

vivian+espie

resource management and landscape planning

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INTRODUCTION

- 1. This report identifies and quantifies the landscape and visual effects likely to arise from a proposal to rezone an area of the Rural General Zone (RGZ) of the Queenstown Lakes District Plan (the Plan) to Rural Lifestyle Zone (RLZ). The site of the proposed zone is within Wyuna Station, which is a very large farming property immediately east of Glenorchy. The proposed area of RLZ is approximately 31.9ha and is located on a west facing terrace above Glenorchy Town.
- 2. The area of RLZ is proposed to be created by way of the QLDC's District Plan Review. I understand that the purpose of this review is to update and amend the current District Plan such that it provides for the District's resource management needs for the upcoming decade.
- 3. The methodology for this assessment has been guided by the landscape related Objectives and Policies of the Plan, by the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment produced by the UK's Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment¹, and by the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects "Landscape Assessment and Sustainable Management" Practice Note².

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

- 4. The details and layout of the proposed activities are set out in the Section 32 analysis report and its various appendices including a number of plans. I will not repeat that information here, other than to make the following summary points that are relevant to an assessment of landscape issues:
 - It is proposed to create a RLZ within the specific part of Wyuna Station, as shown on Figure 1 of this report. More detailed plans of the proposed area of zoning are attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

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¹ Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment; 2013; 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – 3rd Edition'; Routledge, Oxford.

² New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects Education Foundation; 2010; Best Practice Note 10.1 'Landscape Assessment and Sustainable Management'.



- The proposed RLZ is located on an elevated terrace and hillside that is immediately east of the Glenorchy Township Zone. The proposed area of RLZ is also located immediately south of the existing RLZ east of Glenorchy Paradise Road. In this sense the proposal is an extension of the existing RLZ.
- The proposed RLZ is envisaged to be accessed via an existing access way off Glenorchy Paradise Road. This existing access way currently services a homestead building within Wyuna Station.
- Additional Objectives, Policies and Rules that specifically relate to the proposed area of RLZ are proposed to be inserted into the Plan. These proposed provisions will be read in conjunction with all of the existing RLZ provisions. The proposed Objectives and Policies are:
- 20.4.9 Objective Wyuna Station Rural Lifestyle Zone To provide for a deferred rural lifestyle zone on the terrace to the east of, and immediately adjoining, the Glenorchy Township.

Policy

- 20.4.9.1 To prohibit or defer development of the zone until such a time that:
- (a) the zone can be serviced by a reticulated wastewater disposal scheme within the property which services both the township and proposed zone. This may include the provision of land within the zone for such purpose; OR
- (b) the zone can be serviced by a reticulated wastewater disposal scheme located outside of the zone which has capacity to service both the township and proposed zone; OR
- (c) the zone can be serviced by an on-site (individual or communal) wastewater disposal scheme no sooner than two years from the zone becoming operative on the condition that should a reticulated scheme referred to in (a) and (b) above become available and have capacity within the next three years then all lots within the zone shall be required to connect to that reticulated scheme.
- 20.4.10 Objective Wyuna Station Rural Lifestyle Zone Subject to Objective 20.4.9, to enable rural living development in a way that maintains the visual amenity values which are experienced from the Glenorchy Township, Oban Street and the Glenorchy-Paradise Road.

Policies

- 20.4.10.1 The subdivision design, identification of building platforms and associated mitigation measures shall ensure that built form and associated activities within the zone are reasonably inconspicuous when viewed from Glenorchy Township, Oban Street or the Glenorchy-Paradise Road. Measures to achieve this include:
- (a) Prohibiting development over the sensitive areas of the zone via building restriction areas;
- (b) Appropriately locating buildings within the zone, including restrictions on future building bulk;
- (c) Using excavation of the eastern part of the terrace to form appropriate building platforms;
- (d) Using naturalistic mounding of the western part of the terrace to assist visual screening of development;
- (e) Using native vegetation to assist visual screening of development;



- (f) The maximum height of buildings shall be 4.5m above ground level prior to any subdivision development.
- 20.4.10.2 To maintain and enhance the indigenous vegetation and ecosystems within the building restriction areas of the zone and to suitably and comprehensively maintain these areas into the future. As a minimum, this shall include:
- (a) Methods to remove or kill existing wilding exotic trees and weed species from the lower banks of the zone area and to conduct this eradication on a year to year basis.
- (b) Methods to exclude and/or suitably manage pests within the zone in order to foster growth of native vegetation within the zone.
- (c) A programme or list of maintenance work to be carried out on a year to year basis on order to bring about the goals set out above.

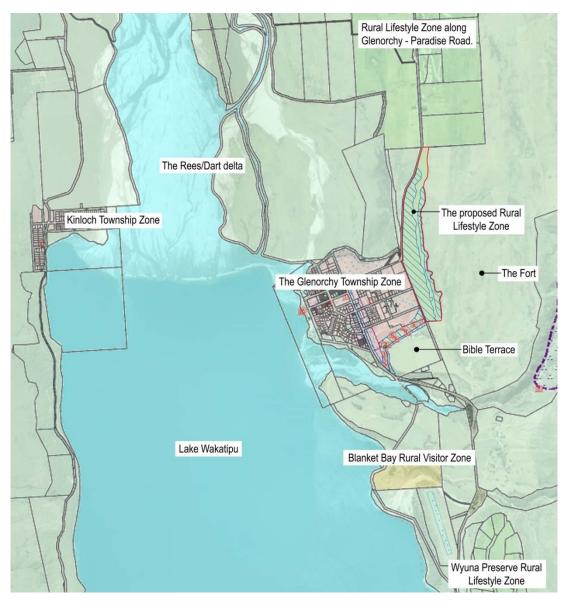


Figure 1: The location of the proposed RLZ within Wyuna Station.



- 5. The proposed RLZ is the result of an iterative and consultative design process over a period of months. I have provided input into this design process from a landscape effects point of view. This report describes and quantifies the landscape and amenity related effects that will result from the proposed zone change and focusses on effects as experienced from outside the proposed RLZ. This report does not directly discuss matters that relate to internal design, internal amenity and internal functionality.
- 6. The proposed RLZ will enable controlled activity subdivision into lot sizes that have a minimum size of 1ha with an overall average size of 2ha. At the time of a subdivision being applied for, the Council will have control over the design of the subdivision with regard to the applicable existing RLZ Objectives and Policies of the Plan and the proposed Objectives and Policies for this specific area. With regard to the proposed Objectives and Policies and the matters over which Council has control at the subdivision and house building stages, the Council will be able to control the following aspects of the development of the zone to ensure that the relevant Objectives and Policies are met:
 - The overall design and layout of subdivision including access, servicing and structural landscaping.
 - The location of building platforms.
 - The height, bulk and external appearance of buildings.
 - The appropriate use of earthworks to excavate ground level where buildings are to be located.
 - The appropriate use of earthworks to create naturalistic mounding for visual screening purposes.
 - The enhancement and ongoing management of native vegetation for visual screening purposes for natural character purposes.
 - The appropriate use of external building materials and colours so as to be visually recessive.
- 7. It is my understanding that the ultimate result of the proposed area of RLZ will be development that includes the following aspects:
 - Up to 15 dwellings on the flat of the terrace landform. Two of these dwellings may be north of the existing access way into the site.



- Vehicle access to all dwellings is likely to take the form of an alignment that runs along the terrace landform from north to south (most likely on the uphill side of dwelling locations).
- Future dwellings would be restricted in height and external appearance to assist in achieving the requirement of being reasonably inconspicuous when seen from the west.
- Earthworks are likely to be used to bench dwellings into the rear of the terrace and
 to create naturalistic mounding at the front of the terrace. This will assist in visually
 screening dwellings from Glenorchy and also will mean that views from the
 dwellings include lake and mountain views but do not include Glenorchy Township.
- The slope below the developable area of the zone will be maintained so as to bolster the existing native vegetative community and manage it into the future.
 Native vegetation will likely extend slightly further east so as to cover naturalistic earth mounding created on the western lip of the terrace area, which will assist in reducing visibility of future dwellings.
- Vegetation is likely to be used in the vicinity of the zone's road boundary north of the existing vehicle entrance to ensure development in the northern part of the zone is inconspicuous from Glenorchy Paradise Road.

STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

8. The parts of the Resource Management Act that are relevant to the consideration of the landscape and amenity related effects of the proposed zone change include:

6 Matters of national importance

In achieving the purpose of this Act, all persons exercising functions and powers under it, in relation to managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources, shall recognise and provide for the following matters of national importance:

(b) The protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development:

7 Other Matters

In achieving the purpose of this Act, all persons exercising functions and powers under it, in relation to managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources, shall have particular regard to-

- (c) The maintenance and enhancement of amenity values
- (f) Maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment



9. Section 4 of the Plan deals with matters that are relevant to the district as a whole. Section 4.2 of the Plan provides district wide guidance regarding landscape and amenity issues. Logically, all other sections of the Plan shall be compatible with Section 4. The most relevant provisions in relation to the assessment of the potential landscape and amenity effects of the proposed zone change include:

4.2.5 Objectives and Policies

Objective:

Subdivision, use and development being undertaken in the District in a manner which avoids, remedies or mitigates adverse effects on landscape and visual amenity values.

Policies:

1 Future Development

- (a) To avoid, remedy or mitigate the adverse effects of development and/or subdivision in those areas of the District where the landscape and visual amenity values are vulnerable to degradation.
- (b) To encourage development and/or subdivision to occur in those areas of the District with greater potential to absorb change without detraction from landscape and visual amenity values.
- (c) To ensure subdivision and/or development harmonises with local topography and ecological systems and other nature conservation values as far as possible.

2 Outstanding Natural Landscapes (District-Wide/Greater Wakatipu)

- (a) To maintain the openness of those outstanding natural landscapes and features which have an open character at present.
- (b) To avoid subdivision and development in those parts of the outstanding natural landscapes with little or no capacity to absorb change.
- (c) To allow limited subdivision and development in those areas with higher potential to absorb change.
- (d) To recognise and provide for the importance of protecting the naturalness and enhancing amenity values of views from public roads.

8. Avoiding Cumulative Degradation

In applying the policies above the Council's policy is:

- (a) to ensure that the density of subdivision and development does not increase to a point where the benefits of further planting and building are outweighed by the adverse effect on landscape values of over domestication of the landscape.
- (b) to encourage comprehensive and sympathetic development of rural areas.

9. Structures

To preserve the visual coherence of:

- (a) outstanding natural landscapes and features and visual amenity landscapes by:
 - encouraging structures which are in harmony with the line and form of the landscape;
 - avoiding, remedying or mitigating any adverse effects of structures on the skyline, ridges and prominent slopes and hilltops;
 - encouraging the colour of buildings and structures to complement the dominant colours in the landscape:



- encouraging placement of structures in locations where they are in harmony with the landscape;
- promoting the use of local, natural materials in construction.
- (c) All rural landscapes by
 - limiting the size of signs, corporate images and logos
 - providing for greater development setbacks from public roads to maintain and enhance amenity values associated with the views from public roads.

15. Retention of Existing Vegetation

To maintain the visual coherence of the landscape and to protect the existing levels of natural character by:

- (a) Encouraging the retention of existing indigenous vegetation in gullies and along watercourses;
- (b) Encouraging maintenance of tussock grass-lands and other nature ecosystems³ in outstanding natural landscapes.

³ refer to Section 4.1 on nature conservation values.

17. Land Use

To encourage land use in a manner which minimises adverse effects on the open character and visual coherence of the landscape.

- 10. Although not a statutory document, The Glenorchy Community Plan³ is a document created through extensive consultation with the Glenorchy Community. I therefore consider it is useful in providing information on community aspirations. I recognise that the community plan is more than ten years old and that a review of it has begun. Notwithstanding this, I consider that it has relevance.
- 11. The Community Plan outlines a number of outcomes needed to achieve a desired overall vision for Glenorchy. Outcome 3 sets out broad goals that relate to rural subdivision in relation to landscape and wilderness qualities. These include:
 - Visual landscape, vistas and wilderness atmosphere retained/unspoilt.
 - Rural subdivision and other rural developments to be inconspicuous in the visual landscape.
 - Rural subdivision to be limited and to not impact on the special characteristics and qualities of the area. 4
- 12. With more specific relevance to the proposed RLZ, Section 4.32 of the Community Plan deals with "Rural Land on the Outskirts of the Town". The most relevant key strategies are to:
 - Avoid inappropriate urbanisation and domestication i.e. inappropriate rural subdivision.
 - Retain the natural undeveloped character of the town backdrop.

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 $^{^{3}}$ Blakely Wallace Associates; August 2001; "Glenorchy – Head of the Lake, Community Plan".

⁴ Ibid, page 16



- Revegetation of parts of this backdrop would enhance the rural wilderness character of the town.⁵
- 13. The Community Plan then identifies the town backdrop on Sheet 2 of its appended plans. I attach Sheet 2 to this report as Appendix 2.

THE EXISTING LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

The landscape baseline

- The proposed RLZ is located in a part of Wyuna Station immediately east of, and up slope from, the Glenorchy Township Zone. Immediately east of the proposed RLZ are the steep slopes of The Fort, which is a small north-south running spur of mountainous topography that separate Chinaman's Flat from the Rees/Dart delta. The western part of the RLZ (which is to be a building restriction area) takes the form of a steep, vegetated slope that descends down to Glenorchy Township. The proposed location of the RLZ is shown on Figure 1 of this report and the zone area is shown in detail on Appendix 1.
- The landscape in the area to the north of Lake Wakatipu is dominated by the vast, steep mountain slopes of the Richardson, Humboldt and Forbes mountain ranges (as can be seen in all of the photographs of Appendix 3 to this report). These mountain ranges are comprised of weathering up-thrust schistose bedrock and generally have been farmed much more minimally than the flatter land and are frequently covered in remnant native ecology. The river valleys of the Dart to the west and the Rees to the east converge in a Y-shape around the lone peak of Mount Alfred as they enter the lake. The flat floors of these valleys are comprised of deposited post glacial materials and have generally been the location of intensive agriculture, grazing and ecological modification since the colonial period.
- The rugged forms of the mountains that rise up from the more tamed and verdant pastoral valley floors are striking to visitors to the area and are romantic and sublime in terms of aesthetics. Changing light, weather (including frequent snow cover) and atmospheric conditions can create dramatic effects and I believe that it would be generally shared and recognised by observers that these mountain ranges are majestic, natural and memorable.

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⁵ Ibid, page 43.



- 17. The farmed valley floors are not as natural or dramatic in appearance. I believe that it would generally be obvious to observers that these valley floors have been much more modified than the mountain slopes, are less striking and have more in common with many parts of rural agricultural New Zealand. The expansive gravel beds of the braided rivers themselves however are remarkable and obviously natural features.
- 18. Wyuna Station is contained within the Rural General Zone and therefore is subject to the Plan's landscape categorisation process in accordance with Part 5.4.2.1 of the Plan. Part 4.2.4(2) of the Plan states that "the outstanding natural landscapes of the district are romantic landscapes the mountains and lakes."
- 19. Categorising the landscapes of a district into outstanding natural landscapes and landscapes that are not both outstanding and natural is an exercise that must obviously be done at a very large scale. A number of Environment Court decisions relating to the district have emphasised the point that the categorisation process must be done at the scale of entire landscapes, not landscape units or bits of landscapes.
- I am aware of maps and reports made public by the Council setting out their position regarding landscape categorisation of the relevant area that is proposed to be formalised by the District Plan Review. The Council's information shows all the land outside of the Glenorchy Township Zone as being part of the outstanding natural landscape. Given the scale at which landscape categorisation is appropriately done, I agree with this categorisation.
- The proposed RLZ area takes in flat paddock areas at its northern end. These are immediately south of the existing RLZ and have been improved and grazed for many decades (and can be seen on Appendix 3, Viewpoint Location 1). Moving south, these flat areas become a terrace that stretches south to the southern end of the zone. This terrace landform is the part of the proposed zone on which development is anticipated (and can be seen on Appendix 3, Viewpoint Location 2). The remainder of the zone area is to be covered by a building restriction area. This terrace is flattish, verdant and grazed; while the building restriction areas within the proposed zone are steeper, rougher country. The slope between the developable part of the zone and Glenorchy Township is relatively densely covered in remnant native vegetation.



- More closely in the vicinity of the proposed activities, the flattish terrace land that accommodates dilapidated shearing shed structures and the existing farm dwelling has deeper soils than the mountain slopes and has been used as improved pasture. The steeper slopes of The Fort hillside have been farmed much less intensively. The terrace is approximately 40m wide and the steep, rocky escarpment upslope of this terrace contains sporadic vegetation. This escarpment is approximately 7 metres high and will be the backdrop to the developable part of the proposed RLZ. The hillside downslope of the terrace is significantly covered in native shrub vegetation dominated by kanuka, matagouri and coprosma grey shrub species. Stock are not currently excluded from this area.
- 23. The northern boundary of the proposed RLZ is to abut the existing RLZ that is located directly north of the site, immediately east of the Glenorchy Paradise Road. This northern portion of proposed RLZ contains a dilapidated shearing shed and a farm dwelling. The terrace that runs to the south of the farm dwelling currently accommodates a farm track that extends south to Bible Terrace.
- 24. Regarding aspects of the landscape resource that are potentially affected by the proposal (landscape receptors), the landscape character of the backdrop of Glenorchy Township is potentially affected, as is the landscape character of the broader outstanding natural landscape.

The visual baseline

- The proposed RLZ is potentially visible from an identifiable visual catchment or zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV). This ZTV includes parts of the Glenorchy Township, the Glenorchy Walkway, part of the surface of Lake Wakatipu, part of the Rees/Dart delta, some private land to the immediate north of the site and larger areas of more distant elevated land such as parts of Mount Alfred, the eastern face of the Humboldt Mountains and part of the Kinloch Road. The ZTV is shown on Figure 2 and in more detail on Appendix 3 to this report. The developable area of the proposed zone is visually screened from the east and south.
- 26. Observers within the ZTV that are potentially visually affected by the proposal (visual receptors) include:
 - Users and occupiers of Glenorchy Township.



- Users of the Glenorchy Walkway.
- Users of Lake Wakatipu and the Rees/Dart delta.
- Users of Glenorchy Paradise Road.
- Users and occupiers of distant areas such as Mount Alfred, parts of the Humboldts and the Kinloch Road.
- 27. The views that these observers currently experienced and how these are likely to be affected are discussed subsequently.

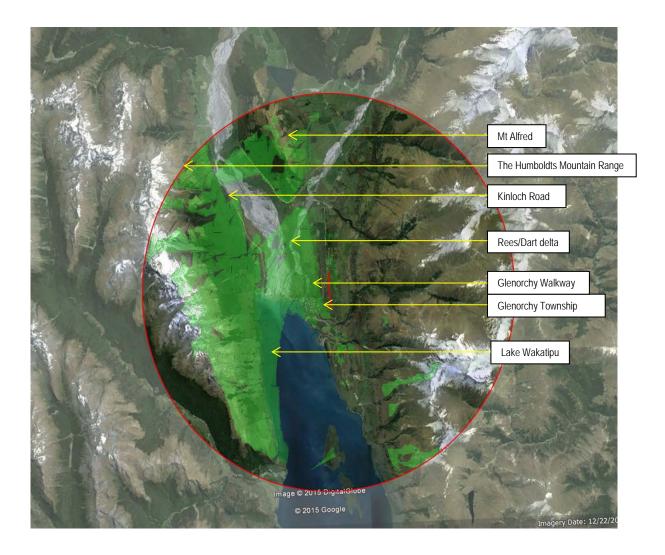


Figure 2: Zone of theoretical visibility diagram. The area highlighted in green illustrates land from which development within the proposed RLZ will potentially be visible. See Appendix 3 of this report for more information.



THE LANDSCAPE EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSAL

- 28. When describing effects, I will use the following hierarchy of adjectives:
 - Nil or negligible;
 - Slight;
 - Moderate;
 - Substantial;
 - Severe.
- 29. Landscape effects are the effects that an activity may have on the landscape as a resource in its own right. Landscape effects relate to landscape character and the elements and patterns that make up that character, rather than to visual issues. I have considered these effects with reference to the relevant statutory considerations.
- The character of the site and the landscape in which it sites has been discussed above. The site of the RLZ itself takes in land used as pasture, a vegetated slope and a rocky escarpment. At a broader scale the site sits within a dramatic landscape of high natural character (as can been seen on Appendix 3, Viewpoint Locations 4-10). The proposed RLZ will bring about a rural living area and the protection and enhancement of indigenous vegetation and ecosystems within the slope and escarpment areas of the site. These proposed activities will be surrounded by the existing farm activities within Wyuna Station.
- 31. The subsequent subdivision and development that will occur within the proposed RLZ has been described in paragraph 7 above. The terrace will contain up to 15 dwellings of limited height and recessive appearance that will be benched into the terrace landform. Vehicle access will be via an existing entrance point. Management of the slope and escarpment areas will maintain and enhance indigenous vegetation cover.
- 32. At the northern end of the proposed zone, the developable area of the zone takes the form of roadside paddocks that abut the existing RLZ. These paddocks continue to the north within the existing RLZ. They have not been developed in accordance with their zoning but they could potentially accommodate many dwellings. This northern part of the proposed zone does not contain any significant indigenous vegetation. It is contained to the east by the immediate backdrop of the toe of The Fort that separates it from the main farming area



of Wyuna Station. I consider that in terms of landscape character, this area of the proposed zone will appear as an extension of the pattern of the existing RLZ. However, being much thinner in an east–west direction than the existing area of RLZ and being contained to the flat pasture land, it will bring about much less density and less prominent development than the immediately adjacent existing zone. In terms of landscape character, it will create a feathered southern edge to the existing RLZ. When we consider the scale and nature of development enabled by the existing RLZ, I consider that the northern part of the proposed zone (approximately north of the woolshed) will be appropriate in terms of character; it will continue and round out the pattern of the existing zone.

- An increase in rural residential development will be brought about by the proposal. It will extend the rural living pattern of the existing RLZ north of the site across the terrace land that runs through the site. This thin terrace area of land is grazed but is primarily used for access through the farm and is illustrated in Appendix 3, Viewpoint Locations 1, 2 and 3. The area of the proposed RLZ is not of significant importance to the overall farming operation of Wyuna Station. Future dwellings and their associated activities located on the terrace will alter the current character within the developable area of the proposed zone. At a localised level this terrace area will change in character entirely; from a grassed terrace to accommodating perhaps 10-15 dwellings.
- While this terrace will change substantially in terms of character, at a broader scale the proposed zone will create a thin strip of rural living type development in close proximity to Glenorchy Township (future RLZ dwellings will be within 200-300 meters of the Township Zone). In terms of landscape character broadly, this is not an unexpected or unusual situation. Most of the district's townships have Rural Living Zones very close to them. Examples include Makarora, Hawea, Luggate and Albert Town. This is a common pattern throughout small townships of New Zealand; that outside the township itself (but close to it) there are enclaves of rural living land use. Indeed, the RLZ on Glenorchy Paradise Road, The Wyuna Preserve RLZ and the Blanket Bay Rural Visitor Zone all exist within 2 kilometres of Glenorchy Township.
- Therefore, in terms of overall landscape character, I do not see it as unexpected, unusual or adverse to change the relevant strip of land from a rural pattern to a rural living pattern (provided that visual effects are appropriate). A well designed rural development in this location that creates a feathered edge to the existing RLZ and that protects and enhances



an important hillslope can potentially sit very well in relation to landscape character patterns. The terrace landform and existing vegetation base provide an increased capacity for absorption and allow retention of openness and natural character.

- A large portion of the proposed RLZ takes in the lower slope and escarpment face of the toe of The Fort hillside. This area is to be protected from any future built form and a proposed policy will ensure that the indigenous vegetation and ecosystems that currently exist will be maintained and enhanced. With diligent use of Council's control at subdivision and dwelling consent stage, I consider that this policy will be able to be used to significantly enhance natural character in and around the rural living development that will occur. At subdivision stage, I would envisage conditions that require a comprehensive vegetation management plan is prepared and approved for the building restriction areas of the proposed zone.
- In summary, the rural residential activities will change the truly rural, agricultural landscape character of the terrace and paddocks that contain the developable area of the proposed zone. This area will become more modified and less rural. However in terms of broad scale landscape planning, I do not consider that a rural living area in this location adjacent to Glenorchy is unusual or adverse in terms of overall landscape character patterns, provided visual effects can be appropriately managed. In addition, I consider that the configuration of the zoning will provide for significant localised maintenance and enhancement of natural vegetative character.

THE VISUAL EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSAL

- 38. Visual effects are the effects that an activity may have on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people. Again, I have considered these effects with reference to the relevant statutory consideration.
- 39. Paragraph 26 sets out the observers that gain potential views of the proposed RLZ that may be affected by the proposal. The proposed Objectives and Policies will enable Council control at both subdivision and building consent stages. The outcomes of the proposed zone are discussed in my paragraph 7. It is relevant that dwelling sites within the developable area of the proposed RLZ gain dramatic views to the north, northwest and west. Earth mounding and/or vegetation that is designed to reduce visibility of dwellings



from Glenorchy will not reduce the quality of views available from these dwelling sites. Even if Glenorchy Township is screened, these dwelling sites will still gain spectacular views that include the surface of the lake, the river delta and the vast surrounding mountains. I discuss the potential visual effects brought about by the proposal in relation to potential observers below:

Users and occupiers of Glenorchy Township

- 40. Glenorchy Township is immediately west of the proposed RLZ. The township zone has largely been developed although some capacity still exists. Due to its proximity to the site and the site's topography, visibility of future built form will not be gained from the easternmost part of the township. This area primarily contains private land and locally used roads (as can be seen on the inset on Appendix 3, Viewpoint Location Map). The vegetated slope of the lower building restriction area is visually prominent from this part of the township.
- As one moves away from the site to the west into Glenorchy Township, viewing angles are such that the developable part of the proposed zone becomes more able to be seen. From Oban Street and further west, visibility of the horizontal line of the terrace would be easily available if not for the blocking effect of foreground elements (as can be seen on Appendix 3, Viewpoint Locations 4-10).
- 42. From any given viewpoint within the Glenorchy Township, visibility of the entire length of the terrace is not available. Built form and vegetation within the township create intermittent visibility of the terrace. From many parts of the township, the terrace is entirely screened. When travelling around the township, visibility differs from each location to the next. Ultimately, any given point on the terrace is visible from some point within Glenorchy Township.
- As described previously, I understand that the proposed Objectives, Policies and Council controls will mean that future dwellings will be appropriately located, be restricted in height, be benched into the terrace landform, be of visually recessive colours and be partially screened by naturalistic mounding and native vegetation. It is likely that the upper portions of future dwellings will be visible from numerous points within the western two thirds of Glenorchy Township. These parts of built form will be seen directly behind and in front of



the vegetation on the hillside and the escarpment face. This vegetation will be bolstered over time and consists of kanuka-dominated shrub species. Dark recessive external materials will also reduce the visual prominence of future dwellings when experienced from the township. I consider the dark colours of future built form visually blend in well with the vegetation that will be enhanced.

- Visible parts of buildings will interrupt the open character that is currently evident. However, in relation to the line and form of the landscape, the horizontal terrace on which the developable area is to be located currently reads as a break or obvious horizontal line on the slopes to the east of Glenorchy (as can be seen on Appendix 3, Viewpoints 5 to 11). This currently visible line, created by the terrace and the rocky escarpment behind it, is a visual interruption to the simplicity of the slopes of The Fort. It is on this horizontal line that parts of future buildings will be seen. In this sense, future development will be located such that it harmonises with the line and form of the landscape. Visually, it will be associated with an existing break point or interruption to landform; it will not create some entirely new visual interruption.
- In an overall consideration, it is my opinion that the Council will have good ability to use its controls at subdivision and dwelling construction stages to bring about built development that is relatively inconspicuous. Curtilage activities and vehicle access are likely to be completely hidden. While there will be some visibility, I do not consider that development will be dominant or prominent and it will be in the location of an existing landform break line in terms of geomorphology and legibility. Visibility will range up to a moderate degree at most.
- 46. In relation to how adverse this visual effect is, the district-wide community's aspirations are set out in the District Plan provisions cited in paragraph 8. These provisions generally seek that any development in an outstanding natural landscape setting is located in areas that have a higher capacity to absorb change. Due to the various factors discussed in this report, I consider that the developable area of the proposed zone certainly has a higher capacity to absorb change than most locations within the outstanding natural landscape surrounding Glenorchy. In this regard, I consider that the limited visibility of development that will eventually result from the proposed zone will not be significantly at odds with the district-wide community's aspirations.



47. Regarding the more specific Glenorchy community's aspirations, the parts of the Glenorchy Community Plan cited in paragraphs 11 and 12 of this report make it clear that retaining the undeveloped character of the town backdrop is an important community goal, as is revegetating parts of this backdrop. The proposed zoning will assist with the revegetation goal but will place development (albeit relatively inconspicuously) within this backdrop. In this regard, I consider that the visual effect of built form as seen from Glenorchy Township that has been described must be considered to be adverse.

Users of the Glenorchy Walkway including the boardwalk area

- The development area within the proposed RLZ is visible from roughly the western two thirds of the Glenorchy Walkway. The walkway meanders through a river delta area that is considerably covered in willows (as is illustrated by Appendix 3, Viewpoint Location 8). Views out to the developable area within the proposed RLZ and the surrounding landscape are intermittent and very often completely screened.
- Visibility of future dwellings from this walkway will be gained in a similar manner to views from Glenorchy Township that are discussed above. The proposed Objectives and Policies ensure that the Council has an appropriate level of control to require that mitigation measures are used to limit the visibility of future development and reduce the visual prominence of built form. I consider that the upper portions of future built form will be visible, however when experienced from the Glenorchy Walkway they will not appear visually prominent. Parts of the vegetated building restriction area will be easily seen and will read as the toe of the surrounding, containing mountain slopes. As discussed in relation to the township, the visibility of built form in this setting will reduce perceived natural character and must be considered to be adverse, however, this effect has been mitigated as much as possible and useful Council control will be retained.

Users of Lake Wakatipu and the Rees/Dart delta

Visibility of the entire length of the developable area can be gained from the surface of Lake Wakatipu and the Rees/Dart delta. The upper portions of future dwellings will be visible and as an observer gets further away from the site, viewing distances will mean that the site is seen more horizontally.



- Visibility will be gained at distances of between 2 and 4 kilometres. When viewed from such distances a vast panorama of the landscape including the surrounding surface of Lake Wakatipu, the Rees/Dart delta, Glenorchy Township and the surrounding mountains is visible. A viewer will look horizontally across Glenorchy Township to the proposed zone. The parts of visible development within the zone will begin to visually blend with the development of the township. In these more distant views, I consider that it will become difficult to distinguish the new development area from the existing town and both will be dwarfed by the surrounding mountains.
- From the Rees/Dart delta the northern portion of the proposed RLZ is visible. Development within this part of the proposed zone will be similarly visible to development provided for by the existing RLZ to the immediate north but will be kept to the foot of the slope. Future built form will have an immediate backdrop of the hillside to its east. When experienced from the Rees/Dart delta, I consider future development will appear in keeping with the development provided for by the existing RLZ but will be significantly lower and less conspicuous.
- Overall, I consider that development that results from the proposed zone will equate to a minor addition to the existing scene that is available from the lake surface and the Rees/Dart delta. Visual effects will be slight.

Users of Glenorchy Paradise Road

The northernmost portion of the proposed zone abuts the existing RLZ that is adjacent to Glenorchy Paradise Road. The existing RLZ provides for rural living properties with an average size of 2ha. The existing RLZ takes in topography that rises steeply from Glenorchy Paradise Road towards the east, up to an altitude of approximately 640masl (practically to the top of The Fort). Only small pockets of development have been done to date within this zone; the provision for many more dwellings remains. The Council will have control at subdivision and dwelling building stages to ensure that appropriate screening and mitigation measures are incorporated, enabling development to be inconspicuous when experienced from Glenorchy Paradise Road. When experienced alongside the existing RLZ I consider the proposed zone will have a slight degree of visual effect at most. It will read as a feathered or soft southern edge to the Rural Lifestyle area.



Users/occupiers of more distant areas such as Mount Alfred, parts of the Humboldts and the Kinloch Road

- The propose zone area will be visible from public and private places within the broader landscape. Visibility of future built form will be gained from Mount Alfred, parts of the Humboldts and the Kinloch Road at distances of 3.5km and upwards. When viewed from such distances, Lake Wakatipu, the Rees/Dart delta, Glenorchy Township and the surrounding mountains are visible. The area of the proposed zone amounts to a small element in a very broad scene.
- Apart from Kinloch Road and the flat river delta lands, these distant views of the proposed RLZ are gained from elevated locations. These elevated locations will gain visual access to the developable part of the proposed zone and also to the existing RLZ and Glenorchy Township. When experienced from these distant locations, the developable area will appear immediately adjacent to the built form of the Township and adjoined to the existing RLZ. Its close proximity to these two exiting areas of development means that, given viewing distances involved, these development areas will visually blend together. Future built form will be difficult to pick out or distinguish from the Township Zone. In any event, viewing distances will mean that new development will amount to a very minor visual addition to the existing scene. Effects will be of a slight degree.

CONCLUSIONS

- 57. An area of RLZ is proposed immediately adjacent to Glenorchy Township Zone. I understand that the details of the proposed zone mean that the development that ultimately results from the zone will:
 - Consist of up to 15 dwellings that will be situated on the existing terrace landform. Dwellings will be restricted in height and appearance so as to be relatively inconspicuous when viewed from Glenorchy Township.
 - Use earthworks to bed dwellings into the terrace landform and to create naturalistic earth mounding in order to assist in achieving inconspicuousness.
 - Include native vegetation enhancement and protection over the slope and escarpment parts of the proposed zone (the building restriction areas) in order



to bolster indigenous ecosystems and natural character and to assist in reducing visibility of built form.

- All of the Rural General Zone land outside of Glenorchy Township forms part of a vast outstanding natural landscape. Within this landscape, the developable area of the proposed zone takes the form of paddock land that has been used for farming purposes for many decades.
- In relation to landscape character, the proposal will change the character of the terrace itself from paddock land to an area of rural residential use. This will increase modification of the landscape and reduce natural character. Notwithstanding this, it is common for small townships to have a rural living area adjacent to them. I do not consider that locating an enclave of rural living development in close proximity to Glenorchy Township as proposed will lead to significantly unexpected, unusual or adverse effects in terms of landscape character patterns, provided that visual effects are appropriate and that the natural character of the slope and escarpment landforms within the zone (the most important areas in relation to the backdrop of Glenorchy) is enhanced.

60. In relation to visual effects:

- The visual effects of the proposed zone as experienced from Glenorchy have been mitigated as much as is practicable. Future development will not be invisible but will not be visually dominant or prominent. The most displayed parts of the relevant area (the escarpment and slope areas) will be visually enhanced in terms of their visible natural character. Visual effects of built form can be described as being of a moderate degree at worst. I consider that, given the Glenorchy community's goals as expressed in the Community Plan, this effect must be considered to be adverse.
- Visual effects as experienced from the Glenorchy Walkway are similar to those described in relation to the township, however views are more intermittent and less direct.
- Visual effects as experienced from Lake Wakatipu, the Rees/Dart Delta, Glenorchy
 Paradise Road and distant areas such as the Humboldts and Mount Alfred will be
 of a slight degree at worst.



61. Overall, I consider that the landscape and visual effects of the proposed zone have been well mitigated and there is considerable logic to the proposal in terms of landscape planning. There are some positive visual and landscape character effects associated with the maintenance and enhancement of the natural character of some slopes that are prominent parts of the backdrop to Glenorchy. There are, however, some residual visual effects as experienced from parts of Glenorchy Township.

Ben Espie

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