

Mr Glenn Davis for QLDC – Summary of Evidence 02 May 2016
Hearing Stream 2 (Chapters 33 & 34)

1. Overall my evidence highlights the issues of the ODP with regards to protecting indigenous biodiversity, as well as providing the necessary scientific information on the ecological importance for: (1) updating the general clearance rules for indigenous vegetation in the Proposed District Plan (**PDP**), (2) identifying and scheduling Areas of Significant Indigenous Vegetation and Habitats (**SNAs**), (3) how irrigation and oversowing can be dealt with in regards to the definition of indigenous vegetation clearance, and (4), why the planting of certain wilding exotic tree species should be prohibited.
2. I first address the Indigenous Vegetation chapter. The current vegetation clearance provisions within the ODP have been problematic to apply in some parts of the District, in particular within highly modified ecosystems where the ecological values are less well understood. As a consequence the clearance of rare lowland, dryland ecosystems and threatened species has occurred within the District.
3. The vegetation clearing provisions put forward in the PDP provide a tiered approach based on the amount of indigenous vegetation cover remaining. This method elevates the importance of the lowland environments and should assist with halting the decline of lowland ecosystems and threatened species. I consider these provisions to be appropriate.
4. I was engaged by QLDC to identify, assess and include further SNAs, as outlined in Appendix 5 of the ODP. I have identified sites that I consider contain ecological values consistent with the assessment criteria. Consequently, the submissions that request the removal of 25 SNAs should be rejected, with the exception of SNAs on Hillend Station for the reasons set out in Mr Craig Barr's evidence.
5. With regards to the definition of indigenous vegetation clearance, there are two points of contention, the inclusion of 'irrigation' and 'oversowing' as methods of indigenous vegetation clearance. Both activities result in the

clearance of indigenous vegetation through competitive exclusion of native species, particularly in lowland, dryland environments.

6. I confirm that I have read those briefs of submitter evidence that are relevant to my area of expertise:
 - (a) I note the email from the Department of Conservation, attached to Mr Dent's evidence where they agree to withdraw their opposing further submission associated with NZ Ski's request to make indigenous vegetation clearance within the Ski Area Sub Zones on land managed by DoC a permitted activity. With regard to the new policy and rule (exemption) requested by Mr Dent in paragraphs 161 and 164, I prefer that 'Public Conservation Land' be changed to 'Conservation Act 1987' due to the different assessment focus between land governed under the Conservation Act and Reserves Act.
 - (b) I disagree with the changes requested by Mr Sean Dent, in paragraphs 152 and 155, as they are not consistent with the Purpose of Chapter 33.
 - (c) I agree with the evidence of Mr Brian Rance, paragraph 24 to 27, that the areas he identifies do meet the criteria within the PDP to be identified as SNAs. However, I consider the PDP adequately provides protection for areas outside of identified SNAs.
 - (d) I agree with evidence of Mr Peter Espie that LENZ and TEC have value as a broad scale planning tool. However, I disagree that this tool is not useful in assisting an assessment of the rarity of vegetation communities.
 - (e) I disagree with statements made by Mr Peter Espie, regarding the benefits of irrigation. From what I can determine his evidence shows the complete loss of all indigenous vegetation following irrigation.
7. Turning to the Wilding Exotic Trees chapter, the risks and destructive effects of wilding exotic trees on the indigenous biodiversity of the District are well established. Therefore, prohibiting exotic species that are a high risk of spread is in my view an appropriate approach.
8. In response to evidence filed relating to the Wilding Trees chapter:
 - (a) I agree with the evidence of Mr Brian Rance, paragraph 38, on the impractical nature of using 'sterile' plants.