating in the north smoothing to river terraces in the south. The natural character of the basin has been compromised by its pastoral use and residential development. Its rural character also has been compromised by the presence of residential development in the south western quarter of the basin, and by the spread of wilding trees particularly along its western margins. Its visual amenity, however, is very high and its vulnerability is considered to be very high also. It is considered that the protection of the rural

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<sup>8</sup> Hayward, B W & Kenny, J A (eds). (1998). Inventory and Maps of Important Geological Sites and Landforms in the Otago Region. Geological Society of New Zealand: Lower Hutt.

character of this landscape character area is of high importance to the maintenance of the remaining rural character and visual amenity of the Basin, and that the enhancement of its natural character should be a priority<sup>9</sup>.

**Recommendation:** Avoid further subdivision and residential development of the Arthurs Point basin by specific provision in the District Plan. Encourage the enhancement of the natural character of the Basin.

The margins of the Arrow River from the Arrow Junction Bridge south to the confluence with the Kawarau River and east to the foot of the Crown Terrace (area 18) form another landscape unit. This area has been subdivided into a range of lot sizes but most are larger, 10 to 20ha and so residential development remains reasonably dispersed and discrete. Rural character remains reasonably high but is at risk of further fragmentation and domestication and is considered to be vulnerable to change. This area is the first part of the Wakatipu Basin which is experienced by someone travelling from Cromwell on State Highway 6. It currently has high visual amenity and it is considered that this amenity is vulnerable to change also. It is considered that the protection of the rural character of this landscape character area is of high importance to the maintenance of the remaining rural character and visual amenity of the Basin.

**Recommendation:** Avoid further subdivision and residential development of the Arrow River margins area by specific provision in the District Plan.

The area to the north and east of the North Lake Hayes Rural Residential zone is considered to be another landscape character area (area 13) which has moderate remaining rural character and moderate to high visual amenity. Both have been compromised by prominent residential development along the eastern slopes below the Hills Golf Course, and by the Rural Residential and Rural Lifestyle zoning which protrudes north into this area. This area provides a rural break between the development which surrounds Lake Hayes and Millbrook which is located over the ridgeline to the north. While the area is a continuation of the Speargrass Valley to its west, it is considered separately because it has both positive features, particularly the avenue of trees associated with the Ayrburn homestead, and detractions, as discussed, which do not influence the valley. As such it is considered that the protection of the remaining rural character and visual amenity is highly desirable.

**Recommendation:** Manage further subdivision and development by increasing the rigour of the relevant assessment matters.

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<sup>9</sup> A resource consent granted on Part Section 29 Block XIX Shotover Survey District which encompasses the eastern cliffs includes the clearance of weeds and their revegetation which will enhance the natural character of the vicinity.

**Recommendation:** Consider the rezoning of the area as Rural Lifestyle within 10 to 15 years depending on development pressure.

The area to the immediate north of the Hawthorn Triangle is another area where a moderately high level of rural character has been retained, and which provides moderately high visual amenity to surrounding areas (area 11). It is also the case here, however, that the loss of this rural character and visual amenity would have fairly limited consequences on the rural character of the Basin as a whole, provided the slopes to the north east remained rural in character.

**Recommendation:** Manage further subdivision and development by increasing the rigour of the relevant assessment matters.

**Recommendation:** Consider the rezoning of the area as Rural Lifestyle within 10 to 15 years depending on development pressure.

Ladies Mile, between Lake Hayes and the Shotover River (area 19), provides an important introduction to the Wakatipu for visitors travelling from Cromwell and Wanaka. While the rural character of the area has been compromised by the fragmenting and domesticating effects of residential development on the northern side of the road, the extent of these effects on the southern side has been considerably less. Consequently expansive views to Cecil and Walter Peaks are possible over open pasture providing high visual amenity. It is considered that the protection of the remaining rural character and visual amenity of this landscape unit is of high importance to the maintenance of the remaining rural character and visual amenity of the Basin and that further development in this area should be avoided.

**Recommendation:** Avoid further subdivision and residential development of the Ladies Mile landscape unit by specific provision in the District Plan.

The balance of the Wakatipu Basin could be said to be in an intermediate zone, where landscape character and visual amenity are moderately vulnerable. This includes most of the elevated areas of Malaghans Ridge (area 4); Hogans Gully and Bendemeer Hill (area 23); the Slope Hill Valley (area 14 on Appendix 2) and North Slope Hill (area 10 on Appendix 2); Arrow Junction (area 24); the McDonnell Road Valley (area 16) and the eastern end of Malaghans Valley (area 21). In all of these areas the relatively complex topography is central to their localised landscape character and its vulnerability to change is limited. The lack of visibility from public and private locations limits the potential effects of further development on the visual amenity of the Basin as a whole. This is not to say that subdivision and development proposals in these areas do not require active management to ensure that this is the outcome.

**Recommendation:** Manage further subdivision and development by increasing the rigour of the relevant assessment matters.

## **Potential Management Methods**

### **Minimum lot sizes**

One option for introducing a greater level of control over development in the Basin which has been mooted is the determination of a minimum lot size to be imposed in addition to the landscape based assessment criteria. This option raises the objection that allowable size of allotments is always arbitrary. I do not consider this to be entirely accurate. It is my observation that allotments of less than 5ha in area are small enough that land management practices which are essentially domestic in nature (mowing, tree planting, gardening) are feasible. Between 5 and 10 hectares some rural land management practices usually become necessary (animals, baleage, cropping) but fragmentation by division into small pastures, the planting of shelter belts and woodlots, and domestication by the planting of large numbers of amenity trees frequently occurs. At 10 to 15 hectares, while all of these practices may be undertaken, the size of the property limits the scale of the undertaking and the extent of the fragmentation and domestication is limited. At around 15ha, it seems from observation, rural character can be maintained.

If it is then accepted that a minimum lot size for the maintenance of rural character is 15ha, it is necessary to examine what effect the imposition of this would be within the areas of the Basin in which further development might occur. It seems that in order to be effective a minimum lot size would need to enable sufficient further subdivision to direct development into areas where the landscape can absorb it while deterring development in areas where it cannot. It would clearly be effective in preventing further subdivision in many areas where the landscape has already been subjected to fairly intensive subdivision. While not an exhaustive analysis, these include: the margins of the Arrow River south of the Arrow Junction Bridge; Ladies Mile; Littles Stream Basin; Fitzpatrick Basin; North Lake Hayes; and the McDonnell Road Valley. It would not, however, be effective in facilitating subdivision in the areas in which the landscape might absorb further development such as Malaghans Ridge and Morven Ferry. While a number of holdings along Malaghans Ridge are of sufficient size to be subdivided into 15ha blocks, the proportion of these sites which could be so subdivided without adverse landscape or visual effects would be much smaller.

For example, Ayrburn Estates own 131ha of land at the eastern end of the Speargrass Flat Valley/ Malaghans Ridge landscape character areas<sup>10</sup>. Of this only approximately 36ha of land is located on the top of the ridge where development may possibly be absorbed, the south facing slopes and valley

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<sup>10</sup> Its legal description is Part Lot 3 DP 5737, Lot 4 DP 319854 and Lots 3- 5 DP 343305

floor being considered to be highly sensitive to both character change and changes in visual amenity. In fact, subdivision consent for three lots has already been granted on this property, and three building platforms are already located within this area. There is another aspect of this property which is relevant to this investigation. That is, it is on this property that large swathes of exotic amenity trees have been planted on the south facing slopes, noted above, and it is anticipated that this will have an increasingly domesticating effect on the landscape of the Speargrass Valley as the trees grow demonstrating that even on large properties inappropriate management can be undertaken which will have adverse landscape effects.

While it is considered that 15ha is the minimum lot size necessary to ensure that rural character and rural amenity is preserved it is also worth examining the impact of a smaller minimum, one at which significant domestication may still be avoided, of 10ha. At this minimum lot size none of the vulnerable areas of the Basin would be protected from further subdivision. It would enable subdivision within the areas identified for further development but with the attendant risk of adverse effects on landscape and visual amenity which would still require management.

A further consideration needs to be made. It is the case that in some subdivisions within the District the landscape and visual effects have been successfully managed by the use of common or balance lots, or management covenants. 'Stonebridge' for example, has a total of eight residential lots on a total site of 20ha, giving a land area per dwelling of 2.5ha per dwelling. The residential use of the site is restricted to an area of 4.1ha, however, providing each dwelling a curtilage of approximately 2000m<sup>2</sup>. The surrounding balance of approximately 16ha is maintained as productive agricultural land owned in common by the lot owners. This has been successful in reducing the domesticating effect of the overall development. Ayrburn Estate is an example of a management covenant, where the lots are run as a productive farm, the lot owners being restricted in their influence to a relatively small curtilage area. This does maintain the floor of the eastern part of the Speargrass Valley as productive, pastoral land, but its effectiveness has been compromised by the planting of the exotic amenity trees discussed above. It would appear that a minimum lot size would remove, or seriously hamper, the ability to undertake these more creative methods of achieving effective landscape management within the Basin.

**Recommendation:** The inclusion of a minimum lot size would not assist in the maintenance of rural character in the Wakatipu Basin.

### **Plan provisions**

I have undertaken an analysis of the landscape provisions in the Plan in Sections 4 and 5. This clearly demonstrates a number of problems with both the policies and objectives and the assessment

matters. I attach the analysis as Appendix 4. In summary there are a number of general points to be made. Firstly, the definitions of the landscape classifications and the issues which concern each type are confused. The reference to 'openness' in reference to Outstanding Natural Landscapes is misplaced given that, apart from the high tussock grasslands, the natural condition of most of the ONLs of the District was forested. Given that the classification is based on S6(b) of the RMA, it would reasonably be expected that maintaining and enhancing the natural character and outstanding quality of those landscapes should be a major focus. Similarly, as S7(c) is the basis justifying the Visual Amenity Landscape category, references to 'enhancing natural character' again seem misplaced, and the maintenance and enhancement of amenity (not just visual amenity) would appear to be a more logical focus.

**Recommendation:** The definitions of the landscape categories should be rewritten so as to better reflect the intentions of the enabling legislation.

The definition of the Visual Amenity Landscapes is particularly problematic. The reference to Arcadian landscapes has, in my opinion, led to much confusion, both amongst lay people and professionals, neither group having a clear grasp of what it actually means. In addition the definition refers to 'pastoral or arcadian'. It is unclear if this means that the Plan aims to have regard to both landscape characters, or if they are different ways of stating the same thing.

Arcadia was, in fact, a common subject of the early picturesque painters and as such has made a significant contribution to the development of the picturesque aesthetic. An examination of these paintings has led me to the conclusion that an 'Arcadian' landscape has a number of distinct features.

These are:

- the landscape of the fore and mid-ground is fine-grained and broken into small, reasonably discrete areas by vegetation and topography;
- there are areas of rugged topography (cliffs, waterfalls);
- the fore and mid-ground landscape contains many large trees;
- the mountainous context of the site is distant and its detail indistinct;
- buildings are always visible and these are often temples;
- there are animals present, usually sheep or goats;
- there is water, either a river, lake, pond or the sea;
- there are always people present, usually resting if they are a worker (shepherd or goatherd) or recreating as is the case in both of these paintings.

This arcadian landscape is, first and foremost, an idealised rural landscape which bears little relationship to a productive or truly pastoral rural landscape. It is the landscape recreated in the picturesque parks of England. Its inclusion as a part of the definition of Visual Amenity Landscapes

has led to landscape professionals considering that its development within the District is a goal of the Plan. This, in combination with the direction to enhance natural character, has been used as justification for the planting of many exotic amenity trees; of avoiding linear planting, even when it is entirely in keeping with the character of the vicinity; and of considering residential development partially screened from sight to be acceptable. It has strongly influenced the developing character of the Wakatipu Basin.

In my opinion the areas of the Basin which most clearly demonstrate arcadian qualities are Dalefield; the Hawthorn Triangle; the slopes of Slope Hill to the south of Slope Hill Road; and Arrow Junction. These are the most modified and highly developed areas of the Basin. There are also those who consider that the development of this character is positive, and I have heard it argued that the Hawthorn Triangle will, in time, have the character of Thurby Domain. The Domain is on a south facing slope and was planted at a time when sun and views were not high priorities. Far from developing a similar character I consider it more likely that the presence of large amenity trees within the Hawthorn Triangle is likely to provoke neighbourhood conflict over lost views and shading. Further, the spread of this English parkland character across the landscape obscures the landforms and topography and diminishes the local, indigenous character of the Basin.

It is my opinion that if there is a desire to slow the subdivision and residential development of the Wakatipu Basin and to protect the local character of the landscape then it is necessary to amend the definition of Visual Amenity Landscapes to remove references to 'arcadia'.

**Recommendation:** Remove all references to arcadian landscape character from the District Plan.

While the plan does discuss the issues associated with each landscape classification these are very generalised and rather confused and confusing, as noted above. I consider that it would be advantageous to establish specific descriptions, identified threats and positive goals for the management of character areas within the broader District landscapes. Such a description of the character and threats to it are listed above. Positive goals for the management of the Basin could include such things as the removal/control of wilding species including hawthorn, sycamore and conifer species. I do consider that public consultation in the setting of goals for the management of landscapes is critical.

**Recommendation:** Develop, in consultation with the public, specific objectives for the management and enhancement of the landscape of the Wakatipu Basin.

The assessment matters repeatedly confuse matters of landscape character with visual amenity. This, plus the overwhelming focus on the visual (we are talking about Visual Amenity Landscapes) has resulted in the consenting of many developments within the Wakatipu Basin which compromise

the character of the landscape. They do so by the planting of amenity trees, particularly avenues along driveways; by the fragmentation and enclosure of the pastoral landscape; and by the spreading of structures across the landscape. Separating out these two aspects, character and visual amenity, in keeping with current best practice, would improve Council's ability to manage the effects of development on both landscape character and on visual amenity, and improve the ability of landscape professionals to accurately assess the effects of development. It may be necessary to amend the name 'Visual Amenity Landscapes' to reflect this change of focus, possibly to Amenity Landscapes.

The separation of landscape character and visual amenity could simplify the assessment matters considerably. Each landscape category would have a set of assessment matters tailored to the assessment of effects on the landscape character and quality it is considered important to maintain and/or enhance. In all landscapes the goal should be to ensure that development does not adversely affect the character of the surrounding landscape within its vicinity, and could include requirements for the enhancement of that character<sup>11</sup>. The definition of vicinity could vary depending on the landscape, with that of ONLs being larger than that of VALs. Alternatively, and particularly with regard to the Wakatipu Basin, landscape units could be defined in the Plan and the requirement made that development within each unit not have an adverse effect on the character of that unit. As visual amenity is important within all landscapes classifications, it could be possible to have one set of assessment matters for all landscape categories.

**Recommendation:** Rewrite the landscape assessment matters so as to separate issues of landscape character and visual amenity.

In addition, the inclusion of performance standards in the assessment matters would provide objective (or relatively objective) baselines by which further development could be assessed. Such standards could include requirements that further residential development must not be visible from Malaghans Road or Speargrass Flat Road, for example.

**Recommendation:** Use specific performance standards to manage future development within the Wakatipu Basin and elsewhere.

Specific sections of the assessment matters require particular attention. The first is that relating to the Form and Density of Development (S5.4.2.2(3)(c)). While these assessment matters also confuse visual and character aspects of the landscape their most significant failing relates to the so-called 'circle criteria'. It is my understanding that the first criterion, that development be located within 50m of existing development, was based on an analysis of the tradition rural farm cluster where the

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<sup>11</sup> Enhancement could be achieved by the removal of inappropriate trees; the planting of indigenous vegetation in areas where the natural character is to be enhanced; the rehabilitation of inappropriate earthworks or other means determined by objectives for the character area.

dwelling, barn, shearing shed and shearers quarters were found to be located within approximately 50m of one another. Consequently the aim of this part of the section is to encourage development to mimic the traditional pattern which is a part of the landscape character and where that is not the case then Council wishes to be reassured that the chosen location is the best possible (within a 500m radius). The 1.1km radius, also the definition of 'vicinity' elsewhere in Section 5, arose from an analysis of the spacing of the original homesteads in the Basin, another example of trying to mesh future development into the existing character of the landscape. Thus, while this section has aimed to ensure that development within the VAL does not have an adverse effect on the settlement pattern and thus landscape character I consider that it has failed. In the main that failure is due to the obscure meaning and intention of the section which simply remains beyond most people's ken.

**Recommendation:** Delete this assessment matter.

The second group of assessment matters which require specific examination are those relating to cumulative effects (S5.4.2.2(3)(d)). A superficial reading of these assessment matters suggests that they are reasonably clear in their intent. That they have failed in containing development in the Wakatipu Basin is also clear. In my opinion this is largely due to two things. One is the tendency to take the 'it's stuffed anyway' approach to cumulative effects on the landscape. This would not be acceptable in regard to issues such as water quality and should be no more acceptable in regard to landscape.

The other is the underlying failure to be clear about specifically what the landscape resource is which is necessary to determine how much is left and therefore, whether or not the cumulative effect of a proposal is a step too far. This can be addressed by a clear understanding of the character of the landscape and the features and patterns which contribute to this character. Cumulative effects on character may include alterations to the fabric of the landscape either by the removal of key elements or the inclusion of new ones; changes to the scale, diversity, pattern, colour or other aesthetic aspect of the landscape; or, combined, alterations to the key characteristics possibly leading to a new landscape character.

With regard to cumulative visual effects, this relates to the effects on particular people or groups of people and involves the characteristics of views and the visual amenity enjoyed by people from particular locations. These effects may occur in a stationary location where they are of combination, where instead of one dwelling two may be seen in a single view, or in succession where one instead of one dwelling being visible in a single view the viewer must turn to see the second. When moving through a landscape cumulative effects are sequential and concern the frequency of affected views.

**Recommendation:** Rewrite the cumulative effects assessment matters to clarify separation between landscape and visual effects.

**Recommendation:** Clarify the nature of the landscape resource by defining landscape character areas and defining specific goals for their management.

In conclusion I consider that the rewriting of the landscape provisions of the plan to more clearly and appropriately define the landscape categories and to clarify the division between landscape character and visual amenity would improve the ability of Council to manage development in all areas of the District. I consider that it may be appropriate to introduce specific goals for particular landscape areas within the District in order to define the aspects of their character which it is sought to maintain, or the means by which they could be enhanced.

### **Environmental compensation**

The idea has been mooted that applications for subdivision and residential development within the Wakatipu Basin could be expedited if they included environmental compensation in the form of revegetation or ecological enhancement. While this idea is certainly worthy of consideration there are a number of issues which the suggestion raises.

It is the case that the majority of the Basin floor, and certainly the areas where development has occurred and those which I have identified as having capacity for more development are, in the main, within areas where indigenous vegetation is considered to be acutely or chronically threatened. Chronically threatened areas tend to be on the steeper escarpments and acutely threatened areas on the flats and on the hummocky elevated land. The extent of the problem is such that it would seem that the contribution which could be made by any revegetation associated with further development not yet consented would be minute. While anything may be better than nothing, figuring a formula which would provide a reasonable exchange between revegetation and expedited development would be a challenge. This is not to say, however, that it would not be appropriate to encourage the protection and re-establishment of indigenous vegetation as a positive effect of development and this could be done through the rewriting of the assessment matters. It would also be necessary to make the protection and re-establishment of indigenous vegetation communities within areas where it is categorised as chronically or acutely threatened a clear goal for the management of the Basin.

## **Conclusion and Discussion**

In conclusion, it is considered that much of the difficulty which has arisen in applying the landscape management strategies of the QLDC District Plan stem from the poor and confusing definitions of the landscape categories, and from the confusion of landscape and visual amenity effects. It is considered that rewriting parts of the plan to remove these confusions would increase the ease and clarity with which the assessment matters could be applied. This alone would not, however, be adequate to ensure that the management of the Wakatipu Basin landscape would improve. This requires the formulation of clear objectives and goals for the management of that landscape, and clear descriptions of the character that it is desired to maintain and/or promote.

It is considered that the most effective way to direct development into areas within the Basin where the effects of that development can be contained is to rezone areas Rural Lifestyle. The effectiveness of the objectives, policies and rules for that zone have been beyond the scope of this report. It is the case that under the current regime the landscape classifications do not apply in the Rural Lifestyle Zone. While not recommending that change, I do consider that these zones should be subject to the overarching goals of the landscape management of the Basin as a whole. That way the character of the development within these zones can be managed to be in sympathy with the character of the wider basin, if at a much higher density.

Finally, I have come to the conclusion that the continuation of the discretionary regime is the best way to manage development in the balance of the Basin in conjunction with clarified assessment matters and the inclusion of performance standards. These performance standards should be rigorous enough to ensure that any further development cannot compromise the character or visual amenity of the remaining pastoral areas, nor the character of the wider basin.

Appendix 1: Summary of the landscape character analysis

Landscape Area	Extent of Rural Character	Key Characteristics	Vulnerability to Character Change	Contribution to visual amenity	Vulnerability of Visual Amenity
<b>Crown Terrace (17)</b>	High	Large paddocks Traditional shelter belts Sheep and cattle Dispersed residential development	High	High	High due to the importance of the Crown Range Road and elevation above the basin
<b>Malaghans Valley (2)</b>	High	Legible glacial features Large paddocks Traditional shelter belts Sheep and cattle Dispersed residential development	High	High	High due to openness of the landscape; importance of Malaghans Road.
<b>Morven Ferry (22)</b>	Moderately High	Agricultural activities Pasture Hummocky topography Lifestyle development Hawthorn hedges	Moderate Presence of lifestyle development along the road margins at capacity	Moderate to low	Moderate to low owing to topography and location away from important roads. Cycle way not considered.
<b>Speargrass Valley (12)</b>	Moderately High	Pasture Sheep and cropping Narrow, linear form Amenity trees	High. Planting of amenity trees is already degrading the rural character.	High	High due to remaining openness of the landscape.
<b>Malaghans Ridge (4)</b>	Moderately High	Steep to very steep northern slopes Wide, hummocky summit. Folded southern slopes Large paddocks Residential development in: Dalefield, Mooney Valley, eastern areas Deeply cut southern slopes	Moderate. Main threats are fragmentation; spread of amenity trees; spread of residential development including buildings and tracks.	High to Low	High to moderate. The northern and southern slopes contribute to the visual amenity of Basin occupants and users of Malaghans Road. The higher parts contribute less.
<b>Slope Hill Valley (14)</b>	Moderate	Enclosed Valley Pasture Residential development Amenity trees Wetland Revegetation	Moderate Main threats are fragmentation; spread of amenity trees; spread of residential development including buildings and tracks	Low to Moderate	Moderate to low The valley is enclosed and separated from the majority of the basin but now has a part of the Wakatipu Cycleway running through it

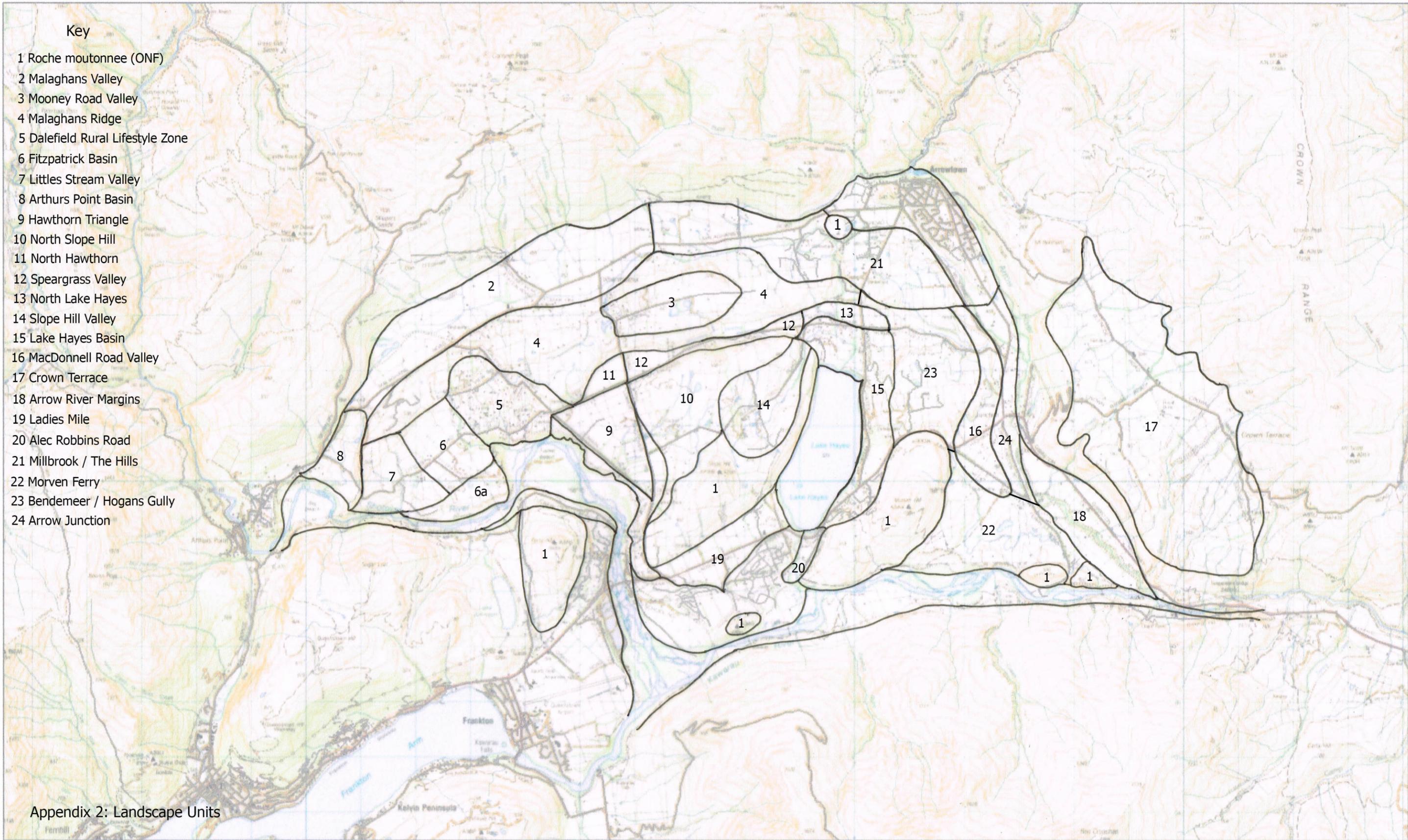
<b>North Slope Hill (10)</b>	Moderate	Complex topography Tarns, wetlands, melt-water channels, creeks Pasture Residential development	Low to moderate Relatively high density of residential development but some areas have some potential.	Low to Moderate	Moderate to low Some parts of this area are widely visible, some not readily visible at all. Some parts have capacity to absorb future development
<b>Hogans Gully and Bendemeer (23)</b>	Moderate	Complex topography Tarns, wetlands, melt-water channels, creeks Pasture Relatively dense residential development consented within Bendemeer Estate	Moderate to high. Residential capacity at or close to its capacity in terms of landscape character.	Low to Moderate	Moderate to high. The complexity of the landforms offers some opportunities to introduce dwellings but it is close to capacity.
<b>Arrow Junction (24)</b>	Moderate	Complex topography Small scale Heritage trees (hawthorn hedges and Lombardy poplars) Residential development	Moderate to high Residential capacity at its maximum in terms of landscape character.	High	Moderate to high The complexity of the landforms provides opportunities to introduce dwellings but it is close to or at capacity
<b>North Lake Hayes (13)</b>	Moderate	Open pasture Heritage trees (Ayrburn avenue) Residential development to the east	High Open area provides rural character to surrounding residential development	High to moderate	High Already compromised by development in the Hogans Gully area.
<b>Arrow River Margins (18)</b>	Moderate	Open pasture Scattered residential development Amenity trees	Moderate to high The area is already fragmented for rural residential use but the lots remain large and open to SH6.	High to moderate	High to moderate Visible from SH6.
<b>North Hawthorn Triangle (11)</b>	Moderate	Open pasture Hawthorn hedge Amenity trees Dwellings	High Location immediately adjacent to Hawthorn Triangle provides development pressure	Moderate Provides rural context for	High to moderate
<b>Littles Stream Valley (7)</b>	Moderate to low	Steep folded topography Open to views from Ferry Hill/Lake Johnston Pastoral Lifestyle development	Moderate to high Subdivision for lifestyle development has occurred At capacity below Littles Road	Moderate to high	Moderate to high Already compromised by consented development.
<b>Fitzpatrick Basin (6)</b>	Moderate to low	Rural lifestyle development Pastoral southern areas Hummocky topography Flat basin floor Steep northern wall.	Low Character already incoherent	Moderate to low	Moderate to low Low in the basin proper Moderate in the southern, hummocky rim area

<b>Mooney Road Valley (3)</b>	Moderate to low	Amenity trees Domestication Wetlands Enclosure Settlement pattern with elevated dwellings	Low	Moderate to high	Low Effects on visual amenity contained within the limited catchment of the valley
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<b>Arthurs Point Basin (8)</b>	Moderate to low	Glacial and fluvial origins readily legible Cliffs Undulating floor Scattered exotic weeds Containment	High	High	High
<b>McDonnell Road Valley (16)</b>	Moderate to low	Enclosure Lifestyle development	Moderate to low	Moderate	Moderate
<b>Dalefield Deferred RL Zone</b>	Low	Amenity trees Dwellings Broken topography Pasture	Low	Moderate	Moderate
<b>Ladies Mile (19)</b>	Low	Flatness Expansive views Openness Enclosure	High	High	Very high
<b>Alec Robbins Road (20)</b>	Low	Dwellings Amenity trees Domestication	Low	Low	Low
<b>Eastern Malaghans Valley (21)</b>	Low	Broken complex landforms Wilding conifers Amenity trees Residential development	Moderate to low	Moderate to high	Moderate to high
<b>Hawthorn Triangle (9)</b>	Very low	Flat Dense residential development Hawthorn hedges Lombardy poplars	Low	Moderate to Low	Low
<b>Ferry Hill Fringe</b>	Very low	River terraces Fragmented Residential development	Low	Moderate	Moderate
<b>Lake Hayes Basin (15)</b>	Very Low	Containment Residential development Amenity trees	Low	High	Low The main aspects of visual amenity are the lake, Slope Hill and Threepwood
<b>Dalefield Rural Residential Zone (5)</b>	Very low	Amenity trees Domestication Residential development	Low	Moderate	Moderate to low
<b>Millbrook/The Hills (21)</b>	Very low	Manicured Residential development Amenity trees	Low	Low to moderate	Low in the main. High around the fringes (the ridgelines)

Key

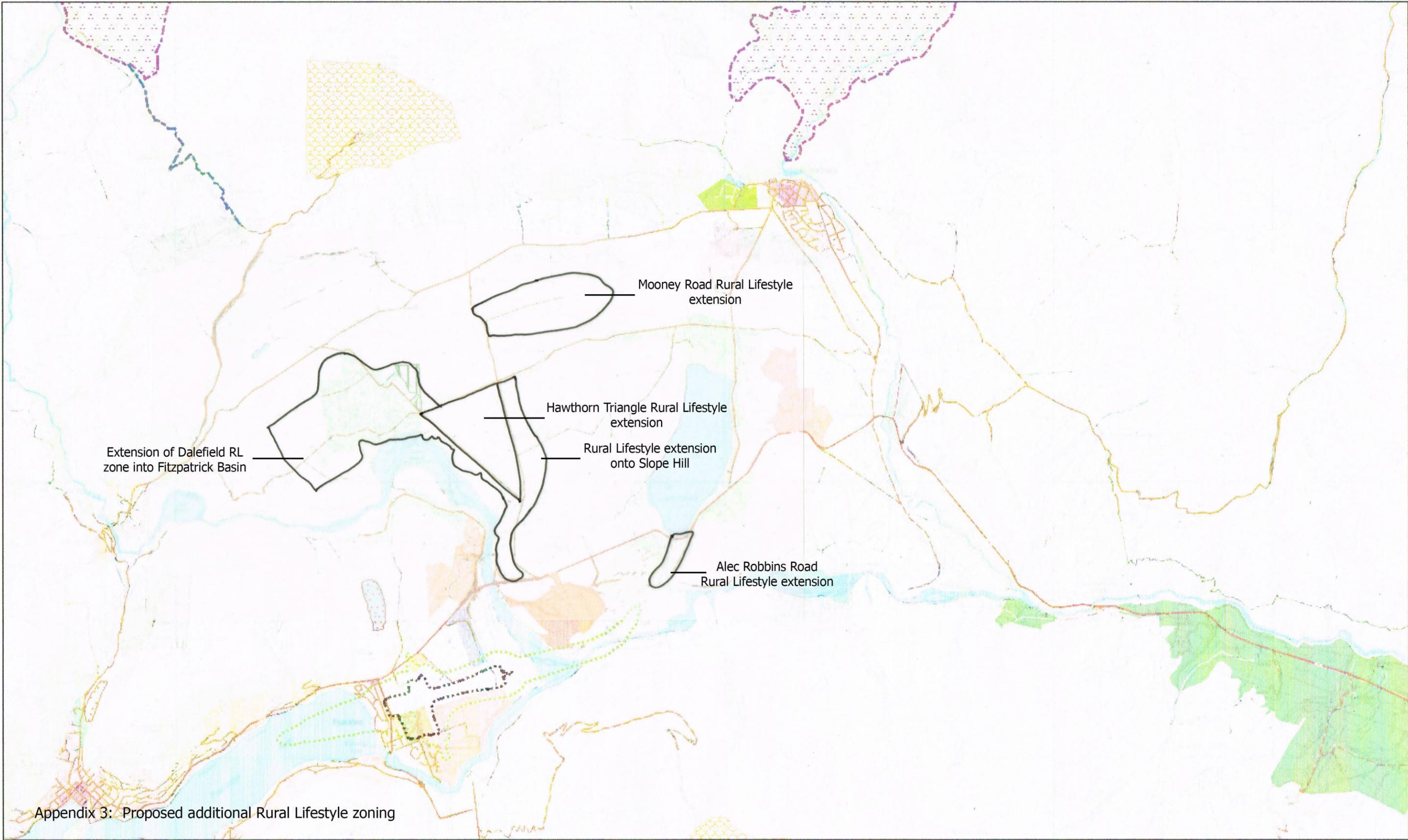
- 1 Roche moutonnee (ONF)
- 2 Malaghans Valley
- 3 Mooney Road Valley
- 4 Malaghans Ridge
- 5 Dalefield Rural Lifestyle Zone
- 6 Fitzpatrick Basin
- 7 Littles Stream Valley
- 8 Arthurs Point Basin
- 9 Hawthorn Triangle
- 10 North Slope Hill
- 11 North Hawthorn
- 12 Speargrass Valley
- 13 North Lake Hayes
- 14 Slope Hill Valley
- 15 Lake Hayes Basin
- 16 MacDonnell Road Valley
- 17 Crown Terrace
- 18 Arrow River Margins
- 19 Ladies Mile
- 20 Alec Robbins Road
- 21 Millbrook / The Hills
- 22 Morven Ferry
- 23 Bendemeer / Hogans Gully
- 24 Arrow Junction



Appendix 2: Landscape Units

The map is an approximate representation only and must not be used to determine the location or size of items shown, or to identify legal boundaries. To the extent permitted by law, the Queenstown Lakes District Council, their employees, agents and contractors will not be liable for any costs, damages or loss suffered as a result of the data or plan, and no warranty of any kind is given as to the accuracy or completeness of the information represented by the GIS data. While reasonable use is permitted and encouraged, all data is copyright reserved by Queenstown Lakes District Council. Cadastral information derived from Land Information New Zealand. CROWN COPYRIGHT RESERVED





Appendix 3: Proposed additional Rural Lifestyle zoning

The map is an approximate representation only and must not be used to determine the location or size of items shown, or to identify legal boundaries. To the extent permitted by law, the Queenstown Lakes District Council, their employees, agents and contractors will not be liable for any costs, damages or loss suffered as a result of the data or plan, and no warranty of any kind is given as to the accuracy or completeness of the information represented by the GIS data. While reasonable use is permitted and encouraged, all data is copyright reserved by Queenstown Lakes District Council. Cadastral information derived from Land Information New Zealand. CROWN COPYRIGHT RESERVED

Appendix 4: Raw analysis of District Plan provisions S 4 and S 5

Plan provision	Character focus	Visual focus	Appropriateness	Proposed change
<b>Objective 1 - Character and Landscape Value</b> <b>To protect the character and landscape value of the rural area by promoting sustainable management of natural and physical resources and the control of adverse effects caused through inappropriate activities.</b>	Character reference positive	Use of 'landscape value' in conjunction with character suggests / implies that it is entirely visual	OK but could be improved by rewording. You do have to wonder if this is appropriate as the first objective for the rural area, however. What about productive value?	Amend: To protect the landscape character and visual amenity...
Policies: 1.1 Consider fully the district wide landscape objectives and policies when considering subdivision, use and development in the Rural General Zone.	Comprehensive	Comprehensive	Entirely appropriate	
1.2 Allow for the establishment of a range of activities, which utilise the soil resource of the rural area in a sustainable manner.			N/a	
1.3 Ensure land with potential value for rural productive activities is not compromised by the inappropriate location of other developments and buildings.	Relates to character to some degree		Yes.	
1.4 Ensure activities not based on the rural resources of the area occur only where the character of the rural area will not be adversely impacted.	Entirely focused on character.		Entirely appropriate but could be strengthened.	Amend: Ensure activities not based on the rural resources of the area including residential development occur only where the character of the rural area will not be adversely impacted.
1.5 Provide for a range of buildings allied to rural productive activity and worker accommodation.			N/a	
1.6 Avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects of development on the landscape values of the District.	Character focus		OK but wording could be improved.	Amend: Avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects of development on the landscape character of the District.
1.7 Preserve the visual coherence of the landscape by ensuring all structures are to be located in areas with the potential to absorb change.		Visual focus but leaning towards seeing (!) landscape character as a visual matter.	'Visual coherence' is technical jargon.	Amend: Preserve the visual amenity of the landscape by ensuring all structures are to be located in areas with the potential to absorb change. Preserve the character of the landscape by ensuring all structures are to be located in areas with the potential to absorb change.
1.8 Avoid remedy or mitigate the adverse effects of the location of structures and water tanks on skylines, ridges, hills and prominent slopes.		Visual	Very specific for a policy.	Amend?
1.9 Ensure adverse effects of new commercial Ski Area activities on the landscape and amenity values are avoided or mitigated.	Mixed	Mixed	Clarify	Amend: Ensure adverse effects of new commercial Ski Area activities on the landscape character and visual amenity are avoided or mitigated.
<b>5.2.1 Environmental Results Anticipated</b> <b>The following environmental results are anticipated in the Rural General zones:</b> (i) The protection of outstanding natural landscapes and features from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.			(i) simply restates the Act. Do we not want more?	
(ii) Maintenance and enhancement of openness and naturalness of outstanding natural landscapes and features.	As above.		Needs to be amended to recognise that many ONLs are not open in the sense of being forested.	Amend: Maintenance and enhancement of the natural character of outstanding natural landscapes and features.
(iii) Strong management of the visual effects of subdivision and development within the visual amenity landscapes of the district.		Focus on visual effects complete	Needs to be amended to protect the character of the VAL too.	Amend: Strong management of the effects of subdivision and development on the landscape character within the VAL. Strong management of the visual effects of subdivision and development on the visual amenity of persons.
(iv) Enhancement of natural character of the visual amenity landscapes.	Character		Natural character is not required to be enhanced by the Act – it is the maintenance and enhancement of amenity	Amend: Maintenance and enhancement of the character of the visual amenity landscapes.
(v) A variety in the form of settlement pattern within visual amenity landscapes based upon on the absorption capacity of the environment.	Reads as a character issue	Interpreted as a visual issue	Should be amended to be consistently about character.	Amend: A variety in the form of settlement pattern within visual amenity landscapes based upon on the absorption capacity of the landscape character area.
(vi) Retention and enhancement of the life-supporting capacity of the soil and vegetation.			N/a	
(vii) The continued development and use of land in the rural area.			Very strange! I wonder if the intent was to support farming activity?	Delete or clarify.
(viii) Avoid potential land uses and land management practices, which create unacceptable or significant			N/a	

conflict with neighbouring land based activities, including adjoining urban areas.				
(ix) Maintenance of a level of rural amenity, including privacy, rural outlook, spaciousness, ease of access and quietness, consistent with the range of permitted rural activities in the zone.	Issues of character, to some degree. Privacy, spaciousness, quietness, ease of access	Issues of visual amenity, to some degree. Rural outlook	OK in as far as it goes. Good idea to list (somewhere) rural character features and the specific threats which exist to them.	Amend
(x) Retention of the amenities, quality and character of the different rural environments within the District, and development and structures which are sympathetic to the rural environment by way of location and appearance.	Acknowledges that there are different character areas		Could be clearer.	Amend: Retention of the amenities, quality and character of the different rural environments within the District, and development and structures which are sympathetic to the landscape character by way of location and appearance.
(xi) Retention of a range of recreation opportunities.			N/a	
(xii) Utilisation of mineral resources within the District, providing that the scale of each operation and its effects, both short and long-term, are appropriate to its environment.			N/a	
<p><b>5.4 Resource Consents - Assessment Matters - Rural Zones</b></p> <p><b>5.4.2 Assessment Matters</b></p> <p>In considering whether or not to grant consent or impose conditions, the Council shall in addition to considering any other relevant matters apply the following terms and criteria:</p> <p><b>5.4.2.1 Landscape Assessment Criteria – Process</b></p> <p>There are three steps in applying these assessment criteria. First, the analysis of the site and surrounding landscape; secondly determination of the appropriate landscape category; thirdly the application of the assessment matters. For the purpose of these assessment criteria, the term “proposed development” includes any subdivision, identification of building platforms, any building and associated activities such as roading, earthworks, landscaping, planting and boundaries.</p> <p>Step 1- Analysis of the Site and Surrounding Landscape</p> <p>An analysis of the site and surrounding landscape is necessary for two reasons. Firstly it will provide the necessary information for determining a sites ability to absorb development including the basis for determining the compatibility of the proposed development with both the site and the surrounding landscape. Secondly it is an important step in the determination of a landscape category - i.e. whether the proposed site falls within an outstanding natural, visual amenity or other rural landscape.</p> <p>An analysis of the site must include a description of those existing qualities and characteristics (both negative and positive), such as vegetation, topography, aspect, visibility, natural features, relevant ecological systems and land use.</p> <p>An analysis of the surrounding landscape must include natural science factors (the geological, topographical, ecological and dynamic components of the landscape), aesthetic values (including memorability and naturalness), expressiveness and legibility (how obviously the landscape demonstrates the formative processes leading to it), transient values (such as the occasional presence of wildlife; or its values at certain times of the day or of the year), value of the landscape to Tangata Whenua and its historical associations.</p> <p>Step 2 - Determination of Landscape Category</p> <p>This step is important as it determines which district wide objectives, policies, definitions and assessment matters are given weight in making a decision on a resource consent application.</p> <p>The Council shall consider the matters referred to in Step 1 above, and any other relevant matter, in the context of the broad description of the three landscape categories in Part 4.2.4 of this Plan, and shall determine what category of landscape applies to the site subject to the application.</p>			This process is highly problematic. If the RMA amendments proceed this will become largely redundant. It should simply refer people to the maps.	Delete. Possibly replace.

<p>In making this determination the Council, shall consider:  (a) to the extent appropriate under the circumstances, both the land subject to the consent application and the wider landscape within which that land is situated; and  (b) the landscape maps in Appendix 8.  Step 3 - Application of the Assessment Matters  Once the Council has determined which landscape category the proposed development falls within, each resource consent application will then be considered:  First, with respect to the prescribed assessment criteria set out in Rule 5.4.2.2 of this section;  Secondly, recognising and providing for the reasons for making the activity discretionary (see para 1.5.3(iii) of the plan [p1/3]) and a general assessment of the frequency with which appropriate sites for development will be found in the locality.</p>				
<p><b>5.4.2.2 Assessment Matters</b>  <b>(1) Outstanding Natural Landscapes (Wakatipu Basin) and Outstanding Natural Features – District wide.</b>  These assessment matters should be read in the light of two further guiding principles. First that they are to be stringently applied to the effect that successful applications for resource consent will be exceptional cases. Secondly, existing vegetation which:  (a) was either  • planted after; or  • self seeded and less than 1 metre in height at - 28 September 2002; and  (b) obstructs or substantially interferes with views of the landscape (in which the proposed development is set) from roads or other public places  - shall not be considered:  (1) as beneficial under any of the following assessment matters unless the Council considers the vegetation (or some of it) is appropriate for the location in the context of the proposed development; and  (2) as part of the permitted baseline.  - nor shall removal of such vegetation be considered as a positive effect of any proposal.</p>			<p>Fine, although the rider about existing vegetation is very hard to implement.</p>	
<p><b>(a) Effects on openness of landscape</b>  In considering whether the proposed development will maintain the openness of those outstanding natural landscapes and features which have an open character at present when viewed from public roads and other public places, the following matters shall be taken into account:</p>	<p>Confuses character (openness) with visual amenity.</p>	<p>Confuses character with visual amenity</p>	<p>Issue with 'openness' as above.   Focus on character not visual effects.</p>	<p>Amend the whole section:  (a) Effects on landscape character  In considering whether the proposed development will maintain or enhance the natural character of outstanding natural landscapes and features the following matters shall be taken into account:</p>
<p>(i) whether the subject land is within a broadly visible expanse of open landscape when viewed from any public road or public place;</p>	<p>Confuses character (openness) with visual amenity</p>	<p>Confuses character with visual amenity</p>		<p>(i) the natural character of the subject land and its landscape context.</p>
<p>(ii) whether, and the extent to which, the proposed development is likely to adversely affect open space values with respect to the site and surrounding landscape;</p>	<p>Confuses character (openness) with visual amenity</p>	<p>Confuses character (openness) with visual amenity</p>		<p>(ii) whether, and the extent to which, the proposed development is likely to adversely affect the natural character of the site and surrounding landscape;</p>
<p>(iii) whether the site is defined by natural elements such as topography and/or vegetation which may contain and mitigate any adverse effects associated with the development.</p>		<p>(iii) focuses entirely on visual effects</p>		<p>Delete</p>
<p><b>(b) Visibility of development</b>  In considering the potential visibility of the proposed development and whether the adverse visual effects are minor, the Council shall be satisfied that:</p>		<p>Focus on visual amenity along is fine.</p>		
<p>(i) the proposed development will not be visible or will be reasonably difficult to see when viewed from public roads and other public places and in the case of proposed development in the vicinity of unformed legal roads, the Council shall also consider present use roads for vehicular and/or pedestrian, equestrian and other means of access; and</p>		<p>Works well.</p>	<p>Might want to consider if private visual amenity should be included also.</p>	<p>Amend:  (i) the proposed development will not be visible or will be reasonably difficult to see when viewed from public roads and other public places and in the case of proposed development in the vicinity of unformed legal roads, the Council shall also consider present use roads for vehicular and/or pedestrian, equestrian and other means of access. The proposed development will not</p>

				have an adverse effect on private visual amenity which is more than minor.
(ii) the proposed development will not be visually prominent such that it dominates or detracts from public or private views otherwise characterised by natural landscapes; and	Confuses character and visual amenity	Confuses character and visual amenity	Separate visual and character.	Amend: (ii) the proposed development will not be visually prominent such that it dominates or detracts from public or private views.
(iii) the proposal can be appropriately screened or hidden from view by any proposed form of artificial screening, being limited to earthworks and/or new planting which is appropriate in the landscape, in accordance with Policy 4.2.5.11 (b).		Confuses of character and visibility	Appropriate that visual screening be in keeping with the character of the landscape.	
(iv) any artificial screening or other mitigation will detract from those existing natural patterns and processes within the site and surrounding landscape or otherwise adversely affect the natural landscape character; and	Confuses character and visibility	Confuses character and visibility	Actually seems redundant as (iii) seems to have it covered.	
(v) the proposed development is not likely to adversely affect the appreciation of landscape values of the wider landscape (not just the immediate landscape).	Confuses character and visibility	Confuses character and visibility	OK but a very low threshold to meet. Needs clarification.	Amend: the proposed development is not likely to adversely affect the visual amenity of the wider landscape (not just the immediate landscape).
(vi) the proposal does not reduce neighbours' amenities significantly.	Amenities such as noise etc are part of character.	Visual amenity focus.	Needs splitting. Also a significant reduction in amenity seems a lot bigger to me that a significant adverse effect on amenity.	Amend: the proposal does not have a significant adverse effect on the neighbours' rural amenities
<b>(c) Visual coherence and integrity of landscape</b> In considering whether the proposed development will adversely affect the visual coherence and integrity of the landscape and whether these effects are minor, the Council must be satisfied that:	These are (confusingly) actually part of what should be considered in the landscape character assessment.			
(i) structures will not be located where they will break the line and form of any ridges, hills and any prominent slopes;				
(ii) any proposed roads, earthworks and landscaping will not affect the naturalness of the landscape;	Confuses character and visibility		Needs to be focused on visual issues	Amend: any proposed roads, earthworks and landscaping will not adversely affect the visual amenity of the landscape;
(iii) any proposed new boundaries will not give rise to artificial or unnatural lines or otherwise adversely (such as planting and fence lines) affect the natural form of the landscape.	Confuses character and visibility.		There are character and visual aspects to this issue.	Amend: Any proposed new boundaries will not give rise to artificial or unnatural lines or otherwise adversely (such as planting and fence lines) affect the visual amenity of the landscape; Include (somewhere): Any proposed new boundaries will not give rise to patterns in the landscape which would adversely affect the character of the landscape;
<b>(d) Nature Conservation Values</b> In considering whether the proposed development will adversely affect nature conservation values and whether these effects are minor with respect to any ecological systems and other nature conservation values, the Council must be satisfied that:			Really an ecological issue and within the realm of an ecologist's expertise. Perhaps this section should be moved from the landscape section?	Amend.
(i) the area affected by the development proposed in the application does not contain any indigenous, ecosystems including indigenous vegetation, wildlife habitats and wetlands or geological or geomorphological feature of significant value;			Geological or geomorphological features are not part of nature conservation. Their significance also requires expertise beyond that of most LAs.	Amend
(ii) the development proposed will not have any adverse effects that are more than minor on these indigenous ecosystems and/or geological or geomorphological feature of significant value;				
(iii) the development proposed will avoid the establishment of introduced vegetation that have a high potential to spread and naturalise (such as wilding pines or other noxious species).			This is both a landscape matter (both character and visual amenity) as well as an ecological issue.	
(e) Cumulative effects of development on the landscape In considering the potential adverse cumulative effects of the proposed development on the natural landscape with particular regard to any adverse effects on the wider values of the outstanding natural landscape or feature will be no more than minor, taking into account: (i) whether and to what extent existing and potential development (ie. existing resource consent or zoning) may already have compromised the visual coherence	Confuses character and visual amenity	Confuses character and visual amenity	Visual coherence is something which is considered in the assessment of character. This should be amended, and possibly split.	Amend: whether and to what extent existing and potential development (ie. existing resource consent or zoning) may already have compromised the natural character of the landscape  whether and to what extent existing and potential development (ie. existing resource consent or zoning) may already have compromised the visual amenity of

and naturalness of the landscape;				the landscape
(ii) where development has occurred, whether further development is likely to lead to further degradation of natural values or domestication of the landscape or feature such that the existing development and/or land use represents a threshold with respect to the site's ability to absorb further change;	Focus is on character.		Terrribly waffly and hard to understand.	Amend: Where development has occurred and affected the natural character of the landscape, whether further development would likely degrade the landscape to the point at which its natural character or outstandingness was compromised.
(iii) whether, and to what extent the proposed development will result in the introduction of elements which are inconsistent with the natural character of the site and surrounding landscape;	Character.		Actually fine.	
(iv) whether these elements in (iii) above will further compromise the existing natural character of the landscape either visually or ecologically by exacerbating existing and potential adverse effects;	Confuses character and visual amenity	Confuses character and visual amenity		Amend: whether these elements in (iii) above will further compromise the existing natural character of the landscape by exacerbating existing and potential adverse effects
(v) where development has occurred or there is potential for development to occur (ie. existing resource consent or zoning), whether further development is likely to lead to further degradation of natural values or domestication of the landscape or feature.			What does it mean???	
<b>(f) Positive Effects</b> In considering whether there are any positive effects in relation to remedying or mitigating the continuing adverse effects of past inappropriate subdivision and/or development, the following matters shall be taken into account: (i) whether the proposed activity will protect, maintain or enhance any of the ecosystems or features identified in (f) above which has been compromised by past subdivision and/or development;			Really the field of an ecologist.	
(ii) whether the proposed activity provides for the retention and/or re- establishment of native vegetation and their appropriate management, particularly where native revegetation has been cleared or otherwise compromised as a result of past subdivision and/or development;	Goes to character.		Possibly should have input of an ecologist	
(iii) whether the proposed development provides an opportunity to protect open space from further development which is inconsistent with preserving a natural open landscape, particularly where open space has been compromised by past subdivision and/or development	Confusing, but about character			Amend: whether the proposed development provides an opportunity to protect land from further development which is inconsistent with preserving the natural character of the landscape, particularly where it has been compromised by past subdivision and/or development
(iv) whether the proposed development provides an opportunity to remedy or mitigate existing and potential adverse effects (ie. structures or development anticipated by existing resource consents) by modifying, including mitigation, or removing existing structures or developments; and/or surrendering any existing resource consents;			Application of this is a bit difficult as these types of activities have to be volunteered by the applicant, in my understanding.	
<b>(g) Other Matters</b> In addition to consideration of the positive effects (i) - (iv) in (f) above, the following matters shall be taken into account, but considered with respect to those matters listed in (a) to (e) above: (i) the ability to take esplanade reserves to protect the natural character and nature conservation values around the margins of any lake, river, wetland or stream within the subject site;			N/a	
(ii) the use of restrictive covenants, easements, consent notices or other legal instruments otherwise necessary to realise those positive effects referred to in (f) (i) - (v) above and/or to ensure that the potential for future effects, particularly cumulative effects, are avoided			N/a	
<b>(2) Outstanding Natural Landscapes (District Wide)</b> <b>(a) Potential of the landscape to absorb development</b> In considering the potential of the landscape to absorb development both visually and ecologically, the following	Confuses character with visual amenity	Confuses character with visual amenity	Same issues re openness.	Amend: In considering the potential of the landscape to absorb development the following matters shall be taken into account consistent with retaining and enhancing natural character:

matters shall be taken into account consistent with retaining openness and natural character:				
(i) whether, and to what extent, the proposed development is visible from public places;		Straight issue of visual amenity.	OK. I think that visual matters should go together somewhere.	
(ii) whether the proposed development is likely to be visually prominent to the extent that it dominates or detracts from views otherwise characterised by natural landscapes;	Confuses character and visual amenity.	Confuses character and visual amenity		Amend: whether the proposed development is likely to be visually prominent to the extent that it dominates or detracts from the visual amenity provided by the ONL
(iii) whether any mitigation or earthworks and/or planting associated with the proposed development will detract from existing natural patterns and processes within the site and surrounding landscape or otherwise adversely affect the natural landscape character;	Character only.		OK	
(iv) whether, with respect to subdivision, any new boundaries are likely to give rise to planting, fencing or other land use patterns which appear unrelated to the natural line and form of the landscape; wherever possible with allowance for practical considerations, boundaries should reflect underlying natural patterns such as topographical boundaries;	Confuses character and visual amenity.	Confuses character and visual amenity	Needs splitting.	Amend: Any proposed new boundaries will not give rise to artificial or unnatural lines or otherwise adversely (such as planting and fence lines) affect the visual amenity of the landscape; Include (somewhere): Any proposed new boundaries will not give rise to patterns in the landscape which would adversely affect the character of the landscape;
(v) whether the site includes any indigenous ecosystems, wildlife habitats, wetlands, significant geological or geomorphologic features or is otherwise an integral part of the same;			Requires ecological expertise.	
(vi) whether and to what extent the proposed activity will have an adverse effect on any of the ecosystems or features identified in (v);			Should be done by an ecologist.	
(vii) whether the proposed activity introduces exotic species with the potential to spread and naturalise.	Goes to both character and visual amenity	Goes to both character and visual amenity	OK	
<b>(b) Effects on openness of landscape.</b> In considering the adverse effects of the proposed development on the openness of the landscape, the following matters shall be taken into account: (i) whether and the extent to which the proposed development will be within a broadly visible expanse of open landscape when viewed from any public road or public place and in the case of proposed development in the vicinity of unformed legal roads, the Council shall also consider present use and the practicalities and likelihood of potential use of unformed legal roads for vehicular and/or pedestrian, equestrian and other means of access; and		Visual issue as presented	Issue around openness	
(ii) whether, and the extent to which, the proposed development is likely to adversely affect open space values with respect to the site and surrounding landscape;	Sounds like a character issue		What are 'open space values'?	Amend
(iii) whether the proposed development is defined by natural elements such as topography and/or vegetation which may contain any adverse effects associated with the development.	Could be character	Could be visual	Should be split	Amend
(c) Cumulative Effects on Landscape Values In considering whether there are likely to be any adverse cumulative effects as a result of the proposed development, the following matters shall be taken into account: (i) whether, and to what extent, the proposed development will result in the introduction of elements which are inconsistent with the natural character of the site and surrounding landscape;	Character.		Pretty good.	
(ii) whether the elements identified in (i) above will further compromise the existing natural character of the landscape either visually or ecologically by exacerbating existing and potential adverse effects	Confuses character and visual amenity.			Amend
(iii) whether existing development and/or land use represents a threshold with respect to the site's ability to absorb further change;	As before			
(iv) where development has occurred or there is potential for development to occur (ie. existing resource consent or zoning), whether further development is	AS before		I'm thinking that not only could assessment matters regarding visual amenity be simplified and made just one section, but so could cumulative effects.	

likely to lead to further degradation of natural values or inappropriate domestication of the landscape or feature.				
(d) Positive Effects In considering whether there are any positive effects associated with the proposed development the following matters shall be taken into account: (i) whether the proposed activity will protect, maintain or enhance any of the ecosystems or features identified in (a)(v) above;			Really ecologists domain. Could alter it to talk about natural character.	
(ii) whether the proposed activity provides for the retention and/or re-establishment of native vegetation and their appropriate management;			Will it enhance natural character?	
(iii) whether the proposed development provides an opportunity to protect open space from further development which is inconsistent with preserving a natural open landscape; (iv) whether the proposed development provides an opportunity to remedy or mitigate existing and potential (ie. structures or development anticipated by existing resource consents) adverse effects by modifying, including mitigation, or removing existing structures or developments; and/or surrendering any existing resource consents; (v) the ability to take esplanade reserves to protect the natural character and nature conservation values around the margins of any lake, river, wetland or stream within the subject site; (vi) the use of restrictive covenants, easements, consent notices or other legal instruments otherwise necessary to realise those positive effects referred to in (i)- (v) above and/or to ensure that the potential for future effects, particularly cumulative effects, are avoided.			These are pretty much all the same as those already considered above.	
<b>(3) Visual Amenity Landscapes</b>				
(a) Effects on natural and pastoral character In considering whether the adverse effects (including potential effects of the eventual construction and use of buildings and associated spaces) on the natural and pastoral character are avoided, remedied or mitigated, the following matters shall be taken into account:			Issue that natural character is an ONL quality, not a VAL quality. It should probably just refer to character.	Amend: (a) Effects on landscape character In considering whether the adverse effects (including potential effects of the eventual construction and use of buildings and associated spaces) on the character of the landscape are avoided, remedied or mitigated, the following matters shall be taken into account
(i) where the site is adjacent to an Outstanding Natural Landscape or Feature, whether and the extent to which the visual effects of the development proposed will compromise any open character of the adjacent Outstanding Natural Landscape or Feature;	Confuses visual effects with character effects	Confuses visual effects with character effects	Should probably be split into two assessment matters, one referring to possible impacts on the character of the ONL and one referring to the visual amenity of the ONL.	Amend: (i) where the site is adjacent to an Outstanding Natural Landscape or Feature, whether and the extent to which the effects of the development proposed will compromise the character of the adjacent Outstanding Natural Landscape or Feature; (ii) where the site is adjacent to an Outstanding Natural Landscape or Feature, whether and the extent to which the visual effects of the development proposed will compromise the visual amenity of the adjacent Outstanding Natural Landscape or Feature;
(ii) whether and the extent to which the scale and nature of the development will compromise the natural or arcadian pastoral character of the surrounding Visual Amenity Landscape;	Character only		The scale and nature of a development in one location may be appropriate in one location but not in another. Problems with 'arcadian'	Amend: (ii) whether and the extent to which the scale and nature of the development will compromise the character of the surrounding Visual Amenity Landscape
(iii) whether the development will degrade any natural or arcadian pastoral character of the landscape by causing over-domestication of the landscape;	Character only		Problems with 'arcadian' – such landscapes are domesticated almost by definition.	Amend: (iii) whether the development will degrade the character of the landscape by causing over-domestication
(iv) whether any adverse effects identified in (i) - (iii) above are or can be avoided or mitigated by appropriate subdivision design and landscaping, and/or appropriate conditions of consent (including covenants, consent notices and other restrictive instruments) having regard to the matters contained in (b) to (e) below;			OK but I can't remember ever seeing this referred to.	
(b) Visibility of Development Whether the development will result in a loss of the natural or arcadian pastoral character of the landscape, having regard to whether and the extent to which:	Confuses character and visual effects	Confuses character and visual effects	Needs to be altered (maybe a single section referring to the visual amenity of all landscape categories?)	Amend: Whether the development will result in a loss of the visual amenity of the landscape, having regard to whether and the extent to which:
(i) the proposed development is highly visible when viewed from any public places, or is visible from any public road and in the case of proposed development in		About visibility	Really is asking what the extent of the zone of theoretical (or actual) visibility is. I've always had trouble with 'highly visible' as something is either visible	Amend: The extent of the Zone of Theoretical Visibility. In the case of proposed development in the vicinity of

the vicinity of unformed legal roads, the Council shall also consider present use and the practicalities and likelihood of potential use of unformed legal roads for vehicular and/or pedestrian, equestrian and other means of access; and			or it is not.	unformed legal roads, the Council shall also consider present use and the practicalities and likelihood of potential use of unformed legal roads for vehicular and/or pedestrian, equestrian and other means of access; and
(ii) the proposed development is likely to be visually prominent such that it detracts from public or private views otherwise characterised by natural or arcadian pastoral landscapes;	Confuses character and visual effects	Confuses character and visual effects		Amend: (ii) the proposed development is likely to be visually prominent such that it detracts from public or private views;
(iii) there is opportunity for screening or other mitigation by any proposed method such as earthworks and/or new planting which does not detract from or obstruct views of the existing natural topography or cultural plantings such as hedge rows and avenues;		Relates quite clearly to mitigation of visual effects	Probably not a bad assessment matter. Possibly could be improved but not a matter of urgency. Need to have a closer look at what the GILVA says about mitigation. This is an area where visual effects and character intersect – you don't want visual effects mitigated at the expense of landscape character. This is a key issue!	Amend: (iii) there is opportunity for screening or other mitigation by any proposed method such as earthworks and/or new planting which does not detract from or obstruct views of the existing natural topography or cultural plantings such as hedge rows and avenues; and which is in keeping with the character of the landscape.
(iv) the subject site and the wider Visual Amenity Landscape of which it forms part is enclosed by any confining elements of topography and/or vegetation;		Visual.	Never really understood the bit about the wider landscape. Makes sense if referring to locating development where it is less visible because of existing topography or vegetation.	Amend: The development site is enclosed by any confining elements of topography or existing vegetation which limit its visibility from public and private locations.
(v) any building platforms proposed pursuant to rule 15.2.3.3 will give rise to any structures being located where they will break the line and form of any skylines, ridges, hills or prominent slopes;		Visual	Have commented before. Classical aesthetics.	
(vi) any proposed roads, earthworks and landscaping will change the line of the landscape or affect the naturalness of the landscape particularly with respect to elements which are inconsistent with the existing natural topography;	Confuses character and visual effects	Confuses character and visual effects	Two issues. One is the visibility of earthworks and their effect on visual amenity, the other is the effect of earthworks on the character of the landscape (dog turd mounding for eg)	Amend: (vi) any proposed roads, earthworks and landscaping will change the line of the landscape and adversely affect its visual amenity particularly with respect to elements which are inconsistent with the existing natural topography;.
(vii) any proposed new boundaries and the potential for planting and fencing will give rise to any arbitrary lines and patterns on the landscape with respect to the existing character;	Confuses character and visual effects	Confuses character and visual effects	Two issues – one on character, the other on visual amenity. Appropriate with regard to character but not in regard to visual amenity.	Amend: (vii) any proposed new boundaries and the potential for planting and fencing will give rise to any arbitrary lines and patterns on the landscape with respect to the existing visual amenity.
(viii) boundaries follow, wherever reasonably possible and practicable, the natural lines of the landscape and/or landscape units;	Relates to character and visual	Relates to character and visual	Does this include garden boundaries? I think that this could be in both a section on visibility and one on character.	
(ix) the development constitutes sprawl of built development along the roads of the District and with respect to areas of established development.	Character issue	Not visual issue	Ass mat is OK but it shouldn't be in a section on visual effects.	Remove from this section
(c) Form and Density of Development			Never really understood what this section was about.	
In considering the appropriateness of the form and density of development the following matters the Council shall take into account whether and to what extent: (i) there is the opportunity to utilise existing natural topography to ensure that development is located where it is not highly visible when viewed from public places;		Visibility	OK except for the bit about 'highly visible'	Amend: (i) there is the opportunity to utilise existing natural topography to ensure that development is located where it is not visually prominent when viewed from public places;
(ii) opportunity has been taken to aggregate built development to utilise common access ways including pedestrian linkages, services and open space (ie. open space held in one title whether jointly or otherwise);	Character issue		OK	
(iii) development is concentrated in areas with a higher potential to absorb development while retaining areas which are more sensitive in their natural or arcadian pastoral state;	Confuses character with visibility	Confuses visibility with character effects.	Never clear what 'area' means in this context, nor what 'absorbing development' means as it can have a character and a visual interpretation. I noted as I wrote the proposed amendments that the location with the lowest visibility and the location with the least impact on landscape character might not be the same place.	Amend: (iii) development is concentrated in the parts of the site(s) where they will be least visible from public and private locations. (iii) development is concentrated in the parts of the site(s) where they will have the least impact on landscape character.
(iv) the proposed development, if it is visible, does not introduce densities which reflect those characteristic of urban areas.	Confuses visibility with character.	Confuses visibility with character.	What is the issue here? Seems to imply that if you can't see it you can create a small town in a RG area. Definitely to do with character.	Amend: (iv) the proposed development does not introduce densities which approach those characteristic of urban areas.
(v) If a proposed residential building platform is not located inside existing development (being two or more houses each not more than 50 metres from the nearest point of the residential building platform) then on any application for resource consent and subject to all the other criteria, the existence of alternative locations or methods:			Question is, is clustering development a good idea? If no then this should be removed, as it is, but could be replaced with something which requires the consideration of the density of development in the vicinity of the proposal. Guess that's part of character assessment anyway. Perhaps it's as simple as defining 'vicinity' clearly?	

(a) within a 500 metre radius of the centre of the building platform, whether or not: (i) subdivision and/or development is contemplated on those sites; (ii) the relevant land is within the applicant's ownership; and (b) within a 1,100 metre radius of the centre of the building platform if any owner or occupier of land within that area wishes alternative locations or methods to be taken into account as a significant improvement on the proposal being considered by the Council - must be taken into account.				
(vi) recognition that if high densities are achieved on any allotment that may in fact preclude residential development and/or subdivision on neighbouring land because the adverse cumulative effects would be unacceptably large.	Character issue		Not really an assessment matter.	Delete?
(d) Cumulative effects of development on the landscape In considering whether and the extent to which the granting of the consent may give rise to adverse cumulative effects on the natural or arcadian pastoral character of the landscape with particular regard to the inappropriate domestication of the landscape, the following matters shall be taken into account: (i) the assessment matters detailed in (a) to (d) above;	Framed as a clear character issue	Should have some visual aspects too		
(ii) the nature and extent of existing development within the vicinity or locality;	Basic issue of landscape character.		Never been sure how this is applied. Perhaps there should be a section of assessment matters outlining how to determine the character of the landscape in the vicinity.	
(iii) whether the proposed development is likely to lead to further degradation or domestication of the landscape such that the existing development and/or land use represents a threshold with respect to the vicinity's ability to absorb further change;	Character		Needs rewording – hard to understand, and how do you set the threshold?	Amend: (iii) whether the proposed development is likely to lead to further degradation or domestication of the landscape such that it will cause a significant alteration in the character or quality of the landscape in the vicinity.
(iv) whether further development as proposed will visually compromise the existing natural and arcadian pastoral character of the landscape by exacerbating existing and potential adverse effects;	Visual effects don't compromise character	Visual focus	Needs rewording – previous ass mat dealt with character, this one can deal with visual matters.	Amend: (iv) whether further development as proposed will visually compromise the existing visual amenity of the landscape by exacerbating existing and potential adverse effects;
(v) the ability to contain development within discrete landscape units as defined by topographical features such as ridges, terraces or basins, or other visually significant natural elements, so as to check the spread of development that might otherwise occur either adjacent to or within the vicinity as a consequence of granting consent;	Confuses character and visual effects	Confuses character and visual effects.	Implies a sort of precedent effect, which is really saying that if we allow this development to alter the character of an area, will that mean more development will be consented? I think this should be made more clear.	Amend: (v) the ability to contain development within discrete landscape units as defined by topographical features such as ridges, terraces or basins, or other significant natural elements, so as to check the extent of the visual effects of the development. (v) the ability to contain development within discrete landscape units as defined by topographical features such as ridges, terraces or basins, or significant natural elements, so as to check the extent of the effects on the landscape character of the development
(vi) whether the proposed development is likely to result in the need for infrastructure consistent with urban landscapes in order to accommodate increased population and traffic volumes;	Character issue		Have never seen a development in risk of doing this. I rather wonder if it is needed in the RG zone?	
(vii) whether the potential for the development to cause cumulative adverse effects may be avoided, remedied or mitigated by way of covenant, consent notice or other legal instrument (including covenants controlling or preventing future buildings and/or landscaping, and covenants controlling or preventing future subdivision which may be volunteered by the applicant).	Character and visual	Character and visual	OK	
Note: For the purposes of this assessment matter the term "vicinity" generally means an area of land containing the site subject to the application plus adjoining or surrounding land (whether or not in the same ownership) contained within the same view or vista as viewed from: · from any other public road or public place frequented by the public and which is readily visible from that public road or public place; or · from adjacent or nearby residences. The "vicinity or locality" to be assessed for cumulative	Confuses character and visibility	Confuses character and visibility	Needs the issues separated out.  I think this is the same as the Zone of Theoretical Visibility, or is perhaps a subset of it?	Amend:

effect will vary in size with the scale of the landscape i.e. when viewed from the road, this "vicinity", will generally be 1.1 kilometre in either direction, but maybe halved in the finer scale landscapes of the inner parts of the Wakatipu basin, but greater in some of the sweeping landscapes of the upper Wakatipu and upper Clutha.				
(e) Rural Amenities In considering the potential effect of the proposed development on rural amenities, the following matters the Council shall take into account whether and to what extent: (i) the proposed development maintains adequate and appropriate visual access to open space and views across arcadian pastoral landscapes from public roads and other public places; and from adjacent land where views are sought to be maintained;	Rural amenity is part of character.		Ability to have views across the countryside is a feature of character.	OK
(ii) the proposed development compromises the ability to undertake agricultural activities on surrounding land;			Looking for reverse sensitivity issues. Agricultural activities not really about rural amenity. Should be a separate area out from landscape.	
(iii) the proposed development is likely to require infrastructure consistent with urban landscapes such as street lighting and curb and channelling, particularly in relation to public road frontages;	Character		Repeats the assessment under Cumulative effects.	Delete?
(iv) landscaping, including fencing and entrance ways, are consistent with traditional rural elements, particularly where they front public roads.	About character.		Could be clearer.	Amend: Landscaping, including fencing and entrance ways, are consistent with the existing landscape character of the vicinity.
(v) buildings and building platforms are set back from property boundaries to avoid remedy or mitigate the potential effects of new activities on the existing amenities of neighbouring properties.	About character		Appropriate.	
<b>(4) Other Rural Landscapes</b> Where it has been determined that the proposed development is not within a ONL or VAL but otherwise within the Rural General zone consideration of the potential effects of the development shall include taking into account whether and the extent to which: (i) the proposed development will be complementary or sympathetic to the character of adjoining or surrounding visual amenity landscape;	Character		Not at all sure what 'complementary or sympathetic to' actually means. Also, assumes ORLs are adjoining or surrounded by VALs and most I can think of are adjacent to ONLs.	Amend: (i) the proposed development will be complementary or sympathetic to the character of adjoining or surrounding landscape;
(ii) the proposed development will be visible from public roads or from neighbour's properties		About visibility – assumes that being visible is bad.	Visibility is not an effect. The answer to this question is yes or no, or, possibly, partly. There needs to be a second part.	Amend: (ii) the extent to which the proposed development will be visible from public roads or from neighbour's properties, and the extent of the effect of this visibility on the visual amenity of persons at those locations.
(iii) the proposed development utilises existing topography or vegetation to integrate the development into the landscape and reduce its visibility;		Visual effects	Not problematic	
(iv) the proposed development will adversely affect the naturalness and rural quality of the landscape through inappropriate landscaping including earthworks and planting as a result of any proposed mitigation or increased domestication;	Character		Introduces naturalness again – this is a feature of S6 landscapes not ones not covered by the RMA! Doesn't actually make sense.	Amend: (iv) the proposed development will adversely affect the rural character of the landscape through inappropriate landscaping, including earthworks and planting for proposed mitigation; or increased domestication;
(v) landscaping as a result of development maintains and/or enhances historic or cultural patterns although it is acknowledged that this assessment matter is not necessarily consistent with others e.g. (iii) and (iv) above or (vii) below;	Character		Fine I think .	
(vi) the proposed development is complementary or sympathetic to, or can be co-ordinated with, existing or proposed development on adjoining or adjacent properties in terms of landscaping, roof design, roof materials and/or colours, and other external materials and/or colours;	Character		Is OK but is it necessary?	
(vii) the proposed development is designed and/or intended to be carried out in a comprehensive manner taking into account the topography of the site, the size and configuration of the property being developed, the extent and nature of existing or proposed development on adjoining or adjacent properties, and the	Character		This is a process assessment rather than a landscape one. I guess it is attempting to direct the manner of development.	

opportunities for shared access and/or shared amenities;				
(viii) the nature and extent of building setbacks and/or earthworks and/or landscaping can create buffers to avoid or mitigate the potential effects of development on adjoining properties, public roads or public places.	Character? (Rural amenity)	Visual amenity?	Unclear what it is on about.	
(ix) the proposed subdivision is part of a co-ordinated development plan incorporating any balance land (outside the proposed subdivision) in the same ownership;			Same ownership as what?	
(x) here is an opportunity to provide a communal passive or active recreational area which is accessible to residents outside the subdivision as well as within the subdivision;			Why?	
(xi) the proposed development does not introduce densities which reflect those characteristic of urban areas;	Character		OK	
(xii) the proposed development maintains the rural amenities of the neighbourhood.	Character		OK.	
<p>xi Restricted Discretionary Activity - Tree Planting</p> <p>In considering the effects of plantings on the views from any public road, the Council shall take into account the following matters:</p> <p>(a) The classification of the surrounding landscape, and the effects of the planting on the landscape values.</p> <p>(b) The topography of the site in relation to the road.</p> <p>(c) The location of the trees, including their orientation to the road.</p> <p>(d) In considering the species type proposed, the Council will take into account the following matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the potential for wilding spread;</li> <li>- the positive effects associated with the planting of indigenous species;</li> <li>- the density of foliage;</li> <li>- whether the species are deciduous or evergreen.</li> </ul> <p>(e) The purpose of the proposed planting; considering whether the planting is necessary for farming activities, or is for amenity purposes.</p> <p>(f) Whether and to what extent the proposed plantings will, or have the potential to at maturity, block views from the public road.</p>			These assessment matters are really good, but don't seem to relate to anything else in the plan! I've never used them.	

**APPENDIX 8**

**QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT PLAN REVIEW HIGH LEVEL REVIEW OF  
PROPOSED DISTRICT PLAN PROVISIONS  
DATED 20 NOVEMBER 2014**

# **QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT PLAN REVIEW**

## **LANDSCAPE ISSUES**

### **HIGH LEVEL REVIEW OF PROPOSED DISTRICT PLAN PROVISIONS**

**Ben Espie (Landscape Planner)**

**vivian+espie**

**20 November 2014**

## INTRODUCTION

- 1 The Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) is currently undertaking its District Plan Review. Some draft proposed chapters of a reviewed District Plan have been prepared. I have been engaged to conduct a brief, high level review of some proposed chapters of the District Plan as they relate to landscape issues.
- 2 The information that I have been asked to consider was given to me on the 6<sup>th</sup> of November 2014 and takes the form of:
  - A report by Marion Read entitled “Wakatipu Basin Residential Subdivision and Development: Landscape Character Assessment”, dated June 2014 (the Read report).
  - A draft of a proposed Chapter 5 – Landscape
  - A draft of a proposed Chapter 13 – Rural Zone
  - A draft of a proposed Chapter 14 – Gibbston Character Zone
  - A draft of a proposed Chapter 15 – Rural Residential and Lifestyle.
- 3 As discussed, I have been engaged to provide brief high level review comments; therefore I will only comment on the more important issues as I see them and my comments will often not go into specific detail. While I give some direction on how I consider proposed provisions could usefully be changed, I will not set out detailed alternative provisions. A more detailed review would be likely to uncover more issues for discussion.
- 4 I give my review comments in relation to the documents in the order that is set out in my paragraph 2 above. Many of the comments that I make in relation a specific chapter can equally be applied to other chapters but to avoid repetition, I only discuss each matter once. Therefore, I will not give specific comments on the Gibbston Character or Rural Living Zones, since it will be clear from my other comments what my main opinions are on those draft chapters.

## REVIEW COMMENTS ON THE READ REPORT

- 5 I generally agree with the *Introduction* and *Background* sections of the Read report. I agree that useful direction can be taken from the European Landscape Convention and that the definitions cited by Dr. Read have direct application to our situation in New Zealand and the Queenstown Lakes District. I agree that the U.K.'s "Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment" represents the landscape planning profession's current best practice methodology in terms of considering the effects of activities on landscape and visual amenity; and I endorse using this methodology when formulating District Plan provisions.
- 6 I will not discuss the *Wakatipu Basin: Current Condition* section of the Read Report in any detail. I accept that a comprehensive landscape character assessment of the Wakatipu Basin would be a useful tool; it would provide a landscape baseline description against which the effects of activities on landscape character could be considered. However, I consider that this would most appropriately sit outside the District Plan and would be a descriptive document rather than one that sets goals and policies. It should be borne in mind that the preservation of the existing landscape character of a particular area is not a goal in its own right; in some cases, the existing landscape character of a given vicinity can change over time (through development, changes in management practices or other alterations) in a way that is either not adverse or is positive.
- 7 I generally agree with the concept that if we are to accommodate significantly increased population in rural areas into the future, creating new or extended areas of zoning (Dr. Read generally endorses areas of Rural Lifestyle Zone in this regard) is a better large scale solution in terms of landscape character than allowing a uniform increased density of residential use across the rural areas. I tentatively question whether the Rural Lifestyle Zone (with its 1 hectare minimum, 2 hectare average lot size provision) genuinely reflects the community's aspirations in terms of how best to use areas that are identified as being suitable for rural living.
- 8 I also will not discuss the *Potential Management Methods* section of the Read report or Appendix 4 in detail, although my initial thought is that I would agree with much of Dr. Read's criticisms of the current provisions. I generally agree with the premise that the Wakatipu Basin is a part of the District's rural land that requires some separate provisions (most likely Objectives and Policies) in terms of landscape issues. This is primarily because I believe that the community has different

aspirations for it, in terms of landscape character and visual amenity, than the rural lands of the District in general. A similar situation probably applies to a few other areas as well (such as Gibbston Valley and perhaps some part of the inner upper Clutha basin). My initial thoughts are that these areas could have some separate Objectives and/or Policies that apply to them to reflect the community's aspirations in terms of landscape character, but need not be separate zones or separate landscape categories.

## REVIEW COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT PROPOSED CHAPTER 5 - LANDSCAPE

- 9 I endorse the concept of a District Plan chapter on landscape issues that over-arches the various zones. Such a chapter provides District-wide direction against which future proposed Plan Changes, alterations to zone boundaries, etc. can be considered.
- 10 The draft chapter sets out 9 Objectives. Objectives 3, 4, 5 and 6 each deal with an individual landscape category. I agree with the concept of combining the current District Plan's two sub-categories of Outstanding Natural Landscape (ONL) into one category. I also agree with the concept of categorising all rural land that is not within an ONL or ONF as one category. I am unsure whether the Wakatipu Basin needs to be given a separate landscape category or whether it could be dealt with via two or three Policies under the Rural Landscapes Objective (the same could perhaps be said in relation to the Gibbston Valley and possibly the inner upper Clutha basin); to my initial thinking, the Wakatipu Basin is a subset of the District's rural landscapes, rather than a separate type of landscape altogether.

### **Objective 1 and its Policies**

- 11 Objective 1 appears to be intended to be the main over-arching Objective for landscape matters in the District in general. The Policies under it deal with ONLs and ONFs but also with high level landscape matters generally. The remaining Objectives deal with more specific matters. I consider that Objective 1 is not well worded. The use of the term "distinctive landscapes" is confusing. It is unclear whether this term refers to all of the District's landscapes, only the ONLs, or some other subset of our landscapes. Given that the Act and the District Plan refer to ONLs

and ONFs, I do not see any merit in introducing another term; “distinctive landscapes” into the District Plan.

- 12 Additionally, if I have read the intention of Objective 1 correctly, I believe that it should more fully and clearly set out the overall goal or goals for our landscapes. It may have a sentence relating to ONLs and ONFs, a sentence relating to the rural landscapes that are not ONLs or ONFs, and a sentence giving overall direction regarding landscape management.
- 13 The Policies given under Objective 1 appear generally appropriate, although some wording could be made clearer. Policy 5.3.1.5 is confusing in that it seems to elevate cultural, historic, geological and Tangata Whenua issues above all others in the management of ONLs and ONFs.

### **Objective 2 and its Policies**

- 14 Objective 2 and its Policies relate to cumulative effects of activities on landscapes. I support the concept of having a specific Objective on this matter; the management of incremental cumulative effects in rural landscapes being a difficult issue. The Objective is sensible and clear, although I question the use of the term “avoid”. To completely avoid changes in landscape character over time, given expected population growth, seems impossible and perhaps contrary to the community’s aspirations. Policies 5.3.2.1 and 5.3.2.2 seem to reinforce the avoidance approach.
- 15 I accept the general premise that the bulk of population growth over upcoming decades should be catered for by specific zones (residential, rural living, etc.), however it seems unrealistic (and again, possibly discordant with community aspirations) to freeze the rural zone in its present-day state. I consider that an appropriate goal in relation to cumulative effects is to allow the rural landscape to evolve over time (as all landscapes do) but to disallow changes that lead to significant incremental adverse degradation of landscape character; i.e. allow landscape character to change over time provided that the emerging landscape character is not of a significantly lower value than the previously existing character. This will mean that some characteristics and qualities that are currently valued may be lost over time, but will be replaced by new or altered qualities and characteristics.

### **Objective 3 and its Policies**

- 16 This Objective relates to ONFs. It seems unusual that this Objective uses the wording “protect”, while Objective 4 uses the wording “maintain and enhance”. The latter appears more appropriate. The Objective might also give some guidance on what aspects of the ONFs are to be maintained and enhanced, perhaps referring to landscape character (maybe even itemising aspects such as geomorphology, ecology, hydrology, human influence and management, aesthetic and perceptual factors - openness, naturalness, etc.) and the visual amenity that the features provide.
- 17 The Policies seek avoidance of activities that would not protect, maintain or enhance ONFs, or that would degrade the character or visual amenity of the ONFs, which is generally appropriate, although again, more guidance on exactly what aspects should be maintained and enhanced would be helpful. The issue of disallowing development that is in the vicinity of an ONF (but not within the ONF) that would degrade the character of the ONF or the visual amenity that it provides, has always been problematic. “In the vicinity of” is not defined and I have seen it interpreted in vastly differing ways, causing confusion. In some parts of the District, residential or industrial zones immediately about ONFs. I do not see this as problematic; a hard line between a developed area and an ONF can be entirely appropriate. I am therefore unconvinced that this Policy adds anything useful.

#### **Objective 4 and its Policies**

- 18 This Objective relates to ONLs. My comments above apply again; the more guidance on exactly what aspects of the ONLs should be maintained and/or enhanced, the better. This also applies to Policies 5.3.4.1 and 5.3.4.3; specific characteristics or aspects of value to be maintained and enhanced would be most useful. The protection of existing landscape character without any qualification is a very inflexible goal. Character should be able to evolve provided it does not get significantly worse. The Policy regarding Cardrona Valley seems out of place and unusually prescriptive.

#### **Objectives 5 and 6 and their Policies**

- 19 These Objectives and Policies relate to the rural landscapes that are not ONLs or ONFs. Objective 6 is very general while Objective 5 is a bit more specific. I consider that one Objective

could deal with all rural land that is not part of an ONL or ONF. A few Policies could then relate to the Wakatipu Basin particularly. I consider that the Gibbston Valley could be dealt with in the same way. Again, I believe that it would be helpful if the Objective gave some more guidance on what is sought for these landscapes. This might hark back to Dr. Read’s sentiment that the landscape character of the vicinity in which an activity is proposed should be assessed, described and then effects that degrade this character should be avoided, remedied or mitigated. Again, avoiding any alteration to existing character should not be the goal; character must be able to evolve but not become of lower and lower merit.

### **Objective 7 and its Policies**

- 20 This Objective relating to lakes and rivers appears generally appropriate. Again, wording should be consistent through all of these provisions and “maintain or enhance” seems the best option. Also, rather than “landscape values”, “landscape character and visual amenity provided by” seems the better option and should be used throughout. The Policies relate to jetties, moorings and structures. Perhaps they should also give guidance regarding a broader range of activities including surface of water activities such as commercial recreation operations.

### **Objective 8 and its Policies**

- 21 This may be covered elsewhere in the proposed District Plan but I question why these indigenous biodiversity provisions stress the visual aspect of indigenous biodiversity.

### **Objective 9 and its Policies**

- 22 The wording of this Objective seems somewhat clumsy and confusing. Again, I question whether an entire separate zone is needed for the Gibbston Valley and whether the term “distinctive landscapes” should be used.

### **Summary regarding Chapter 5**

- 23 In brief, I support the simplification of the landscape categories but think that they could be simplified further. I consider that Objectives and Policies relating to each landscape category should then be more explicit in setting out what aspects of landscape character and visual

amenity should be maintained or enhanced in each case. This would give more guidance to users of the District Plan. Wording needs to be made more consistent throughout these Objectives and Policies. The goal of avoiding changes to landscape character in any of these categories is not legitimate. I accept that landscape character must not be allowed to incrementally become of less and less merit but landscape character and the type of visual amenity that it provides must be allowed to evolve over time. The wording of Objectives and Policies should reflect this.

## **REVIEW COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT PROPOSED CHAPTER 13 – RURAL ZONE**

- 24 Some of the provisions of the Rural Zone relate to landscape issues and some do not. I will only comment on those that do. I will not repeat comments that I have made above in relation to the Landscape chapter but some of these apply equally to the Rural Zone and subsequent chapters, particularly my comments relating to consistency of wording.

### **Objective 1 and its Policies**

- 25 The zone purpose is generally encapsulated in the first Objective of any chapter of the District Plan and this is the case with the proposed Rural Zone provisions. In terms of area, the vast majority of the District's Rural Zone is high altitude, mountainous country that is managed by farming in a particularly extensive (rather than intensive) way. I question whether the zone purpose and first Objective should not reflect this situation more closely. Enabling and supporting farming activity is obviously vital but enabling and supporting any activities that manage the land cover of this vast area is of equal merit.

### **Objective 5 and its Policies**

- 26 These provisions relating to the Ski Area Sub-Zones are similar to provisions of the operative District Plan and seem generally appropriate. Expansion and consolidation of ski area activities to cater for the growing tourist market over upcoming decades is obviously an important goal for the District. An issue that has often come up in relation to expansion of operations within these sub-zones over the past decade is that of access to the zones from the main roading network.

These sub-zones are often islands, separated from the roading network. In addition, expansion of ski areas to become world-class operations catering for future growth has meant that gondola access has often been discussed. Two of the four Ski Area Sub-Zones have gondola operations consented. My initial thought is that the District Plan should deal with this access issue in some way and acknowledge that appropriate access to the sub-zones is an essential aspect of the desired ski area expansion.

### **Objective 7 and its Policies**

- 27 This Objective deals with subdivision and development in the Rural Zone. Along with its Policies, it simply highlights that the district-wide Landscape Chapter sets Objectives and Policies that relate to landscape issues and that development is disallowed in two particular Building Restriction Areas. My initial consideration is that this Objective and its Policies are not needed. A slightly expanded version of the text in Section 13.2.1 could make it clear that the relevant Objectives and Policies relating to landscape issues are found in the Landscape chapter. Presumably the rules of the Rural Zone make it clear that development is not provided for in the Building Restriction Areas.

### **Objective 8 and its Policies**

- 28 These provisions seek to disallow commercial activities in the Rural Zone that would degrade landscape values, amenity or restrict farming. This seems generally appropriate. The Policies then seek that any commercial activities are affiliated with farming activities. I question whether affiliation with farming activities is of any real relevance provided the landscape related effects of the activity are appropriate.

### **Objective 10 and its Policies**

- 29 This Objective relates to water bodies. The Policies touch on natural character but the more landscape focused provisions in relation to water bodies are found under Objective 7 of proposed Chapter 5. This seems appropriate but those Chapter 5 water body Policies are quite limited, as has been discussed.

### **Rules of Chapter 13**

- 30 While I will not comment on the Rules in detail, I make the following brief points.
- 31 Subdivision and development within an ONF or ONL is proposed to become non-complying rather than discretionary, as it currently is. The commentary that these activities are inappropriate in almost all locations within these landscape categories and that successful applications will be exceptional cases has been elevated to a Policy (5.3.1.3); in the operative District Plan this commentary is only included as a preamble to the relevant assessment matters. Given the inclusion of this Policy, I question why the status of the activity is proposed to be changed. Under the current District Plan over the last decade, subdivisions and developments that have successfully gained resource consent within ONFs and ONLs have been relatively few. These successful proposals have been through a very rigorous process and invariably have included considerable positive effects. I consider that a number of these proposals have significantly improved the state of the ONF or ONL within which they are located; often through enabling and ensuring land management regimes that would otherwise not have occurred. I do not see a resource management problem with the current regime that warrants the proposed change in activity status.
- 32 It appears that the intention of the proposed Rules is that a building within an approved building platform is a permitted activity subject to the related standards, although this is not entirely clear from the relevant Activity Table. If this is the intention, then I support it; however I have some concerns regarding the standards 13.4.2.43, 44 and 45. Standard 13.4.2.43 sets criteria in relation to colour. The light reflectance values (LRVs) in these criteria are extremely low. My initial feeling is that these could be increased by 6% or 7% without causing any problems. This would give more options to home builders and would reduce the need for unnecessary resource consent applications. Secondly, the criteria seek that colours are in the range of browns, greys or greens. My feeling is that this will unnecessarily direct people towards particularly bland colours. Research has shown that provided the LRV and greyness content of a colour are appropriate, then hue is not relevant to the degree of prominence that the colour displays in the landscape<sup>1</sup>. Additionally, only in ONFs and ONLs do the Objectives and Policies seek that buildings visually blend with natural elements. In the rural landscapes that are not ONFs or ONLs, the provisions generally seek that existing character is not degraded. In these

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<sup>1</sup>Hudson Associates. *City of Auckland District Plan - Hauraki Gulf Islands Section Review - Colour for Buildings*. A report for the Auckland City Council. September 2006; and Vivian+Espie. *District Plan Provisions Relating to Colours of Buildings – A Review of the Hauraki Gulf Islands Approach to Colour Provisions and the Applicability of this Approach to the Queenstown Lakes District*. A report to the Queenstown Lakes District Council. March 2013.

landscapes, existing character will often include colonially styled rural buildings; which are traditionally of brighter colours.

- 33 Standard 13.4.2.44 includes a building ground floor area of 300m<sup>2</sup>. If this is to be a total size for all buildings within a building platform (which is not clear), then this seems somewhat low given that rural properties often require at least one large shed/barn in addition to a dwelling. It seems that this could be increased without causing significant problems.
- 34 Standard 13.4.2.45 includes a building height of 8 metres. Over the last decade, the vast majority of resource consent applications for buildings within the Rural General Zone have included volunteered height restrictions considerably lower than this. An 8 metre high building in the rural landscape appears unusually high. Buildings of this height are likely to be discordant with the zone provisions that relate to visual effects. My initial feeling is that reducing this standard to 6 metres would give a clearer direction of what is intended.

### **The Assessment Criteria of Chapter 13**

- 35 The proposed Rural Zone provisions include two sets of assessment criteria; one for ONFs and ONLs and one for Rural Landscapes that are not ONFs or ONLs (the Wakatipu Basin category is included in this second set of criteria). I generally support the simplicity of this approach.
- 36 As a general point, I consider that the term “assessment matters” is preferable to “assessment criteria”. The use of the word “criteria” gives the impression that these are standards that can be either met or not. The word “matters” gives the impression that these are issues to be taken into account in the consideration of the merits of a proposal, which I believe is more accurate.
- 37 In the proposed draft provisions, the headings used for the sets of matters are:

#### ONFs and ONLs

- Effects on landscape character
- Visibility of development

#### Rural landscape

- Effects on landscape character
- Visibility of development

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • Tangata Whenua, biodiversity and geological values | • Form and density of development                    |
| • Cumulative effects of development on the landscape | • Cumulative effects of development on the landscape |
| • Positive effects                                   | • Positive effects                                   |
| • Other matters                                      | • Other matters                                      |

38 Given that these sets of headings are so similar, I consider that it would be simplest to use the same set of headings for both landscape categories. The headings for the proposed Gibbston Character Zone assessment matters are also identical and again, I consider that that zone could be incorporated in the proposed Rural Zone without significant difficulty. Given my initial view that the Wakatipu Basin landscape category (along with Gibbston Valley) could be incorporated into the Rural Landscapes category, some specific assessment matters might be included in this category that relate only to the Wakatipu Basin or Gibbston Valley. Overall, I consider that the Rural Landscapes list of headings given above could be used for both landscape categories.

39 The assessment matters for each landscape category should clearly stem from, and expand on, the guidance given by the Policies that relate to each category. As discussed previously, I consider that these Policies could be more explicit and descriptive in their wording so as to give clearer direction.

40 I give my comments regarding the assessment matters under each heading in the following paragraphs.

### **Effects on landscape character**

41 These assessment matters should expand on the Policies that relate to landscape character for each of the landscape categories. I consider that the proposed ONF/L matters are too brief. The Rural Landscape category matters are fuller but quite disparate. The matters should direct an assessment of the existing character of the relevant vicinity of landscape. Natural character will

be particularly important in the case on ONFs and ONLs. The matters might mention or list factors to be considered in relation to landscape character, such as:

- physical influences - geomorphology, ecology / land cover, hydrology,
- human influence and management – settlements, land management patterns, buildings, roads
- aesthetic and perceptual factors – scale, complexity, openness, memorability, wildness,
- The condition of the landscape and how it is valued.

42 The matters should then direct consideration to how the proposed activity will affect the existing character; whether the proposed activities will accord with existing character or not, and in the case of discordance, the degree of effect and whether it is adverse or not.

43 The Tangata Whenua, biodiversity and geological values assessment matter proposed for the ONF/L category appears that it could be incorporated into the matters under this heading.

### **Visibility of development**

44 I consider that “effects on visual amenity” is perhaps a better heading for these matters. After all, it is the effects of visibility that must be assessed, not just visibility per se. The assessment matters given in relation to both categories of landscape generally cover the relevant issues, although some wording could be made clearer.

45 In relation to ONFs and ONLs, the matters seek that “*the Council shall be satisfied that ... the proposed development will not be visible or will be reasonably difficult to see when viewed from public roads and other public places ...*” In the operative District Plan, this matter only applies to ONFs and ONLs of the Wakatipu Basin. It is proposed that it now applied to all ONFs and ONLs. While in broad terms appropriately maintaining the natural character of the District’s ONFs and ONLs will mean that built development should only occur if it is particularly inconspicuous, the ONLs of the District as a whole include some small areas of land that are not particularly outstanding or natural in themselves. Some suburban reserves, peri-urban areas adjacent to

urban development, small areas of intensively modified farmland, and other unusual pockets of land fall within the ONLs. In these areas, I do not see that completely hiding new built form from view is necessarily an appropriate goal. The inclusion of this assessment matter as it is currently worded appears too inflexible.

### **Form and density of development**

- 46 I consider that the matters under this heading are useful in that they can direct consideration of the specific design of development that is proposed. I consider that if these matters were expanded they could usefully be applied to both landscape categories.

### **Cumulative effects on the landscape**

- 47 I support the inclusion of some matters relating to cumulative effects under each landscape category. I consider that the matters proposed in relation to each category could be expanded slightly to better direct assessment. Including matters regarding cumulative effects on landscape character and cumulative effects on visual amenity separately may be useful.
- 48 I reiterate my comments in relation to the cumulative effects Objective and Policies. Ongoing evolution of landscape character should be provided for but significant degradation of merit should not.

### **Positive effects**

- 49 The matters proposed in relation to positive effects take account of issues such as the protection of geomorphology, protection of land from future development, enhancement of ecology and retention of productive use. This generally seems appropriate; however, I consider that a more general matter regarding environmental compensation should be included to direct consideration towards potential compensatory measures that the other matters do not list. Any measure that provides environmental or public benefit should be considered.

### **Other matters**

- 50 The assessment matters proposed under the “other matters” heading appear that they could be appropriately incorporated into a slightly expanded and reorganised configuration of the “positive effects” heading.

### **Summary regarding Chapter 13**

- 51 The Objectives and Policies of the draft proposed District Plan that relate to landscape are primarily given in the proposed Chapter 5, which seems appropriate. My consideration is that the Objectives and Policies of the proposed Chapter 13 could be revised slightly to give more clarity on some minor issues and leave Chapter 5 to give the Policy direction regarding landscape matters.
- 52 I question whether the status of buildings and subdivision in the ONFs and ONLs needs to change. I cannot see any problem that needs correcting in this regard.
- 53 I agree with the simplification of the assessment matters relating to landscape issues. However, I consider that further adjustments could be made to give clearer direction.

**Ben Espie (Landscape Architect)**

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**20 November 2014.**