

PC34 – LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

Remarkables Park Ltd Plan Change 34

Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects

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On behalf of Remarkables Park Ltd**

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REMARKABLES PARK LTD

**PLAN CHANGE 34:
ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS**

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INTRODUCTION

- 1 This report assesses the landscape and visual effects associated with proposed Plan Change 34 (PC34). PC34 is a private plan change requested by Remarkables Park Ltd, and seeks, among other things, to amend the current layout of activity areas (AA) within the Remarkables Park Special Zone (RPZ). The plan change will require the current Activity Area Structure Plan (Figure 1) replaced with the revised structure illustrated in Figure 2. A more detailed plan of proposed modifications to the activity areas is included with the plan change request documentation.
- 2 The rationale for PC34 and further details of the changes are discussed in the plan change request documentation prepared by Brown & Pemberton Planning Group.
- 3 The plan change request document identifies 13 components to the requested plan change. The majority of these components have no landscape or visual implications and are not addressed in this report. Those components of the change that are regarded as having landscape and visual implications are detailed in the following excerpts from the plan change request document:

3.1 Component [1] – expand Activity Area 5

To enable expansion of the existing commercial and retail centre in AA5 of the RPZ, to provide additional land for, in particular, large format retail (LFR) activities. The existing commercial/retail centre is located on the main road entrance to Remarkables Park from the west (via Lucas Place and Hawthorne Drive), and the expansion proposed is in two locations:

- Towards the east, on land presently in Activity Areas 4 and 6, to utilise the intervening land, within AA8, for carparking and landscaping; and
- To the north, on a property owned by RPL and presently within the Airport Mixed Use zone (AMUZ) (a 1.2131 hectare parcel of land (Lots 1 and 33, DP 304345, Certificate of Title 338091, hereafter referred to as CT338091).

3.2 Component [6] – changes to enable parking in AA4 and AA8

Vehicle parking is generally provided for and required (by Part 14 of the Plan) in conjunction with developments that create a need for parking. There may be some situations where parking may be promoted for convenience and efficiency, and not necessarily in conjunction with specific proposed buildings and/or activities. Such situations may arise in AA4 and AA8. An example is in the southern leg of AA8, between the new proposed U-shaped AA5 (see Component [1] above), which, given its location in relation to airport activities, is not suitable for buildings and not suitable for any activities other than vehicle access and parking, pedestrian routes, and landscaping.

3.3 Component [7] – changes to facilitate passenger ferry transport

The RPZ provisions for AA2a anticipate river transport opportunities. The logical location for a passenger ferry terminal for linking the RPZ with other locations (particularly the Queenstown CBD and Frankton Arm locations) is near the tip of the peninsula of AA2a adjacent to the mixed use

commercial and retail precinct of AA3. However, there are other opportunities for a secondary ferry stopping point further to the east (downstream), in AA2a adjacent to AA7.

3.4 Component [12] – height of buildings in AA8

3.12.1 Purpose of and reasons for Component [12] changes:

The height of buildings in AA8 (except in the southern leg of AA8, adjacent to AA5, in which buildings are prohibited) is currently 7 metres (zone standard 12.11.5.2(ii)). The activities promoted in AA8 are commercial recreational activities. Expected buildings are therefore those associated with a golf course, and potentially a gymnasium, or indoor facilities for sports, to complement outdoor recreational facilities. Buildings are likely to need to be higher than 7 metres. For commercial recreational facilities in AA8, a building height maximum of 18 metres is more suitable.

The maximum height of buildings in the adjoining AMUZ land is 9 metres, and in adjoining RPZ activity areas the maximum height is 18 metres. Proposed PC19, for land to the north of the airport, promotes building heights of between 10 and 18.5 metres. This PC19 land is more visible when viewed from the state highway in the forefront of the vistas to outstanding natural landscapes than AA8 land. Buildings up to 18 metres in AA8 are therefore appropriate in the context of landscape values.

3.12.2 Component [12] changes proposed:

The specific changes of PC34 Component [12] are:

- (a) In Site Standard 12.11.5.1(iii) (building height), add a new bullet point as follows:
 - Activity Area 8 9m
- (a) In Zone Standard 12.11.5.2(ii) (building height), in the row labelled “Activity Area 8”, delete “7m” and replace with “18m”.

4 In addressing likely landscape and visual effects of the components identified above, this report adopts the planning context of the existing RPZ as the baseline for the assessment of effects. The effects considered are those that differ from permitted activities, as provided for by the current Activity Areas of the zone.

5 Components [1] and [6] of PC34 are closely linked and will be addressed together in the following section.

COMPONENT [1] AND COMPONENT [6]—ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

6 The proposed expansion of AA5 to provide for large format retail (LFR).

Statutory context

7 The RPZ is described in section 12.10.1 of the Operative QLDC District Plan (DP). Urban development within the zone is guided by a series of Activity Areas (or sub-zones) that provide for a range of development strategies appropriate to location.

- 8 The activity areas (AA) primarily affected by the proposed change are AA8, AA4 and AA6. These areas are described in the DP in the following terms:

Activity Area 8 - Northern Perimeter Area

A significant “buffer” area of land formerly partly owned by Queenstown Airport Corporation Limited, this land is suitable for development for rural, recreational infrastructural facilities not of a noise sensitive nature. Much of it falls in close proximity to the airport and within higher noise control areas. As such residential activities, visitor accommodation and community activities are prohibited in this area within the Outer Control Boundary.

Activity Area 6 - North Urban Development Area

The building forms proposed for part of this area will secure a number of resource management outcomes including provision for higher density living and certain community activities utilising building designs which mitigate aircraft noise. This will enable close proximity for a significant number of residents to the Remarkables Park Commercial centre and other activities within the wider Frankton locality.

Activity Area 4 - Higher Density Housing

A significant proportion of this area is proposed to be devoted to higher density housing. Such housing will maximise views and sun and will be built at relatively high density.

- 9 The locations of these activity areas are illustrated in Figure 1

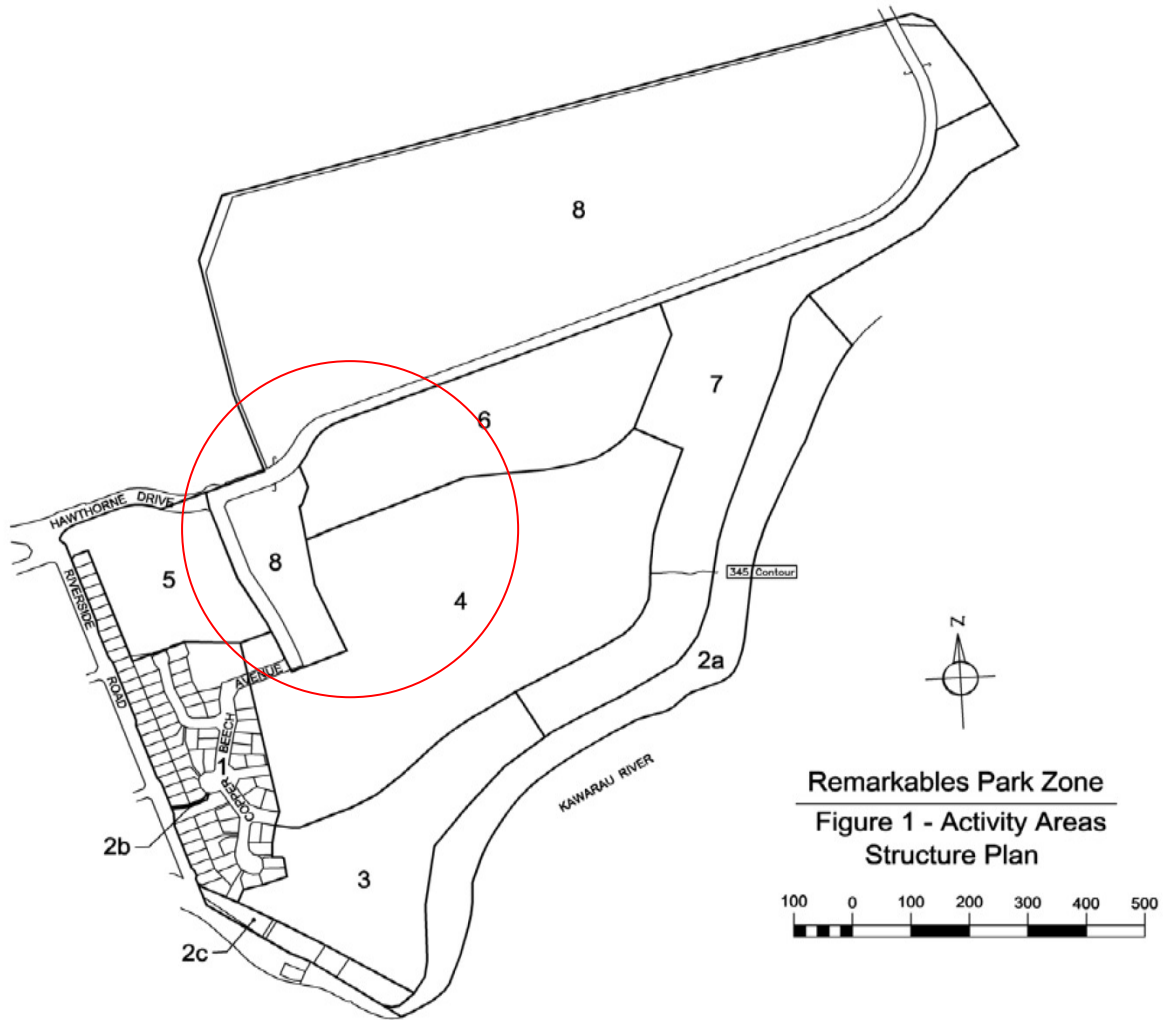


Figure 1: Current Remarkables Park Structure Plan

Development within the RPZ is currently subject to the Structure Plan included at page 12-90 of the DP.

The area to be affected by Components [1] and [6] of the requested plan change (circled in red) is immediately to the east of the south-west extension to Activity Area 8 (AA8), which is currently adjoined by AA6 (to the north) and AA4 (to the south).

- 10 PC34 will result in parts of AA4 and AA6 being replaced by an extension to AA5. AA5 is described in the DP in the following terms:

Activity Area 5 – Commercial / Retail area

Within an area in the northwest part of Remarkables Park, land is available for future retail and other commercial activities including office and service activities. As the first of the Activity Areas reached when arriving in the Zone by road, a true mixed-use approach is found here, including opportunities for education, visitor accommodation and carefully designed higher density residential activities.

- 11 In simple terms, PC34 will result in the introduction of commercial/retail activities (AA5) immediately east of AA8 in areas that are currently zoned for high density living and mixed use/community activities (AA6) and high density residential (AA4).
- 12 The purpose of AA8 will remain the same however, car parking will be a controlled activity within AA8 and AA4. This is a use that is not sensitive to airport operations, as is required by the policies applying to the Zone. A major constraint to the use of a portion of AA8 for uses other than car parking is its location immediately below the approach and departure line of the Queenstown Airport's cross-wind runway.

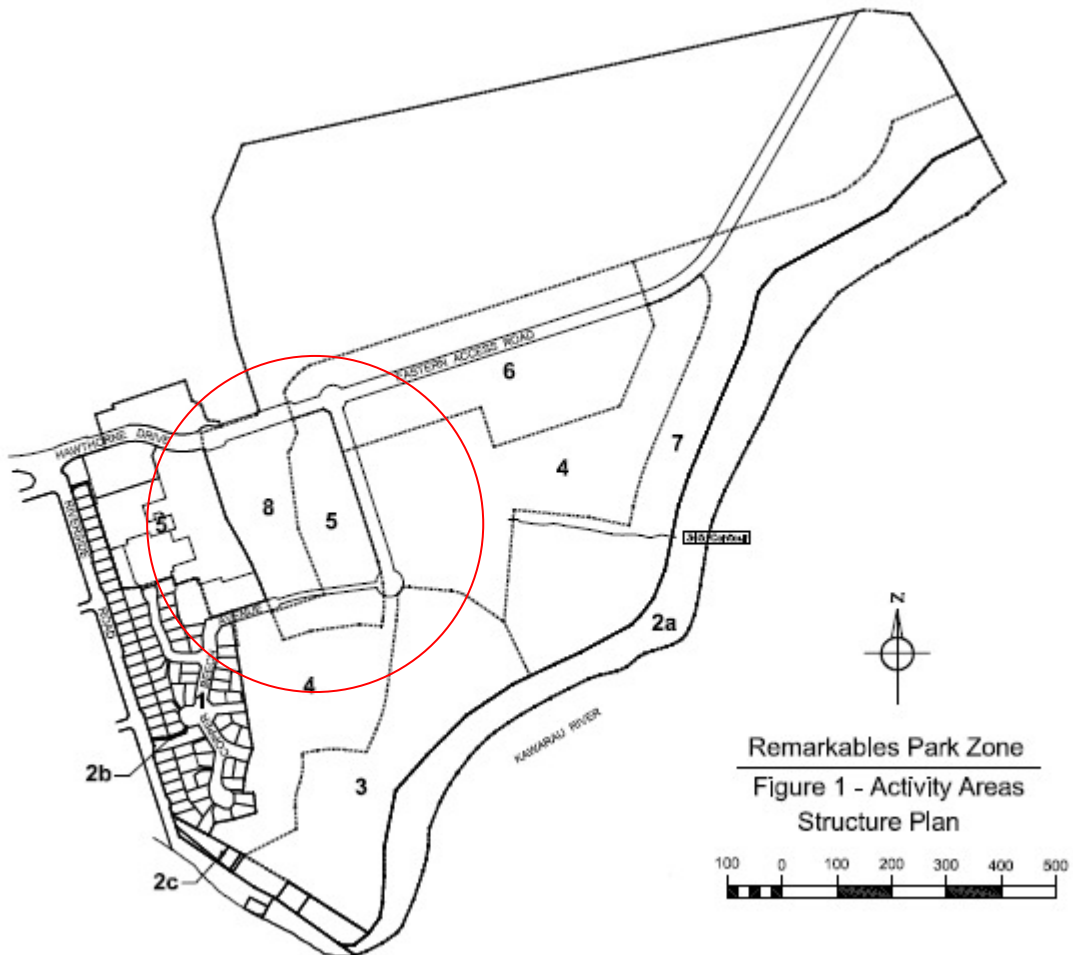


Figure 2 Proposed PC34 Remarkables Park Structure Plan

Figure 2 illustrates the modified structure plan proposed as part of the requested plan change. The most significant change is the introduction of an area of AA5 immediately to the east and south of AA8 (red circle). The proposed extension of AA5 will incorporate land that was formally part of AA4 and AA6.

- 13 The effects of PC34 on landscape and visual matters are considered with respect the relevant objectives and policies of the RPZ section (12.10.3) of the DP. The relevant assessment matters, objectives and policies, and the corresponding assessments against the relevant matters are set out in Appendices A and B to this report. This section of the report summarises the assessments found in the Appendices.

Landscape effects

- 14 PC34, if granted, will result in an area of land currently identified for high density residential and community/mixed use facilities (AA4 and AA6) replaced with an activity area that will permit commercial and retail development (AA5). As the DP already acknowledges the prospect of high density urban development at this location, the landscape effects of Component [1] of PC34 are of a relatively minor nature and not of an adverse nature, given the development the DP currently provides for.
- 15 The introduction of an activity area permitting large format retail and commercial activities may lead to a different pattern of open space and built form compared with what may occur with residential development, but this is not of itself an adverse effect.

Visual effects and amenity

- 16 There will be a change in landscape character through a change in the scale and form of structures that may be built for the purposes of large format retailing, compared with high density residential development. This relates to the larger footprint that individual buildings are likely to occupy, and the conventional design idiom characteristic of large format retail structures. While such structures may lack the design characteristics and qualities that may characterise a reasonable standard of high density residential development, large format retail structures are not unlike some of the large industrial-style buildings associated with aviation activities at Queenstown Airport.
- 17 The change in activity area status will lead to different visual amenity outcomes relative to what might occur at the locality in terms of the existing provisions of the DP. The actual design outcomes will be guided by additional changes to policies and assessment matters proposed in Component [11] of PC34.

18 The development of buildings within the area of AA8 extending south of the Eastern Access Road, is partly constrained by airport activities (the operation of the cross-wind runway). The introduction to Component [6] states that a portion of this area is suited only to “vehicle access and parking, pedestrian routes, and landscaping”. The visual and amenity effects of future car park development within this area of AA8 will depend upon the relative proportions of land given over to parking and soft landscape development. This is addressed in policies and methods, as follows:

- Policy 4 of Objective 2, which states, for Activity Areas 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8
 ...
 - *To require landscaping as part of any development.*
- a proposed modification of Policy 5 of Objective 8 (sought in Component [11]:
 - To ensure landscaping contributes to a distinct town identity, and has regard to important viewshafts.*
- A proposed addition to rule Rule 12.11.3.2(ii), after the words “Day Care Facilities” add the words “Parking Facilities”, a new matter of control is added:
 - *Landscaping within car parking areas*

19 The location and orientation of the southern part of AA8 is such that car parking and landscaping are unlikely to adversely affect important views. However regardless of views beyond the site extensive areas of car parking should be relieved with soft landscaping, particularly trees to avoid the potential for adverse visual and amenity effects. Also, rule 12.11.3.2(i), which sets out the matters over which the Council has reserved control over applications for buildings, includes “the location, layout and landscaping of, and access to, off-street carparks”. These are directly applicable to the southern part of AA8 given that car parking in this area could be utilised by buildings in the adjacent (expanded) AA5.

COMPONENT [7]—ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

20 Component [7] seeks changes to facilitate passenger ferry transport on the Kawarau River by recognising that there is potential for more than one stopping point for water-based ferry transport.

Statutory context

- 21 Part 12.10 of the DP currently provides for a terminal for ferry services, within Activity Area AA2a of the RPZ. Component [7] will provide for an additional stopping point(s) for ferry-based passenger transport on the Kawarau River. These proposed changes have implications for the natural character of the Kawarau River and its margins and consequently any development enabled by Component [7] will be subject to section 6(a) of the RMA. Section 6(a) requires:

[t]he preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment (including the coastal marine area), wetlands, and lakes and rivers and their margins, and the protection of them from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development.

Landscape and Visual Effects

- 22 While this component of PC34 will have implications for the natural character of the Kawarau River and its margins within Activity Areas AA2a and AA7, and within the Rural General zone (the zoning of the surface of the river), the actual effects will be assessed at the time resource consent is sought for a specific design proposal.

COMPONENT [12]—ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

- 23 Component [12] seeks modifications to the maximum building height for AA8. The specific changes of PC34 Component [12] are:
- (a) In Site Standard 12.11.5.1(iii) (building height), add a new bullet point as follows:
 - Activity Area 8 9m
 - (a) In Zone Standard 12.11.5.2(ii) (building height), in the row labelled “Activity Area 8”, delete “7m” and replace with “18m”.
- 24 As stated in the excerpt from the plan change request document quoted in paragraph 3.4 above, Plan Change 19 (PC19) for Frankton Flats land to the north of the airport provides for building heights of between 10 and 18.5 metres, as shown in the following excerpt from the Zone Standards section (12.20.5.2 (iv) Building Height of PC19:
- (c) Activity Areas C1 and C2: Beyond 200 metres from the State Highway: Maximum height is 18.5 metres, buildings can be a maximum of 6 storeys above ground level.
- 25 The provisions adopted by QLDC applying to Activity Areas C1 and C2 may result in 18.5 m high buildings within the foreground zone of views towards The Remarkables from SH6. Views from SH6 towards the area of PC34 will be mediated by the intervening landscape of AAC1 and C2. In such circumstances the proposed 18m maximum height of buildings within AA8 of PC34

will be of little relevance in the experience of views towards the Remarkables, and will not compromise the perception of The Remarkables as an outstanding natural landscape.

26 From within the RPZ, and from users of the Eastern Access Rd, built development within the larger part of AA8, and the area to which the 18m height limit will apply will be experienced in views towards the north. These views feature the outstanding natural feature of Ferry Hill, and the ONL of the Coronet Peak range from Coronet Peak to Brow Peak. Currently these views are across the relatively open expanse of landscape that is the Queenstown Airport, and are unimpeded by development within the land of PC19 or within AA8 of PC34. This will change as a consequence of the development of land affected by both plan changes.

27 The purpose of AA8 is described in the current DP as:

A northern perimeter area comprises Area 8 and has been created to function as a buffer zone enabling activities compatible with both the airport and other Remarkables Park Zone Activity Areas, and providing good separation between them.

28 The form of future development of AA8 is determined by the policy for the area:

- To enable the establishment of activities of a rural/recreational nature, infrastructural utilities and parking, that are not sensitive to nearby airport operations.

29 A further description of AA8 is given on page 12-69 of the DP:

Activity Area 8 - Northern Perimeter Area

A significant “buffer” area of land formerly partly owned by Queenstown Airport Corporation Limited, this land is suitable for development for rural, recreational infrastructural facilities not of a noise sensitive nature. Much of it falls in close proximity to the airport and within higher noise control areas. As such residential activities, visitor accommodation and community activities are prohibited in this area within the Outer Control Boundary.

30 While buildings are not precluded from AA8 (buildings are a controlled activity in AA8), the reference to “rural, recreational infrastructure facilities” and “activities of a rural/recreational nature” implies that the zone will retain extensive areas of open space. To the extent that buildings will be developed within this part of AA8, they will be intermittent and separated by open space that will function as viewshafts.

Landscape and visual effects

31 Component [12] of PC34 provides for the possibility that whatever buildings may be proposed for recreational purposes can be built to a maximum height of 18m. While such buildings will be visible, and prominently so, depending upon location relative to the Eastern Access Rd, this will

not lead to a situation in which visibility of the landscape to the north of the RPZ will be blocked by a wall of 18 m high buildings. Rather, the open space between buildings will provide for viewshafts to the north, in the same manner as PC19 requires in AAC1 and C2 to protect views to The Remarkables. Also, any application for structures between 9 and 18 metres would be a restricted discretionary activity and subject to review by the Remarkables Park Design Review Board, in accordance with Rule 12.11.3.3(ii)(b) of the RPZ.

CONCLUSIONS

- 32 Of the 13 separate components of the requested plan change, only Components [1], [6], [7] and [12] entail the prospect of landscape and visual effects. The specific nature of the effects will relate more to the details of specific development proposals for each activity area than to the zoning per se. Effective design-related policies and assessment guidelines and urban design considerations will contribute to satisfactory outcomes.

Components [1] and [6]

- 33 There will be a change in landscape character through a change in the scale and form of structures that may be built for the purposes of large format retailing, compared with high density residential development. A change to landscape character is not necessarily an adverse effect, and the character of large format retail structures will not be dissimilar to aviation-related structures at Queenstown Airport.
- 34 Car parking in AA8 will be relieved by soft landscape development, as required by rule 12.11.3.2(i), Car parking and related landscape development are unlikely to affect important views towards outstanding natural landscapes.

Component [7]

- 35 Provision for more than one ferry stopping point on the Kawarau River will have implications for the natural character of the river and its margins. However the question of adverse effects on the natural character of the river and its margins will be an issue to be addressed at the time at which proposals are developed for additional staging areas for ferry-based passenger transport.

Component [12]

- 36 Proposed increases in building heights within AA8 will permit buildings to a significantly greater height than current plan provisions provide for (i.e., buildings to a maximum height of 7 m).

However, height is not of itself an issue so much as the proportional relationship between buildings within different activity areas and between buildings and the scale of the landscape context. Given the wider context of the overall RPZ and the proximity and backdrop of The Remarkables range, the maximum height of buildings proposed for AA8 of 18m is acceptable, and will be commensurate with the height of buildings elsewhere within the wider Frankton Flats.

- 37 The possibility of buildings to a maximum height of 18m within AA8 will create a situation in which buildings are potentially more visible than might be the case under the current provisions of the DP. However, any future buildings will be located intermittently within AA8, and those building between 9m and 18m will be subject to review by the Remarkables Park Design Review Board. As such, aspects of development that will proceed as a consequence of PC34 will not compromise views to the outstanding natural landscapes and features of the Wakatipu Basin, nor will future development compromise the status of nearby outstanding natural landscape and features.

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Thursday, December 23, 2010

Appendix A

- 1 Remarkables Park Zone (RPZ) policies and objectives against which the landscape implications of the proposed plan change may be considered are set out in Section 12-10 of the DP. These objectives and policies provide the framework for the assessment of landscape and visual effects. At the landscape scale, the effects that will arise from PC34 to the structure plan will be more identifiable at the time of site planning and detailed design. Given the existing built environment of the RPZ, and the proximity of the land affected by PC34 to existing retail and commercial areas of the zone there are not a wide range of effects that need to be taken into account at the structure planning stage.

- 2 Objectives 2 and 8 and their corresponding policies are considered to have some relevance to the plan change request. These are set out in full below, and are the subject of the detailed assessment of effects that is provided in Appendix B. Other objectives and policies (not reproduced below) will be more relevant at later stages of the development of the RPZ.

Objective 2: Development Form

Urban development in a form which protects and enhances the surrounding landscape and natural resources.

Policies:

- 1 To require development to be undertaken in accordance with a Structure Plan.
- 2 To control the density of residential development.
- 3 To enable the establishment of open space and recreation activities in any of Activity Areas 2a, 2c, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8.
- 4 To provide for a number of identified Activity Areas within the Structure Plan as follows:

Activity Area 1

- To continue the development of low density residential activities in Activity Area 1.

Activity Area 2

- To develop and enhance the Riverside Public Recreation Activity Area at the location and to the extent shown on the Structure Plan and in a comprehensive and integrated manner
- To continue, in general terms, the reserve provisions already in force in relation to land in the southern portion of the Remarkables Park Zone, being Activity Areas 2a, 2b and 2c.

Activity Areas 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8

- To require landscaping as part of any development.
- To require the provision of open space as part of any development.
- To control the bulk and location of buildings.
- To provide for certain community activities and educational facilities in Activity Areas 4, 5 and 6.

Activity Area 8

- To enable the establishment of activities of a rural/recreational nature, infrastructural utilities and parking, which are not sensitive to nearby airport operations.

Objective 8 - Amenity, Image, Character and Design

An integrated commercial centre where open space and pedestrian links, views of the surrounding mountain landscapes extensive planting, and high quality building and townscape design reflecting the surrounding topography, are paramount.

Policies:

- 1 To enable and preserve a high standard of urban and landscape design through the use of the Controlled Activities rules.
- 2 To encourage and promote design which reflects and acknowledges the surrounding topography.
- 3 To require resource consent applications so that areas of open space, pedestrian links and important views can be identified, protected, enhanced and become an essential part of the Remarkables Park Commercial Centre image and amenity.
- 4 To ensure that the design and appearance of buildings, structures and other elements of development are compatible with nearby residential and community uses.
- 5 To ensure landscaping contributes to a distinct town identity, and has regard to important viewshafts.

Appendix B

<p>Objective 2: Development Form Urban development in a form which protects and enhances the surrounding landscape and natural resources.</p>	<p>1 To require development to be undertaken in accordance with a Structure Plan.</p>	<p>The proposed plan change concerns variations to the existing structure plan, but within the existing framework of activity areas already approved for the RPZ. No new activity areas are being proposed, nor are activities that are inconsistent with those provided for by existing activity areas.</p>
	<p>2 To control the density of residential development. in any of Activity Areas 2a, 2c, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8.</p>	
	<p>3 To enable the establishment of open space and recreation activities</p>	
	<p>4 To provide for a number of identified Activity Areas within the Structure Plan [refer Appendix A]</p>	
<p>Objective 8 - Amenity, Image, Character and Design An integrated commercial centre where open space and pedestrian links, views of the surrounding mountain landscapes extensive planting, and high quality building and townscape design reflecting the surrounding topography, are paramount.</p>	<p>1 To enable and preserve a high standard of urban and landscape design through the use of the Controlled Activities rules.</p>	<p>The majority of these policies are more relevant to site planning and design stages of the development, rather than structure planning. However, a significant change that will occur with the acceptance of Component [12] is an increase in the maximum height for buildings within AA8 to 18m.</p>
	<p>2 To encourage and promote design which reflects and acknowledges the surrounding topography.</p>	
	<p>3 To require resource consent applications so that areas of open space, pedestrian links and important views can be identified, protected, enhanced and become an essential part of the Remarkables Park Commercial Centre image and amenity.</p>	
	<p>4 To ensure that the design and appearance of buildings, structures and other elements of development are compatible with nearby residential and community uses.</p>	
	<p>5 To ensure landscaping gives a distinct village identity, and promotes the image of a consolidated commercial centre but does not destroy important views from the centre</p>	