IN THE ENVIRONMENT COURT
AT CHRISTCHURCH

I TE KŌTI TAIAO O AOTEAROA
KI ŌTAUTAHI

Decision No. [2026] NZEnvC 313

IN THE MATTER	of the Resource Management Act 1991
AND	an appeal under clause 14 of the First Schedule of the RMA in relation to the Priority Area Landscape Schedules Variation to the Queenstown Lakes District Council Proposed District Plan
BETWEEN	MOUNT CARDRONA STATION LIMITED
	(ENV-2024-CHC-60)
AND	BLACKMANS CREEK HOLDINGS NO. 1 LIMITED PARTNERSHIP
	(ENV-2024-CHC-66)
	Appellants
AND	QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT COUNCIL
	Respondent

Environment Judge J J M Hassan – sitting alone under s279 of the Act

In Chambers at Christchurch

Date of Consent Order: 9 November 2026

CONSENT ORDER

A: Under s279(1)(b) of the RMA,[1] the Environment Court, by consent, orders that:

(a) the appeals are allowed, to the extent that the Queenstown Lakes District Council is directed to amend the Queenstown Lakes Proposed District Plan wording for 21.22.18 Cardrona Valley PA: Schedule of Landscape Values as set out in Appendix 1, attached to and forming part of this order;

(b) the appeals are otherwise dismissed.

B: Under s285 of the RMA, there is no order as to costs.

REASONS

Introduction

[1] This proceeding concerns an appeal by Mount Cardrona Station Limited (MCSL) & Blackmans Creek Holdings No. 1 Limited Partnership (BCH) against the decision of Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) on the Priority Area Landscape Schedules (PALS) Variation to the Queenstown Lakes District Proposed District Plan (PDP or variation).

[2] Following notification of the PALS variation in June 2022, MCSL and BCH submitted opposing the mapping of the Cardrona Valley Priority Area (PA) and sought amendments to the Schedule of Landscape Values, including changes to the landscape capacity description and rating. An Independent Hearings Panel heard submissions before making recommendations that QLDC accepted in its decisions notified on 21 June 2024.

[3] Appeal points (including those of MCSL and BCH) concerning various aspects of the variation were allocated to two appeal topics. Topic 1 involved the

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1 Resource Management Act 1991.

so-termed "general relief" that focussed on the preamble of Schedules 21.22 and 21.23. The site-specific relief pertaining to the specific Priority Area Landscape Schedules was allocated to Topic 2.

[4] As detailed in *Burdon v Queenstown Lakes District Council,*[2] the court determined that there was no scope to amend the ONF, ONL or RCL landscape boundaries, but confirmed that there was jurisdiction to alter the Priority Area mapping. That determination resolved the Topic 1 relief for both MCSL and BCH.

[5] This order relates to the Topic 2 relief. Both BCH[3] and MCSL seek:

(a) amendments to the Preamble and the Cardrona Valley Priority Area map be amended as described in each appeal with BCH seeking the exclusion of the Ski Area Sub Zone from the Cardrona Valley Priority Area map;
(b) the amendment of Sch 21.22.18 to reflect the relief sought in their respective submissions and to address the concerns raised in their appeals; and
(c) any consequential or additional amendments to the maps and PDP provisions necessary to give effect to the outcomes sought.

Further, should its primary relief not be granted, MCSL seeks the deletion of the Priority Area Schedule.

Agreement reached

[6] I have read and considered the consent memorandum of the parties dated 7 September 2026 which sets out the agreement the parties have reached to resolve

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2 *Burdon v Queenstown Lakes District Council* [2026] NZEnvC 40.

3 The BCH appeal was lodged as "Soho Ski Area Limited and Blackmans Creek Holdings No. 1 Limited Partnership" as the appellant, however Soho Ski Area Ltd withdrew its participation as appellant by memorandum dated 28 September 2026.

the appeal. It explains that having attended mediation on 27 May 2025 and thorough further informal discussions involving planning and landscape input the parties have identified a means of resolving the Topic 2 relief in its entirety for both appeals and related s274 notices.

[7] The parties have agreed:

(a) to insert new text[4] into the 'General Description' section of the Schedule describing two sub-areas within the Cardrona Priority Area, being the Cardrona Settlement Area and Blackmans Terrace. This agreed text recognises that:
   (i) within the Cardrona Priority Area there is an area of existing development, which includes the Cardrona village, Mt Cardrona Station development and other activities (including separate land uses and infrastructure); and
   (ii) there are terrace landforms (including the terraces on which the Mt Cardrona Station development is situated), in proximity to the Cardrona village, that are distinct from other areas within the Priority Area.

(b) to insert new text or amendments to existing text that more accurately reflect factual aspects, or to describe the terrace areas, including, for example, inserting references to activities that are being undertaken or developed within those areas;

(c) revisions to the capacity ratings and guidance text for those two sub-areas, including for certain types of activities, being visitor accommodation, urban expansion, earthworks, farm buildings, transport infrastructure, and rural living activities.

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4 This new text has been developed with planning and landscape input.

Other relevant matters

[8] RealNZ Limited, NZSki Limited and Upper Clutha Environmental Society Incorporated (UCESI) joined the appeal as interested parties under s274 RMA. UCESI withdrew its interest in the Topic 2 relief on 2 April 2025. The remaining s274 parties both signed the consent memorandum setting out the relief sought.

[9] No party has sought costs, instead agreeing that costs should lie where they fall.

[10] The consent memorandum records the parties' assurances that the Agreed Amendments are more appropriate than the Decisions Version as they provide a more accurate and clearer description of the landscape values, characteristics and ratings that apply within this Priority Area. Further the parties consider there are no issues of scope and that all matters proposed for the court's endorsement fall within the court's jurisdiction and conform to the relevant requirements and objectives of the RMA, including, in particular Pt 2.

Outcome

[11] All parties to the proceeding have executed the memorandum requesting the orders. On the information provided to the court, I am satisfied that the orders will promote the purpose of the Act so I will make the orders sought.

Orders

[12] The court makes this order under s279(1) RMA, by consent, rather than as a decision or determination on the merits under s297.

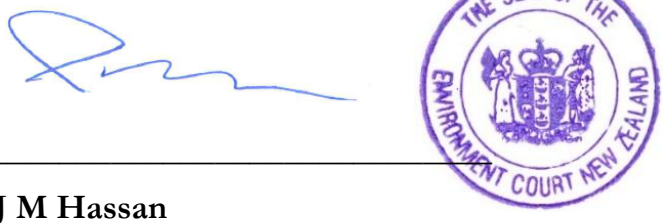
[13] This order is made based on the joint memorandum recording the parties' full agreement.

[14] Based on the information provided and the assurances received, the court is satisfied that the orders will promote the purpose of the RMA. Accordingly,

the appeal is allowed to the extent that QLDC is directed to amend the wording of PDP Sch 21.22.18 Cardrona Valley PA: Schedule of Landscape Values, as set out in Appendix 1, attached to and forming part of this order.

[15] The appeals as they relate to Topic 2, and in their entirety, are otherwise dismissed.

[16] Under s285 of the RMA, there is no order as to costs.



J J M Hassan
Environment Judge | Kaiwhakawā o te Kōti Taiao

APPENDIX 1

Amendments to 21.22.18 Cardrona Valley PA: Schedule of Landscape Values

This section has rules that are subject to appeal.

21.22.18 Cardrona Valley PA: Schedule of Landscape Values

New provisions or rezoning sought to be added by appeal
There is an appeal on aspects of this schedule, which includes the mapping. See appeal for details.

Application

Preamble 21.22, particularly clauses 3.1 – 3.3, explains that the application of the Priority Area Schedules is to the Rural Zone Priority Area only. The Priority Area Assessment Extent for this Schedule includes areas of land that are zoned Rural, including the Ski Area Subzone (SASZ), Settlement (SZ), Informal Recreation, Community Purposes and Operative District Plan zone Mount Cardrona Station Special (MCSSZ).

General Description of the Area

The Cardrona Valley PA covers the ONL within the north-south oriented valley enclosed by the Cardrona Range/Harris Mountains to the west and the Pisa/Criffel Range to the east. The PA extends to the crest of the western Pisa Range flanks and to the landforms visually containing the valley to the west, including the eastern flanks of Mount Cardrona and a ridge of Mount Alpha. In a north-south direction the PA starts just north of Timber Creek and ends at Blackmans Creek about 3.25 kilometres upstream of Cardrona village. ~~The majority of the Cardrona Ski Area Sub-Zone falls within the area.~~

Located within the Cardrona Valley Priority Area Assessment Extent is the Cardrona Settlement Area. The Cardrona Settlement Area comprises Cardrona village on the valley floor (which is partly zoned SZ), and the terraces that sit between the Cardrona Alpine Resort Access Road (inclusive of the Pines Carpark and the Road itself) and between the Cardona Distillery to the north and Little Meg gully to the south. The MCSSZ (which is not within the Cardrona Valley PA) is situated on the terrace to the northwest and elevated above Cardrona village. The Cardrona Settlement Area is distinct when considered against the wider PA as it provides for a mix of residential, rural residential and commercial activities, and zones other than the Rural Zone.

At the northern end of the Cardrona Settlement Area, adjacent to the Cardrona Alpine Resort Access Road, there are two terraces within the Cardrona Settlement Area. These terraces are distinct in that they are at a significantly flatter gradient than the steeper slopes of Mount Cardrona and exhibit visible evidence of historic land uses, including exotic vegetation patterns (such as brown top) and remnants of historic water races that transect the gentle slopes. The lower of those terraces is contained within the MCSSZ, with the upper terrace split zoned as Rural Zone and SASZ. The area of the upper terrace within the PA, sandwiched between two separate zone frameworks, creates a sub-area referred to as the Mount Cardrona Station Terrace (MCST) – which is a sub-area distinct from the wider PA and the balance of the terraces across the Cardrona Settlement Area.

Also located within the Cardrona Valley Priority Area Assessment Extent is the Blackmans terrace. The Blackmans terrace is located between Little Meg gully and Callaghans Creek gully and is separated from the Cardrona Settlement Area by a large spur. This terrace is significantly flatter than its surrounding terrain and has been cleared for pastoral land use activity. Other visible signs of historic land uses include a formed vehicle track which extends from Cardrona Valley Road along the northern side of the terrace, after which it passes by a grassed airstrip and terminates at the Cardrona ski field.

Physical Attributes and Values

Geology and Geomorphology • Topography and Landforms • Climate and Soils • Hydrology • Vegetation • Ecology • Settlement • Development and Land Use • Archaeology and Heritage • Mana whenua

Landforms and land types:

1. A deeply cut fault valley with a flat alluvial floor ~~of up to 700 m in width below~~that widens (or 'opens up') northwards from approximately Little Meg gully. The wider valley floor landform takes in Cardrona Village~~, narrowing above this point~~ and is some 700m in width at its northern end.

2. The Pisa/Criffel Range: the westernmost and highest element of the characteristic 'basin and range' fault block landscape that stretches across Central Otago. The parallel schist ranges of this sequence are characterised by broad planar crests and frequent tors. The western flanks of the range are relatively even in gradient and form a linear eastern 'wall' to the valley, with few significant ridges or gullies apart from Tuohys Gully.

3. Cardrona low hills: low hills and terraces of strongly weathered sandstone-dominant gravels between the valley floor and the main Cardrona Range/Harris Mountains. ~~An~~The terraces include gently sloping flats elevated above the Cardona Valley floor between the Cardrona Alpine Resort Access Road and Little Meg gully. Otherwise the Cardrona low hills are typified by an angular ridge and gully landform pattern, with alluvial flats and small terraces.

4. The Cardrona Range/Harris Mountains: dissected mountain slopes and hummocky slump topography with scattered schist outcrops and schist tors at higher elevations on Mount Cardrona.

5. Contains the Geopreservation Sites: Branch Creek Road faulted aggradation on an alluvial surface; and the NW Cardrona Fault at Blackmans Creek. These are regionally significant and not considered vulnerable to most human activities.

Hydrological features:

6. The Ōrau (Cardrona River) is the most important water course within the PA, flowing the length of the valley. It is a usually shallow water course with gravel substrate, low banks, and substantial seasonal and weather-related flow variations. There is also significant surface water—shallow groundwater interactions with the river having adjacent influent and effluent reaches that may vary temporally. Significant floods occasionally spread across the valley floor (for example 1878 and 1999).

7. Other larger water courses are Tuohys Creek, Branch Burn (McPhees Creek) and Spotts Creek. In addition, there are numerous other named and unnamed smaller scaled watercourses throughout the PA, such as Callaghan's Creek, Little Meg Creek, Pongs Creek and Pringles Creek as well as Homestead Gully.

8. The water courses within the valley are a fishery resource and spawning habitat. They provide habitat for longfin eels, kōaro, upland bullies and Clutha flathead galaxias (nationally critical) and brown and rainbow trout.

Ecological features and vegetation types:

9. Particularly noteworthy vegetation types include:

    a. Kānuka shrubland / forest succession on mountain slopes towards the Upper Clutha mouth of the valley.

    b. Grey shrubland communities on lower elevation south and east facing slopes and within prominent gullies in the Spotts Creek, Branch Creek and Boundary Creek catchments and bordering the main stem of the Cardrona River upstream of Cardrona township. Some of these shrublands are SNAs. The shrublands support tree daisy communities, including the At-Risk Declining *Olearia lineata.* Patches of bracken are common in and around areas of shrubland.

    c. *Dracophyllum* shrubland on shady wetter faces and within gullies.

    d. Dryland vegetation character, including tussock grasslands on mid and lower slopes.

    e. Distinct gradient of indigenous vegetation types on Mount Cardrona from mixed grey shrubland- exotic grassland near the valley floor to mid slope short tussock grasslands in the montane zone to tall snow tussock grasslands and mixed snow tussockland-*Dracophyllum* spp. and herbfield communities in the sub-alpine and alpine zones. Small alpine wetlands (cushion and sedge bogs) occur in the upper basins on Mount Cardrona associated with low gradient streams and flushes.

10. Other characteristic vegetation types are:

    a. Improved irrigated pasture on the valley floor, on flats within the Cardrona hills, and on some lower slopes of the Pisa/Criffel Range.

    b. Short tussock over-sown with pasture on the lower and mid-slope mountain faces and Cardrona hills and terraces.

    c. Crack willows lining the Cardrona River and other water courses.

    d. Groups of exotic shelter trees around station homesteads, including distinctive mature Lombardy poplars.

    e. Plantation of Douglas fir near Spotts Creek.

11. Valued habitat for skinks and geckos, a wide range of invertebrate species (including the threatened flightless shield bug and Otago endemic grasshopper), New Zealand falcon, Australasian harrier, New Zealand pipit, South Island oystercatchers, banded dotterels, black fronted tern, paradise shelduck and grey duck.

Land use patterns and features:

12. ~~On~~Throughout the wider PA, and on the less developed slopes, including some areas which have been retired for conservation and recreation purposes, a natural dryland vegetation cover including tussock grasslands prevails. In the valley floors and on the more accessible gentler slopes and terraces the predominant land use is pastoral farming, although some areas have been retired for conservation and recreation. The Cardrona ~~Ski Area Sub-Zone partly within the PA~~SASZ, and the Southern Hemisphere Proving Ground and Nordic Skiing Snow Farm are ~~just outside of and~~ accessed through the PA ~~on the Pisa Range. Access.~~ Access roads to the Snow Farm and Cardrona Alpine Resort ~~these activities~~ are visually prominent

within the landscape. ~~Apart from Cardrona Valley Road and some roads around Cardrona Village which are sealed, all public and private access roads are unsealed.~~

13. Within the Cardrona Settlement Area, the following mix of land use activities already exists, with further development anticipated. These activities have an influence on the landscape character of the area due to their scale, character, and/or proximity:

a. Cardrona (SZ); the main settlement on the valley floor that includes the Cardrona SZ. This includes a commercial precinct around the focal point of the Cardrona Hotel and Cardrona Valley Road; as well as low density residential activity and visitor accommodation.
b. The MCSSZ (excluded from the PA); a village destination including residential, visitor accommodation, recreational, educational, community activities and commercial development as well as supporting infrastructure. The land use within this zone is starting to appear and is anticipated to continue; with built form exceeding 12m in height in some areas; and water infrastructure (treatment plant/tanks and reservoir) in locations within the southern boundary of the MCSSZ.
c. Mount Cardrona Station tracks and trails (both within and adjoining the PA) that link the SASZ to the MCSSZ.
d. A consented helipad adjacent to a road linking MCSSZ to the Pines Carpark.
e. The Pines Carpark adjoining the Cardrona Alpine Resort access road which includes a ticketing office/toilet.
f. Rural living development and associated roading both north and south of Cardrona SZ, including Pringles Creek subdivision adjoining and south of MCSSZ.
g. Private huts within the SASZ (excluded from the PA) below the Cardrona Alpine Resort access road.
h. A loose cluster of farming, commercial and other development, including the Cardrona Distillery (within the PA) near the Cardrona Alpine Resort access road intersection.

13A. The following activities exist in relative proximity to the Blackmans terrace:

a. A consented and formed all-weather vehicle access and vehicle crossing extending from the Cardrona Valley Road through Blackmans Creek to the Cardrona ski-area.
b. An established farm airstrip on the spur between Litte Meg and Callaghans Creek.
c. Water races associated with historic mining activity.

14. Historic land use and ~~T~~the settlement pattern within the Cardrona Settlement Area coincides with the natural widening of Cardrona Valley approximately at the Little Meg gully extending northwards, including the relatively gently sloping terraces above Cardrona Valley Road on the western flank of the Valley.

15. The MCST sub-area that sits within the PA and the Cardrona Settlement Area, consists of gently sloping terrace land, contained by existing and anticipated development in the SASZ and MCSSZ, the Cardrona Alpine Resort access road and its associated parking and infrastructure to the north and west; and the incised gully of Pringles Creek to the South. This

sub-area includes tracks and trails, a section of the access road linking MCSSZ to the Pines Carpark, and a consented Helipad.

16. ~~Ski area activities~~The Cardrona Valley PA, and in particular the Cardrona Settlement Area, has been influenced by the Ski Area Activities that occur on the upper eastern slopes of Mount Cardrona~~and comprise~~ The SASZ comprises significant built development (including ski fields, chairlifts, terminal and base station buildings and transport infrastructure), ~~within the landscape but are not visually prominent from~~with additional ski area activities, including built development, enabled and anticipated within the SASZ.

17. The SASZ extends down to the mid to lower slopes of Mt Cardrona in the vicinity of the Cardrona Settlement Area. In places, (including the MCST), the SASZ extends down to meet the Cardrona Settlement Area terraces, which could provide opportunities to integrate development with infrastructure, including the Cardrona Alpine Resort access road. Due to the relative proximity of the MCSSZ, Cardrona Village, the SASZ (including the activities anticipated by that sub-zone) and the Cardrona Alpine Resort access road, the Cardona Settlement Area is subject to a relatively high level of existing and anticipated activity, within these parts of the PA.

16. ~~With the exception of Cardrona Village and development near~~Outside the Cardrona ~~Alpine Resort Road intersection~~Settlement Area, buildings are generally well integrated within the landscape by existing landform features and/or established trees, so they are not highly visible from Cardrona Valley Road. Widely spaced station homestead clusters set within areas of mature exotic trees are a feature of the flats and lower valleys, and there are a few consented but undeveloped building platforms in the Timber Creek gully on Hillend Station.

17. Aurora Energy electricity distribution lines servicing the village, ski areas and proving ground follow the valley floor, and there are substation sites adjacent to Cardrona Valley Road.

18. Gravel extraction has been undertaken at times in the Cardrona River and side streams.

Archaeological and heritage features and their locations:

19. Rich history of 19th century gold mining and early European pastoral farming throughout the valley, with numerous archaeological and heritage features, most of which have since been removed from the area. These include the Roaring Meg and Little Criffel pack tracks, river flat ground sluicing and tailings, hydraulic sluiced cliffs, the Criffel Face and Tuohys Gully sluicings and reservoirs, water races, tunnels, dredge remains, domestic sites and homestead sites associated with historic farming. There are large, sluiced cliffs and water races extending along almost the entire length of the valley and at Mount Cardrona.

20. Historic route between Wānaka and Queenstown, and between Cromwell and Cardrona via Tuohys Gully.

21. Scheduled heritage sites include Old Butchery, Tuohy's Gully (QLDC ref. 500); Studholme Nursery Plaque, Cardrona Road (QLDC ref. 510), Hotel façade, hall and church, Cardrona (QLDC ref. 510).

Mana whenua features and their locations:

22. The entire area is ancestral land to Kāi Tahu whānui and, as such, all landscape is significant, given that whakapapa, whenua and wai are all intertwined in te ao Māori.

23. The Ōrau (Cardrona River) has been identified as a wāhi tūpuna by Kāi Tahu.

Associative Attributes and Values

Mana whenua creation and origin traditions • Mana whenua associations and experience • Mana whenua metaphysical aspects such as mauri and wairua • Historic values • Shared and recognised values • Recreation and scenic values

Mana whenua associations and experience:

24. Kāi Tahu whakapapa connections to whenua and wai generate a kaitiaki duty to uphold the mauri of all important landscape areas.

25. The Ōrau is a traditional ara tawhito (travel route) linking Whakatipu-Waimāori (Lake Whakatipu) with Lakes Wānaka and Hāwea. It also provided access to the natural bridge on the Kawarau River.

26. Ōrau is also recorded as a kāika mahika kai where tuna (eels), pora ('Māori turnip'), āruhe (fernroot) and weka were gathered.

27. The mana whenua values associated with the ONL include, but may not be limited to, mahika kai, ara tawhito, nohoaka.

Historic attributes and values:

28. The very strong associations of the valley with 19th century gold mining, with physical evidence of mining activities and associated settlement, preservation and interpretation of mining areas on both conservation and private land, and names of claims being retained in place names.

29. Strong associations with high country dryland vegetation cover including tussock grasslands, pastoral farming, including historic buildings, homestead clusters/former sites, and features, places and station names.

30. Historic route between the Upper Clutha and Whakatipu Basins.

Shared and recognised attributes and values:

31. ~~A~~Cardrona Valley Road is a nationally and regionally renowned scenic and historic route between Queenstown and Wānaka, and a gateway for both the Upper Clutha Basin and the Whakatipu Basin.

32. ~~An~~The Cardrona Valley, including the Cardrona Settlement Area and its surrounds, is an internationally recognised tourist, high performance alpine sport, mountain biking, and recreational destination.

33. High country dryland vegetation character, including tussock grasslands and divaricating shrublands, punctuated with exposed rock outcrops at higher altitudes.

Recreation attributes and values:

34. ~~Very popular destination for~~Many of the recreational activities are located in and around Cardrona Village and MCSSZ within the Cardrona Settlement Area. These include trout fishing, mountain biking, hiking, horse trekking, snowsports, as well as visits to historic sites and commercial recreation activities such as the distillery, mountain carting and shuttle services in the summer season for mountain biking/hiking and horse trekking providers.

Mountain bike trails and walking tracks and huts are incorporated into the Cardrona Settlement Area, linking the SASZ and the MCSSZ.

35. The ~~area features the~~ highly popular Cardrona ~~Ski Area Sub-Zone, providing~~Alpine Resort, located above the PA and accessed via the road connections within the PA, provides a year-round destination offering snow-based recreation such as skiing/snowboarding in winter and hiking/mountain biking opportunities in the summer. Year-round activities are also facilitated here, such as sightseeing, star gazing, mountain carting~~The~~, and visitor accommodation. Part of the private access road to Snow Farm (a ski touring area) is also within the PA area.

36. Popular walking trails includ~~ing~~e: Tuohys Track/Roaring Meg Pack Track, Spotts Creek Track, Little Criffel Track.

37. The Cardrona Valley Road is a popular route for both locals and visitors due to the distinct and engaging valley views.

38. Other popular tracks include diverse mountain biking trails and horse trekking trails within the valley.

39. The area is also a location for high performance sport e.g., skiing, snowboarding, dry-slope training and LANDSAR training.

Perceptual (Sensory) Attributes and Values

Legibility and Expressiveness • Views to the area • Views from the area • Naturalness • Memorability • Transient values • Remoteness / Wildness • Aesthetic qualities and values

Legibility and expressiveness attributes and values:

40. Easily legible form of the valley, with long views available up and down from the Valley floor, and the close, steep mountain walls or hills providing a strong sense of enclosure. Landforms are highly expressive of their formative processes and the open character of the mountains due to the low, dryland vegetation cover, including tussock grasslands means that the hummocky or gullied surface of the land is clearly displayed.

Particularly important views to and from the area:

41. Dramatic and highly attractive views from Cardrona Valley Road to the contained valley floor and enclosing mountains. The scale of the landforms and their proximity dwarf the viewer, giving a sense of sublime grandeur. There is a progressive opening up of views as people move down the valley, particularly north of the Cardrona Village ~~node and~~(including the Cardrona Distillery complex). From this point the consistent ~~'wall'~~steep slopes~~–~~of the Pisa/Criffel range, with its open, natural and relatively wild character, dominates views across the sparsely inhabited 'working farm' rural foreground. To the west, views are often enclosed by the pastoral land of the Cardrona low hills and the escarpment face of the Cardrona terraces but in places (e.g. north of Cardrona Village, Branch Creek, Spotts Creek and Timber Creek) vistas open out to the rugged and often snow-covered Mount Cardrona and Harris Mountains in the distance. ~~Activities~~When viewed from Cardrona Valley Road, current activities within the Cardrona ~~Ski Area Sub-Zone~~SASZ are reasonably difficult to see ~~from the road~~ and the ~~Mount Cardrona Station Special Zone~~MCSSZ is largely screened by rising topography, other than brief glimpses of the MCSSZ from Cardrona Valley Road when approaching the Cardrona Village from both north and south.

42. Spectacular panoramic views from the private ski field roads, ski areas within the SASZ; and Little Criffel Track, taking in the greener and more vegetated valley, the development within the Cardrona Settlement Area including Cardrona SZ and the MCSSZ, and the contrasting open expanses of tawny or craggy surrounding mountains, with glimpses to the Upper Clutha Basin in the north.

Naturalness attributes and values:

43. ~~The landscape is perceived as having a high level of naturalness, particularly to the south of the Cardrona settlement. Little apparent human modification is present on the mountain slopes and Cardrona hills other than roads, tracks, pasture improvements and fencing. Natural spread of kānuka, grey shrubland and bracken on the mountain slopes and gullies are evidence of a progression towards regenerating native forest, and remaining tussocklands on the mountains enhance the naturalness of the landscape.~~
Outside of the Cardrona Settlement Area, and particularly south of Little Meg gully, excepting the Blackmans terrace, the landscape is perceived as having a high level of naturalness, where little apparent human modification is currently present on the mountain slopes. Natural spread of kānuka, grey shrubland and bracken on the mountain slopes and gullies are evidence of a progression towards regenerating native forest, and remaining tussocklands on the mountains enhance the naturalness of the landscape. Where they exist, the presence of ski field access roads have reduced naturalness values through both physical change to the underlying landform and their visibility. However, ski field access roads also make an important contribution to Cardrona Valley's recreational and tourism activities, and given the presence of the SASZ, are an anticipated activity.

44. The presence of development on the valley floor~~, in Cardrona Village, in Mount Cardrona Special Zone, and in the Cardrona Ski Area Sub-Zone (including access roads) modifies perceptions of naturalness, but pastoralland on the valley floor is still perceived as a pleasant rural foreground to the mountains and hills and retains a significant level of naturalness.~~ and terraces within the Cardona Settlement Area, reduces naturalness values where it occurs. Physical changes to the landform associated with built development and supporting infrastructure within the Cardrona SZ and MCSSZ, as well as the introduction of exotic vegetation such as amenity planting and pastoral land along Cardrona Valley Road and browntop on the terraces provides a positive contrast with the high naturalness of the steeper mountain slopes and tussocklands. Pastoral land on the valley floor is still perceived as a pleasant rural foreground to the mountains and hills beyond the Cardrona Settlement Area that retain a high level of naturalness. ~~The ski areas, village and special zones are nodes of human occupation and development within a landscape dominated by natural patterns and farming land use.~~

45. The Cardrona Settlement Area comprises a range of land uses. Two main settlement areas (Cardrona SZ and MCSSZ), reduce the perception of openness and naturalness of the adjoining PA due to the character and visibility of this development, especially from Cardrona Valley Road (for the Cardrona SZ) and the road connections of the Snow Farm and Cardrona Alpine Resort road (for MCSSZ). This reduced naturalness and more domesticated character reflects historic settlement patterns that have taken advantage of the flatter nature of the topography on the valley floor and lower terraces; and the presence of a ski area and other tourist and visitor activities that both influence and reduce the naturalness values and the condition of natural character within the Cardrona Settlement Area, most noticeable within the PA on the fringes of the Cardrona SZ and in the MCST sub-area.

Memorability attributes and values:

46. Highly memorable journey through a large, enclosed valley with views of dramatic mountain ranges, largely clothed in dryland vegetation / tussock grasslands enhanced by their changing vegetation colours and snow cover across the seasons.

47. Highly memorable views from elevated roads, tracks and ski areas ~~within the PA~~ that take in the entire valley form and its relationship to the Upper Clutha Basin.

Transient attributes and values:

48. Seasonal snowfall and ice, large variations in the Cardrona River flow, changing green, brown and tawny gold of pastoral ~~areas~~Areas, the characteristic autumn colours of poplars and willows, changes in the play of light and shadow on the hummocky mountain slopes, and the presence of birdlife and stock.

Remoteness and wildness attributes and values:

49. A sense of remoteness and wildness can be experienced ~~on~~from walking and mountain biking tracks within the landscape, including Tuohys Track and Spotts Creek Track and in locations away from Cardrona Valley Road ~~on~~/ and Cardrona Settlement Area the high-country stations and the ski areas when viewing the surrounding landscape.

Aesthetic attributes and values:

50. The experience of the values identified above by a significant number of residents and visitors travelling on Cardrona Valley Road or visiting the Cardrona village (which includes the Cardrona SZ and development around its margins) MCSSZ and the ski areas (including access roads).

51. More specifically:

    a. The ~~muscular~~legible unmodified slopes of the Pisa/Criffel range with their relatively even gradient and crest.

    b. The craggy Cardrona Range/Harris Mountains largely clothed in natural dryland vegetation including tussock grasslands.

    c. The contrast between the ~~mountains~~steeper mountain slopes that enclose the lower hill slopes, and the pastoral alluvial flats and terraces ~~in the valley floor and on the low hills~~and Cardrona Settlement Areas.

    d. The strong sense of enclosure within a long, straight and legible valley.

    e. At a finer scale, the following aspects contribute to the aesthetic appeal:

        i. the open tussock grasslands and indigenous shrublands on the mountain slopes;

        ii. the presence of snow and ice during winter months;

        iii. the contrasting and changing colours of sky, mountain slopes, snow cover and rocky outcrops;

iv. the play of light and shadow on the mountain slopes;

v. Historic buildings, buildings that display a historic character and scattered station homestead clusters in the valley and Cardona hills;

vi. The contrast created by built form and development within the inhabited areas of the Cardrona Settlement Area including the Cardrona SZ and MCSSZ, and the high naturalness of the seemingly 'undeveloped' steep enclosing mountain slopes of Mt Cardrona/Harris Mountains and the Pisa/Criffel Range.

vii. the rural character and mature exotic trees within the valley;

viii. the autumn colours of willows and poplars on the valley floor, contributing to the scenic appeal despite not being native.

Summary of Landscape Values

Physical • Associative • Perceptual (Sensory)

Rating scale: seven-point scale ranging from **Very Low** to **Very High**.

very low	low	low-mod	moderate	mod-high	high	very high

These various physical, associative and perceptual attributes and values described above for the Cardrona Valley PA come together and can be summarised as follows:

52. **High physical values** due to the high value landforms, faulted valley, Cardrona River, the range of vegetation features and habitats, and the mana whenua features associated with the area.

53. **Very high associative values** relating to the mana whenua associations with the area, the historic attributes of the valley, the very strong shared and recognised values, and the popularity of the area as a tourism and recreational destination.

54. **High perceptual values** relating to:

a. The legibility and expressiveness values deriving from the visibility and openness of the landscape, enabling a clear understanding of the landscape's formative processes.

b. The aesthetic and memorability values of the area as a consequence of its dramatic and highly appealing visual character and the large number of people visiting or moving through the valley.

c. An impression of high naturalness arising from the dominance of the more natural landscape over built development and landform modification – especially the upper mountain slopes; and the Cardrona Valley as it extends south of the Cardrona Settlement Area.

Landscape Capacity

The landscape capacity rating of the Rural Zone Cardrona Valley PA for a range of activities is set out below. This provides high level guidance as to potential characteristics or locational matters that may assist with identifying appropriate development within the PA.

i. **Commercial recreational activities** — **some** landscape capacity for activities that integrate with and complement/enhance existing recreation features, particularly the Cardrona ~~Ski Area Sub-Zone~~SASZ. Activities should be: located to optimise the screening and/or camouflaging benefit of existing natural landscape elements; designed to be of a sympathetic scale, appearance, and character; integrate appreciable landscape restoration and enhancement (where appropriate) and enhance public access (where appropriate).

ii. **Visitor accommodation and tourism related activities**~~—~~ :

- **some** landscape capacity for visitor accommodation activities that ~~are~~: are co-located with existing facilities; are designed to be of sympathetic scale, appearance and character; integrate appreciable landscape restoration and enhancement and enhance public access (where appropriate).
- **some** landscape capacity for visitor accommodation and tourism related activities within the MCST sub-area that: are designed to be of sympathetic scale, appearance and character; integrate appreciable landscape restoration and enhancement and enhance public access (where appropriate).

- ~~E~~e**xtremely limited** landscape capacity for tourism-related activities outside of the ~~Settlement Zone, Mount Cardrona Station Special Zone and SASZ~~MCST sub-area, except where it is co-located with the ~~Settlement Zone on the valley floor and is: of a modest or sympathetic scale; has a low-key, visually~~SZ~~-~~, provides tracks and trails for recreational use, and~~recessive 'rural' character;~~ integrates appreciable landscape restoration and enhancement (where appropriate); enhances public access (where appropriate); integrates a strong defensible edge to avoid the potential risk of development sprawl; and complements the existing character of the Cardrona ~~settlement~~Settlement Area.

iii. **Urban expansions — extremely limited or no landscape capacity,** except for urban development on the MCST that is of a nature equivalent to that within the MCSSZ and that is: designed to be of sympathetic scale, appearance and character; integrates appreciable landscape restoration and enhancement and enhances public access (where appropriate).

iv. **Intensive agriculture** — **some** landscape capacity on the valley floor that maintains naturalness and scenic views from roads.

v. **Earthworks** — **limited** landscape capacity for earthworks that protect historic, naturalness and expressiveness attributes and values, and are sympathetically designed to integrate with existing natural landform patterns. **Some** capacity for earthworks associated with enabling appropriate, sensitively designed additional development within the Cardrona Settlement Area and on the Blackmans terrace, including tracks and trails for recreational use.

vi. **Farm buildings** — **limited** landscape capacity for modestly scaled buildings that reinforce existing rural character throughout the PA, and **some** landscape capacity within the Cardrona Settlement Area, ~~for modestly scaled buildings that reinforce existing rural character.~~

vii. **Mineral extraction** — **extremely limited or no** landscape capacity for gravel extraction in the Cardrona River riverbed only that protects the naturalness and aesthetic attributes and values of the ONL.

viii. **Transport infrastructure** — **limited** landscape capacity for modestly scaled and low key 'rural' roading and carpark areas on the valley floor that is positioned to optimise the integrating benefits of landform and vegetation patterns. **Some** landscape capacity for sensitively designed and located transport infrastructure within the Cardrona Settlement Area, that improves integration between the valley floor and MCSSZ and SASZ, and that integrates with the existing Cardrona Alpine Resort access road and Pines Carpark. **Some** landscape capacity for sensitively designed transport infrastructure within the Blackmans terrace where it is associated with the development of Passenger Lift Systems, terminal and base stations, and ancillary structures and facilities providing non-vehicle based access to the SASZs. **Very limited** landscape capacity for additional roads, upgrades or expansions to existing roads, carparking areas and passing bays on the enclosing mountain slopes of the valley.

ix. **Utilities and regionally significant infrastructure** — **limited** landscape capacity for infrastructure that is buried or located such that it is screened from external view. In the case of utilities such as overhead lines or cell phone towers which cannot be screened, these should be designed and located so that they are not visually prominent. In the case of the National Grid, **limited** landscape capacity in circumstances where there is a functional or operational need for its location and structures are designed and located to limit their visual prominence, including associated sensitively designed earthworks.

x. **Renewable energy generation** — **extremely limited or no** landscape capacity for commercial scale renewable energy generation. **Limited** landscape capacity for discreetly located and small-scale renewable energy generation.

xi. **Forestry** — **extremely limited** landscape capacity for small scale production forestry on the valley floor.

xii. **Rural living** — **limited** landscape capacity for rural living development co-located with existing development on the valley floor ~~and Cardrona hills~~, where sited so that it is set back from Cardrona Valley Road and contained by landform and/or existing vegetation — with the location, scale and design of any proposal ensuring that it is generally difficult to see from external public viewpoints. Where not on the valley floor:

- v~~V~~**ery limited** landscape capacity for rural living development within the ~~close to~~ Cardrona Settlement Area, where it will not lead to ~~Village or Mount Cardrona Special Zone without~~ cumulative adverse effects on the rural character and naturalness of the PA, and
- **limited** landscape capacity for rural living development on the MCST, where it is designed to be of sympathetic scale, appearance and character; integrate appreciable landscape restoration and enhancement (where appropriate).
- **extremely limited** landscape capacity for rural living development on the Blackmans terrace, where it is located so that it is generally difficult to see from external public viewpoints and where it is designed to be of sympathetic scale, appearance and character, and integrate appreciable landscape and vegetation restoration and enhancement (where appropriate)

xiii. **Passenger lift systems — limited** landscape capacity to improve public access to focal recreational areas higher in the mountains (including between lower lying areas and the Cardrona Ski Area Sub Zone) via non-vehicular transportation modes such as gondolas, provided they are positioned in a way that is sympathetic to the landform, are located and designed to be recessive in the landscape.

PLANT AND ANIMAL PESTS

A. Plant pest species include wilding conifers, crack willow, sweet briar and lupin.

B. Animal pest species include deer, goats, ferrets, stoats, weasels, hares, rabbits, possums, mice and rats.

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