

BEFORE THE QUEENSTOWN-LAKES DISTRICT COUICL

IN THE MATTER of a hearing on submissions to the Proposed Queenstown Lakes District Plan pursuant to clause 8B of the First Schedule to the Resource Management Act 1991

ON BEHALF OF **MORVEN FERRY LIMITED (2449)**

**BARNHILL CORPORATE TRUSTEE LIMITED, D.E
AND M.E BUNN AND L.A GREEN (2509)**

Submitters

**EVIDENCE OF BENJAMIN ESPIE
(LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT)**

13th JUNE 2018

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 My name is Benjamin Espie. I reside in Queenstown. I hold the qualifications of Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (with honours) from Lincoln University and Bachelor of Arts from Canterbury University. I am a member of the Southern Branch of the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects and was the Chairman of that branch between 2007 and 2016. Since November 2004 I have been a director of Vivian and Espie Limited, a specialist resource management and landscape planning consultancy based in Queenstown. Between March 2001 and November 2004 I was employed as Principal of Landscape Architecture by Civic Corporation Limited, a resource management consultancy company contracted to the Queenstown Lakes District Council (**QLDC**).
- 1.2 The majority of my work involves advising clients regarding the protection of landscapes and amenity that the Resource Management Act 1991 provides and regarding the landscape provisions of various district and regional plans. I also produce assessment reports and evidence in relation to proposed development. The primary objective of these assessments and evidence is to ascertain the effects of proposed development in relation to landscape character and visual amenity.
- 1.3 Much of my experience has involved providing landscape and amenity assessments relating to resource consent applications and plan changes both on behalf of District Councils and private clients. I have compiled many assessment reports and briefs of Environment Court evidence relating to the landscape and amenity related aspects of proposed regimes of District Plan provisions in the rural areas of a number of districts. I have provided Environment Court evidence in relation to the landscape categorisation of the Wakatipu Basin, in relation to the formulation of the landscape related provisions that are now part of the Operative District Plan (**ODP**), and in relation to many resource consent applications and a number of plan changes within the Wakatipu Basin.
- 1.4 I have read the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses contained within the Environment Court Practice Note of November 2014 and agree to comply with it. This evidence is within my area of expertise, except where I state that I am relying on information I have been given by another

person. I confirm that I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions expressed herein.

- 1.5 In preparing this evidence I have reviewed the relevant submissions, further submissions and a statement of evidence prepared by Helen Mellsop dated 28th May 2018 (**Ms Mellsop's evidence**).

2. SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

- 2.1 The purpose of this evidence is to assist the Hearings Panel on matters within my expertise of landscape architecture and landscape planning in relation to Submissions 2449 and 2509 on the Proposed District Plan (**PDP**). I have been asked by the submitters to prepare evidence in relation to the landscape and visual effects of the requested changes to zoning in the Morven Ferry Road area.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 3.1 The relief sought by Submitters 2449 and 2509 has been amended since the time of the submissions. I support the amended relief and consider that development enabled by the relief will sit comfortably within its context without inappropriately degrading landscape character or visual amenity.
- 3.2 I consider that the part of Schedule 24.8 that relates to LCU18 should be amended as per the submissions; that capability to absorb additional development should be stated as "moderate-low".

4. RELIEF SOUGHT

- 4.1 Submissions 2449 and 2509 seek a number of changes to PDP Chapter 24 and related chapters. I have only been asked to consider the landscape and visual effects of the proposed areas of zoning in the Morven Ferry Road area that these submissions seek. I have not considered the various other changes to the PDP provisions that these submissions seek.

Submission 2449 (and Stage 1 Submission 629)

- 4.2** Submission 2449 relates to the land of Morven Ferry Ltd (27ha, as shown on Appendix 1 to this brief). Stage 1 Submission 629 also relates to this land. Submission 629 seeks that the relevant area of the Movern Ferry Ltd (**MFL**) land is zoned Rural Residential Zone (**RRZ**), which would allow for subdivision to a 4000m² minimum lot size. In broad terms this would allow for approximately 37 rural living lots as shown on Appendix 1 of my 629 landscape report. Submission 2449 also seeks that the relevant area of MFL land is zoned RRZ but, in the alternative, it is sought that the land is zoned Wakatipu Basin Lifestyle Precinct (**WBLP**) but with a minimum lot size of 4000m².
- 4.3** The 2449 submission sought a 4000m² average lot size provision. In order to alleviate some concerns raised, the submitters now seek a 4000m² minimum lot size provision.
- 4.4** I prepared a landscape and visual effects assessment report dated 16 October 2016 in relation to the relief sought by Submission 629 (**the 629 landscape report**). I do not attach that report but I understand that it is part of the Commissioners' agenda. As I will elaborate upon, the 629 landscape report finds that the landscape character effects of the proposed area of zoning in this location will be less than they would in many parts of the district. The scale of the effect will be limited to a relatively infrequently accessed part of the basin and will not affect the broader Wakatipu Basin. In relation to visual effects, the 629 report finds that development that results from the proposal will be in a relatively hidden part of the basin and will be inconspicuous.

Submission 2509 (and Stage 1 Submission 626)

- 4.5** Submission 2509 relates to land owned by the Bunn family (as shown on Appendix 1 to this brief). Stage 1 Submission 626 also relates to this land. Submission 626 seeks that the relevant area of the Barnhill land is zoned a combination of RRZ, Rural Visitor Zone (**RVZ**) and Rural Visitor Zone Restricted (**RVZR**). In relation to these proposed areas of zoning (and with reference to Appendix 1 of my 626 landscape report):
- The RRZ would allow for subdivision to a 4000m² minimum lot size. This would equate to approximately 24 lots in the western proposed area of RRZ (**RRZ-W**) and approximately 10 lots in the eastern proposed area of RRZ (**RRZ – E**). Again, the 2509 submission sought

a 4000m² average lot size provision but this is now amended to a 4000m² minimum lot size provision.

- The RVZ, being 1.5ha adjoining the western side of Morven Ferry Road (also referred to as **RVZ Area A**), would provide for dense tourist/visitor development in a small cluster or village-like configuration.
- The RVZ-R, being 18.7ha adjoining the western side of Morven Ferry Road (also known as **RVZ Area B**), would provide for a particularly low density of tourist/visitor development. I understand that the landowners envisage a camping area, a bed and breakfast operation and accommodation villas.

4.6 Submission 2509 also seeks the zoning described above but, in the alternative, it is sought that proposed RRZ areas are zoned WBLP but with a minimum lot size of 4000m². Additionally (as is detailed in Mr Freeman's evidence), further provisions are now proposed to restrict development within the RVZ Areas A and B as follows:

- Buildings will require a restricted discretionary resource consent rather than a controlled activity resource consent.
- A building height standard of 8 metres will apply, although 1 viticultural building of 10 metres height is provided for.
- A maximum building footprint standard of 300m² will apply to any given building, although 1 viticultural building of 500m² footprint is provided for.
- A maximum total built form footprint area of 1,500m² will apply to the RVZ Area A. A maximum total built form footprint area of 3,000m² will apply to the RVZ Area B.
- All buildings must be setback at least 35 metres from Morven Ferry Road

4.7 I prepared a landscape and visual effects assessment report dated 16 October 2016 in relation to the relief sought by Submission 626 (**the 626 landscape report**). I do not attach that report but I understand that it is part of the Commissioners' agenda. As I will elaborate upon, the 626

landscape report again finds that the landscape character effects of the areas of zoning sought by Submission 626 in this location will be less than they would in many parts of the district. These effects will again be restricted to an infrequently accessed part of the basin. In terms of visual effects, development that results from the proposed relief will not be discordant with a pleasant rural landscape and will be in a relatively hidden part of the Wakatipu Basin. The ultimate appearance of finished development will be dependent upon the detailed design of development within the proposed zones, which the QLDC will retain control over. I consider that the additional provisions that are now proposed will further reduce the effect of the requested relief.

5. THE WAKATIPU BASIN LAND USE PLANNING STUDY

5.1 In late 2016 / early 2017, the QLDC commissioned and received the Wakatipu Basin Land Use Planning Study (**WBLUPS**) that was intended to give guidance regarding a suitable zoning regime for the Wakatipu Basin based on a study of the landscape character and visual amenity of the basin. The WBLUPS identifies 25 Landscape Character Units (**LCUs**) within the basin and the areas proposed to be rezoned by the relevant submissions falls almost entirely within LCU 18 – Morven Eastern Foothills. I attach to this report as Appendices 2 and 3, the relevant map and description table from the WBLUPS.

5.2 I largely agree with the descriptive comments set out in the WBLUPS table that forms Appendix 3 to this report and I believe they form a useful background for the assessment of effects of potential areas of zoning. Drawing from this and from my own assessment, I consider that the landscape character of the vicinity within which the site sits can be described as a rolling countryside that supports some rural living use but is dominated by farming. The dead-end nature of Morven Ferry Road means that a relative lack of busyness, traffic and people is a relevant characteristic. Particularly relevant parts of the WBLUPS' description of this LCU are:

Predominantly rural lifestyle / hobby farming and more generously proportioned working rural lots with a limited amount of rural residential development evident.

Not located near a key route. Morven Ferry Road is a dead-end road.

The somewhat sleepy backwater location (on a dead-end road), together with its (relatively) lower-lying topography means that the unit is not particularly prominent in terms of the wider basin landscape. The area is visible from the western edges of the Crown Terrace, the tracks throughout the ONL to the east

(Mt Beetham environs) and the zigzag lookout. The diminishing influences of distance and relative elevation, in conjunction with the relative unimportance (visually) of the unit within the wider panorama reduces the unit's prominence.

A low level of landscape coherence. Vegetation patterns generally do not reinforce landform features.

Generally, the area reads as a mixed rural and rural lifestyle / hobby farming area that functions as a transition between the mountain ONL and the lower-lying and more 'developed' river terrace to the north and east.

The unit's very close proximity to ONLs and ONFs, location on a popular walkway/cycleway route together with the role of the area as a transition between the mountain ONL and the lower-lying and more 'developed' river terrace to the north and east, makes it sensitive to additional development.

Hummocky landform on western side of Morven Ferry Road, and vegetation patterns on eastern side of Morven Ferry Road, suggest the potential to absorb additional development.

Larger-scaled lots suggest the potential for subdivision.

Riparian, pond, and wetland restoration potential.

Dead-end road – limited 'profile'.

- 5.3** Overall, the WBLUPS' table gives the Morven Eastern Foothills LCU a "low" rating in terms of capacity to absorb additional development.
- 5.4** The LCU that the WBLUPS identifies to the north of the Morven Eastern Foothills unit is LCU 17 – Morven Ferry. I attach to this report as Appendices 4 and 5, the relevant map and description table from the WBLUPS.
- 5.5** The descriptions of the two separate units are very similar. Many of the entries in the descriptions are practically identical from one unit to the other. The descriptions imply that naturalness is marginally higher in the foothills than on the flats and that visibility/prominence is higher on the flats than in the foothills. I generally agree with these findings. I can see no justification why the flats have been given a "moderate-low" capacity to absorb development, while the foothills have been given a "low" capacity. I agree with the suggested adjustments to the descriptions and capacity that are put forward by the two submissions. I consider that both units should be given the same capacity rating and "moderate-low" is the appropriate term in my opinion. As can be seen on the Appendix 2 and 4 images, the flats area has more existing buildings than the foothills

(and therefore is generally less natural) but the foothills unit has much more variable topography due to its rolling, hummocky landform that creates many concealed areas and hence has much more ability to accommodate development that is visually hidden. Existing vegetation enhances this ability to accommodate development. Specifically demarcated areas of zoning (such as those sought) can sensitively respond to landform and other factors to provide for development in a way that does not degrade overall landscape character.

5.6 I take some support from Dr Marion Read’s report that was prepared in relation to the District Plan Review but before the notification of the PDP¹. That report considers the Morven foothills and the flats together as one landscape unit and describes it as follows:

Landscape Area	Extent of Rural Character	Key Characteristics	Vulnerability to Character Change	Contribution to visual amenity	Vulnerability of Visual Amenity
Morven Ferry (22)	Moderately High	Agricultural activities Pasture Hummocky topography Lifestyle development Hawthorn hedges	Moderate Presence of lifestyle development along the road margins at capacity	Moderate to low	Moderate to low owing to topography and location away from important roads. Cycle way not considered.

5.7 Based on the above, and on my own assessment, I again consider that a rating of “low” capacity to absorb development is not justified for the LCU 18 – Morven Eastern Foothills.

5.8 In any event, a rating of capacity to absorb development given for an entire landscape unit (the WBLUPS’ LCU 18 – Morven Eastern Foothills landscape is approximately 2.5km² in area) is necessarily a generalisation. It does not examine a specific site or a specific proposed zoning solution, which is what I have done in my 626 and 629 landscape reports and in this evidence. As is elaborated upon below, I consider that the specific relief sought by Submissions 2449 and 2509 can be absorbed into this LCU (and the broader Wakatipu Basin landscape) in a way that appropriately maintains the landscape character of LCU18 as described in Schedule 24.8 of the PDP (bearing in mind that the LCU descriptions of Schedule 24.8 were prepared as part of the WBLUPS before any of the zonings of the Wakatipu Basin Variation were proposed).

¹ Marion Read, *Wakatipu Basin Residential Subdivision and Development: Landscape Character Assessment*, a report to the QLDC, dated June 2014.

6. THE 629 LANDSCAPE REPORT REGARDING THE MORVEN FERRY LTD LAND

6.1 The 629 landscape report considers the landscape and visual effects of RRZ zoning across the Morven Ferry Ltd land as shown on Appendix 1. In summary, the conclusions of that report are:

- *In relation to landscape character, the proposed zone location itself will change from an area of pasture land to an area accommodating all the trappings of rural living. The rural character of the Morven Ferry / Arrow Junction Road area is valued by the community (as is the case with all VAL land) but it is not valued as highly as the ONL areas of the district. The character of this area will move some way towards a character in which rural living is a more central characteristic. Consequently, the landscape resource will be adversely affected in that rural character will be reduced, however, the degree of this effect is less than it would be in many parts of the district.*
- *In relation to visual effects, future development will appear relatively inconspicuous from Morven Ferry Road, particularly if some provisions or mechanisms maintain and enhance the existing vegetation on the northern boundary of the proposed zone. There will be a slight to moderate degree of visual effect on users of part of the Twin Rivers Trail. There will be some effect on travellers descending the Crown Range Road zig-zag, but this will ultimately be of a slight degree only. There will be a substantial visual effect on observers in the eastern part of the neighbouring Hamilton property but views from the homestead area of the Hamilton property will not be affected. No relevant submission or further submission has been lodged by the Hamilton landowners.*
- *The landscape character effect described above will increase in extent if we consider the MFL proposal in combination with the Barnhill proposal. However, the effect would be substantial in any event. This type of landscape character effect is practically inevitable when seeking to create new areas of development zoning in rural areas. In relation to visual effects, there will not be a significant combined effect over and above the effects of each proposal individually.*

6.2 As set out previously, Submission 2449 seeks that the relevant area of MFL land is zoned RRZ but, in the alternative, it is sought that the land is zoned WBLP but with a minimum lot size of 4000m².

- 6.3** The alternative relief sought is very similar to the primary relief. Both would generally provide for rural living activity down to a minimum lot size of 4000m². The only significant difference being that the WBLP provisions are slightly more stringent than those of the RRZ and allow more control of activities by the QLDC.
- 6.4** A rural living zoning with lot sizes of 4000m² and above will bring about a considerable density of rural residential activities including dwellings, associated structures, access ways, fences, amenity planting, lawns, busyness and the presence of people. Rural living areas of this sort generally develop a relatively green, treed appearance over time as owners seek to maximise amenity and privacy. The North Lake Hayes / Rutherford Road area, The Rapley Close / Whitechapel area and the Baywaters Lane area of Wilson's Bay are good examples. A busy, relatively dense (for a rural area) but well treed type of character emerges.

7. THE 626 LANDSCAPE REPORT REGARDING THE BARNHILL LAND

- 7.1** The 626 landscape report considers the landscape and visual effects of a combination of RRZ, RVZ and RVZR on the Barnhill land as shown on Appendix 1. In summary, the conclusions of that report are:

- *In relation to landscape character, the proposed zone locations themselves will change considerably. The southern Morven Ferry Road area (approximately south of the Arrow Junction Road intersection), which has recently had parts of the Queenstown Trail added to it, will increase in busyness, activity and modification to the degree that it will no longer be dominated by pastoral/agricultural activities but by rural living/visitor activities. Considerable open land will remain. The Plan sets out that the rural character of this area is valued by the community (as is the case with all VAL land) but it is not valued as highly as the ONL areas of the district. Consequently, the landscape resource will be adversely affected in that rural character will be reduced but the degree of this effect is less than it would be in many parts of the district and will ultimately be determined by the exact natural and appearance of future development within the areas of zoning (which the Council will retain control over).*
- *In relation to visual effects:*
 - *Users of Morven Ferry Road will gain clear visibility of the RVZ and RVZ-R. The visual experience will be of a dense node of development in a rural setting. The degree to*

which the effect is adverse will be determined by future detailed development design. Nodes of this sort can be attractive and sit well in a rural setting.

- *Users of the public trails will gain clear views of all areas of proposed zoning. The visual experience will become less rural, less remote and less quiet. The future developed area is also likely to be a valuable stopping or destination point. This visual effect will relate to a relatively short stretch of trail; users may pass relatively quickly.*
- *There will be little visual effect on users of SH6. Views to the relevant area are peripheral.*
- *Some immediately adjacent neighbouring properties will gain clear views to future development. In most cases, the most valued views of these properties will not be affected. Nonetheless, edge treatment and design of future development in relation to these neighbours will be important.*
- *The landscape character effect described above will increase in extent if we consider the MFL proposal in combination with the Barnhill proposal. However, the effect would be substantial in any event. This type of landscape character effect is practically inevitable when seeking to create new areas of development zoning in rural areas. In relation to visual effects, there will not be a significant combined effect over and above the effects of each proposal individually.*

7.2 As set out previously, Submission 2509 seeks the zoning described above across the relevant area of the Barnhill land but, in the alternative, it is sought that the proposed RRZ areas are zoned WBLP but with a minimum lot size of 4000m².

7.3 Again, the alternative relief sought is very similar to the primary relief, the only difference being that the slightly more stringent WBLP provisions will control the ultimate development outcome.

7.4 The additional proposed provisions that will further constrain development that I summarise in my paragraph 4.5 restrict development more than the situation that I assessed in my 626 landscape report. The actual outcome that the landowners envisage has not changed but these additional restrictions will provide more certainty.

8. MS MELLSON'S EVIDENCE

8.1 Ms Mellson's evidence considers the relief sought by Submissions 2449 and 2509. Obviously, her evidence does not take account of the further restrictive provisions that are now proposed (as summarised in my paragraph 4.5). I consider that these further provisions go some way to alleviate Ms Mellson's concerns.

8.2 Ms Mellson points out that existing consented subdivision has had or will have some domesticating effect on the relevant vicinity². I agree but note that this consented subdivision activity is part of the receiving environment. As Ms Mellson explains, the subdivision approved by RM171268 is a reconfiguration of the previously approved subdivision RM100395.

8.3 In her paragraph 4.2, Ms Mellson supports the WBLUPS' finding that the LCU Unit 18 has a "low" capability to absorb further development. I have set out in my Section 5 above, why I consider that "moderate-low" is a more appropriate descriptor. Ms Mellson gives the following reasons why she supports a "low" rating:

- *The proximity of the land to ONFs or ONLs on three sides;*
- *The strong rural character of the unit, which has a comparatively low density of rural living, and retains a sense of rural remoteness, tranquillity and quietness;*
- *The role of the unit as a transition between the more developed river terrace of Morven Ferry to the north and the ONL to the west and south; and*
- *The visibility of the unit from the parts of the popular Queenstown Trail that are defined as public places. This includes the sections of the trail adjacent to Morven Ferry and Arrow Junction roads and the branch of the Arrow River Bridges Trail that heads east to the Edgar Bridge, but excludes the section of the Twin Rivers Trail that crosses the submitters' land on a public easement.*

8.4 In relation to these reasons, I do not agree that the proximity to ONLs and/or ONFs necessarily decreases the capability of an area to absorb development or makes it unsuitable to be zoned for rural living. Nor do I agree that there is any inherent merit in having a "transitional area"

² Ms Mellson's evidence, paragraph 7.41.

between an ONL and a development area. For example, the notified Wakatipu Basin variation places the following rural living areas (WBLP) immediately adjacent to ONLs / ONFs:

- Arrow Junction,
- Alec Robbins Road,
- Tucker Beach Road;
- Lower Shotover;
- The southern part of the Dalefield / Fitzpatrick Road area.

8.5 A number of the above areas of WBLP are developed rural living zones pursuant to the ODP. I consider this to be entirely appropriate and not unexpected; in many cases more developed land can (and does) appropriately sit immediately adjacent to an ONL. There are many other examples of this throughout the district. In any event, under the requested situation, rural living or RVZ zoning will not adjoin the ONL; it will be separated from it by an area of WBRAZ.

8.6 In relation to the second bullet point of paragraph 8.3, I agree that the amount of built form in LCU 18 is less than that in LCU 17 and therefore LCU 18 has a lower density of rural living. However, again, I do not see that this should be determinative in relation to the absorption capacity of the landscape unit. As the LCU description tables of the WBLUPS (and PDP) set out, LCU 18 is less visually prominent than LCU 17 and topography allows more opportunity for hidden and sensitively designed development. Of LCU 18, the PDP notes that “*the somewhat sleepy backwater location (on a dead-end road), together with its (relatively) low-lying topography means that the unit is not particularly prominent in terms of the wider basin landscape*”³. I consider that this is a particularly important point. In terms of landscape sensitivity and capacity to absorb development, an important overall issue is the cumulative effects of residential land use on the landscape character and visual amenity of the Wakatipu Basin. Locations such as the southern Morven Ferry area that allow for potential development that will not sully the character or amenity

³ Notified PDP (Wakatipu Basin Variation), Schedule 24.8, LCU 18.

of the broader Wakatipu Basin are few and far between. I consider that this is an important point in favour of capability to absorb development.

- 8.7** Regarding the final bullet point of paragraph 8.3, it is important to note that only relatively small parts of LCU 18 are plainly visible from the public parts of the trails network (the section immediately adjacent to Morven Ferry Road and the section that follows the Arrow River corridor to Edgar Bridge). Variable and rising topography in relation to these parts of the trail mean that much of the unit is hidden. In relation to the basin as a whole, and in relation to other units that the WBLUPS and PDP gives a higher capability to absorb, LCU 18 is particularly hidden and peripheral.
- 8.8** In her paragraphs 7.43 to 7.44, Ms Mellsop suggests some amended wording to the descriptive parts of Schedule 24.8. I agree that her suggested wording is helpful.
- 8.9** In her paragraph 7.47, Ms Mellsop states that a 4000m² average lot size is unlikely to retain rural amenity and that the areas of RRZ that are sought would represent spot zones that may lead to reverse sensitivity issues. I have discussed the proposed lot size provisions above; an average lot size provision is no longer sought. I point out that a 4000m² minimum lot size has been part of the ODP RRZ for approximately the last two decades. The intention of the RRZ is described in the ODP by way of the following:
- *Rural lifestyle and rural residential living reflects a desire by some people to live on small holdings in a rural environment while undertaking only limited farming or no farming at all.*
 - *The purpose of Rural-lifestyle and Rural-Residential Zones is to provide for low density residential opportunities as an alternative to the suburban living areas of the District.*
 - *The Rural Residential Zone is anticipated to be characterised by low density residential areas with ample open space, landscaping and with minimal adverse environmental effects experienced by residents. Rural activities are not likely to remain a major use of land in the Rural Residential Zone or a necessary part of the rural residential environment⁴.*
- 8.10** The RRZs of the district are generally small in area. Examples that have been developed to some maturity include the north Lake Hayes/Rutherford Road/Speargrass Flat Road area, the Whitechapel/Rapley Close area and the Baywaters Lane area in Wilson Bay. Obviously, many

⁴ ODP, Sections 8.1.1 and 8.2.

areas of RRZ form part of the PDP outside of the Wakatipu Basin. I consider that well-located areas of RRZ can certainly maintain rural landscape character and amenity for the land that surrounds them, there are many examples of this throughout the district. Inside the actual zoned areas themselves, a large-lot residential character develops with considerable open space and (almost always) considerable tree planting. This accords entirely with the purpose of the zone; to create living opportunities set within rural landscapes in a way that does not detract from the landscape character and visual amenity of the immediate area and the wider context. I can see no amenity of character benefit in increasing the proposed lot size.

8.11 In her paragraph 7.47 Ms Mellsop compares the area proposed to be rezoned to the rest of LCU 18 in general and finds that *“there are no particular characteristics that distinguish the proposed rezoning areas from surrounding land within LCU 18, apart from the limited visibility of the upper western plateau from public places”*. Certainly, according with limited visibility and avoiding areas of exposure have been the main drivers for configuring the proposed zoning. However, the proposed RVZ Area A has been configured to present itself to Morven Ferry Road and to the intersection of the trails, although a 35-metre setback is no proposed.

8.12 Ms Mellsop goes on to say that development in the proposed RVZ Area A will be highly visible from Morven Ferry Road. She notes that:

“While I consider there may be some potential for a single-storey low key commercial or visitor accommodation development to be absorbed within the landscape, I do not consider development enabled by a Rural Visitor zoning would be appropriate from a landscape perspective”⁵.

8.13 It is proposed that an 8m height restriction apply to RRZ Area A, a maximum total footprint of 1,500m² and a road setback of 35 metres. I understand that a node of activity akin to the Gibbston Valley Winery complex or Cardrona Hotel is envisaged. Many areas of RVZ in the district are plainly visible from adjacent roads or public places. The rationale of these zones is that they are small, dense, visitor village type developments. I understand that the logic of having these areas of zoning has always been that they sit as a discrete element and do not impact on the broader rural landscape character in a significant way. The ODP states that:

The Rural Visitor Zones contain important recreation and visitor facilities, including accommodation and other visitor attractions.

⁵ Ms Mellsop's evidence, paragraph 7.51.

Significant physical resources in terms of buildings and facilities exist or are proposed in all the zones both as attractions in their own right or as facilities which serve the visitor industry and surrounding rural or recreation activities. This is particularly the case in respect of those facilities at Cardrona located on the Crown Range Road.

The most distinguishing feature of the Visitor Zones is their compact size, general self-sufficiency and distance from the main urban centres⁶.

- 8.14** In terms of landscape planning, this appears entirely logical. Not all visitor activities in the district can sit within the townships. Additionally, the location of the area of RVZ that is sought accords with the above description. It is located at a key junction on the Queenstown trail network, which is becoming an increasingly popular visitor asset.
- 8.15** In her paragraph 7.52, Ms Mellsop criticises the proposed building coverage provision in relation to the RVZ Area B, which would allow for 9350m² of total built form. As set out in paragraph 4.4, the submitters envisage a camping area, a bed and breakfast operation and accommodation villas in this area. Consequently, the proposed provision has been amended such that 3000m² of total built form is now provided for, spread over an area of 18.7ha and subject to future resource consent applications of at least restricted discretionary status. I consider that these provisions will successfully ensure that Area B develops as a particularly low-density area of visitor activities which is very much dominated by rural open space.
- 8.16** Overall, I consider that a visitor related development as restricted by the proposed provisions can sit appropriately and proudly in the proposed location without inappropriately detracting from the landscape character and visual amenity of the Morven Ferry Road vicinity or the wider Wakatipu Basin.

9. FURTHER SUBMISSIONS

- 9.1** No further submissions have been received in relation to Submissions 2449 or 2509.
- 9.2** In relation to Stage 1 Submissions 626 and 629, four further submissions⁷ opposed the relief sought (although two of these were by P and V West). In relation to landscape issues, these

⁶ ODP, Section 12.3.1.

⁷ Further Submissions 1151, 1144, 1147 and 1022.

further submissions raise some issues but are very general in nature. The relevant points raised are:

- Further Submission 1151: *The effect of the "Green belt" landscape – gate into Queenstown would be hugely down-graded, especially after losing 5 Mile.*
- Further Submissions 1144 and 1147: *Increased housing / development in area will result in loss of rural character and amenity values in an area that is one of the few remaining areas in the Basin that has not been modified through development.*
- Further Submission 1022: *Concerned the proposed changes will degrade the pastoral character and scenic / open space values of the rural landscape.*

9.3 In relation to Further Submission 352, I agree that preserving visual amenity and a pastoral landscape character as experienced from the SH6 entrance to the Wakatipu Basin and Queenstown area are particularly important issues. I consider that the relief sought will have a particularly slight degree of effect in relation to this issue. A stretch of SH6 to the east of the areas of proposed zoning allow some visibility but this is difficult to gain and is particularly peripheral in relation to the visual amenity of a highway user. This issue has been discussed in the 626 and 629 landscape reports.

9.4 Further Submissions 1022, 1144 and 1147 raise issues associated with loss of rural/pastoral character, amenity values, open space and scenic values. My consideration of these issues is set out at length in my 626 and 629 landscape reports. I summarise my findings in earlier sections of this evidence and in my conclusions below.

10. CONCLUSIONS

10.1 I have examined the amended relief sought by Submitters 2449 and 2509. I confirm the findings of my 626 and 629 landscape reports. Most importantly:

- The landscape character effects of the relief sought will be limited to a relatively infrequently accessed part of the basin and will not affect the broader Wakatipu Basin.

Additionally, the activities enabled will not be discordant with existing patterns or with a pleasant rural landscape.

- In relation to visual effects, the activities enabled by the relief will sit in a relatively hidden part of the Wakatipu Basin. The activities will generally be inconspicuous although the RVZ activities will address Morven Ferry Road (although will be well set back). These RVZ activities will sit as an appropriate element adjacent to a key junction of the Queenstown Trails network.

10.2 Regarding the WBLUPS and Schedule 24.8, I consider that while LCU18 has some differences from, LCU17, it does not have a lower capability to absorb development. As the Schedule 24.8 descriptions show, the two units are very similar and, while LCU18 accommodates less existing built form, it has much more variable landform, allowing more ability to accommodate hidden development.

10.3 Notwithstanding the “capability to absorb additional development” entry for the entirety of LCU18 within Schedule 24.8 (which I recommend to be moderate-low), I consider that development enabled by the specific relief sought can be absorbed into the specific part of LCU18 on which it is located without inappropriately degrading the landscape character and visual amenity of the LCU or the broader Wakatipu Basin landscape.

10.4 Of LCU18, the notified Schedule 24.8 sets out that “*the somewhat sleepy backwater location (on a dead-end road), together with its (relatively) low-lying topography means that the unit is not particularly prominent in terms of the wider basin landscape*”⁸. I consider that this is a particularly important point in relation to cumulative effects of residential land use on the landscape character and visual amenity of the Wakatipu Basin. The relief sought will allow for development that will not sully the character or amenity of the broader Wakatipu Basin. Locations of this sort are unusual within the basin.

10.5 In general terms, I consider that well-located areas of RRZ with a 4000m² minimum lot size can maintain rural landscape character and amenity for the land that surrounds them. There are many examples of this throughout the district.

⁸ Notified PDP (Wakatipu Basin Variation), Schedule 24.8, LCU 18.

ATTACHED APPENDICES

- 1 PLAN OF AMENDED RELIEF
- 2 WBLUPS MAP OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER UNIT 18
- 3 WBLUPS / PDP SCHEDULE FOR LANDSCAPE CHARACTER UNIT 18
- 4 WBLUPS MAP OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER UNIT 17
- 5 WBLUPS / PDP SCHEDULE FOR LANDSCAPE CHARACTER UNIT 17.

Ben Espie

vivian+espie

13th June 2018



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 Morven Ferry Road, Arrow Junction
 Appendix 1: Zone Plan
 Ben Espie - Landscape Planner - 12th June 2018

- Legend**
- Morven Ferry Rural Visitor Zone A
 - Morven Ferry Rural Visitor Zone B
 - Morven Ferry Road Rural Residential Zone / Wakatipu Basin Lifestyle Precinct
 - Queenstown Trail
 - Outstanding Natural Feature boundary (from District Plan review)

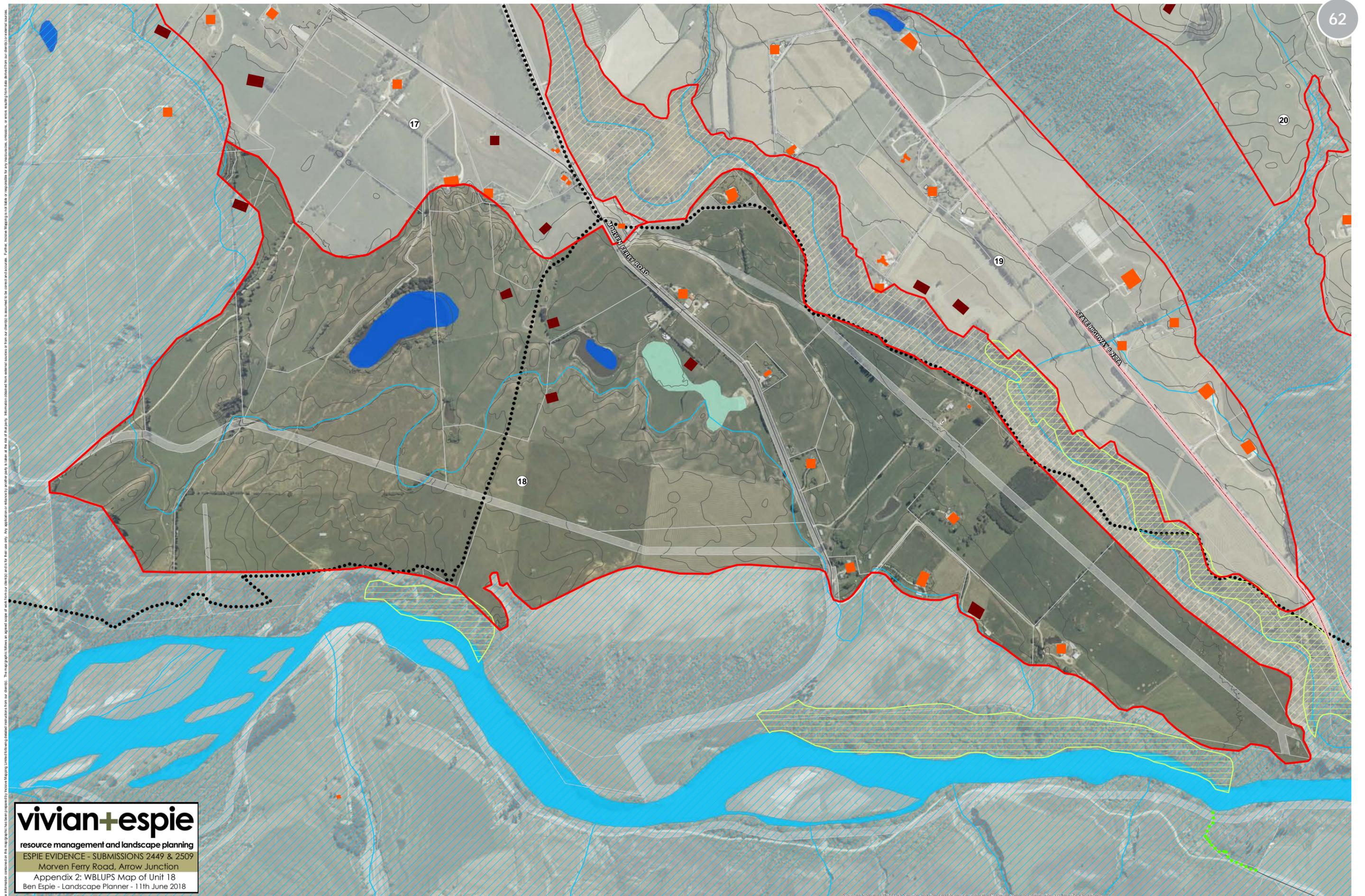
REV.	DATE	REVISION DETAILS	BY:
D	11/6/18	Labels	BM
C	8/6/18	Setback line extension	BM
B	22/5/18	RM171268 Platform Updates	KB
A	22/10/15	Initial release	BM

**PROPOSED ZONE PLAN
 MORVEN FERRY ROAD
 WAKATIPU BASIN**

DATE: 11 June 2018	Scale: 1:4000	DRAWING & ISSUE No.:
BY: BM & KB	Original Plan A3	3015-53A-1D

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 Morven Ferry Road, Arrow Junction
 Appendix 2: WBLUPS Map of Unit 18
 Ben Espie - Landscape Planner - 11th June 2018

INCISIVE MAPPING
 Author: Matt Daniels (matt.daniels@incisivemapping.co.nz) | Reviewed: Bridget Gilbert
 Data Sources: LINZ/Eagle (Aerial), LINZ (NZTopo Database, Crown Copyright Reserved),
 Landscape Research (LCDB4), Queenstown Lakes District Council (Buildings, SHAs, Landscape
 Units, Zones, ONE/ONE, Contours, Recreation, Lots, Roads), Bridget Gilbert, Incisive Mapping
 File Ref: 2016-13, Wakatipu_Basin_Landscape_Character_Units_2016_Map_Series_A1_RevB.mxd



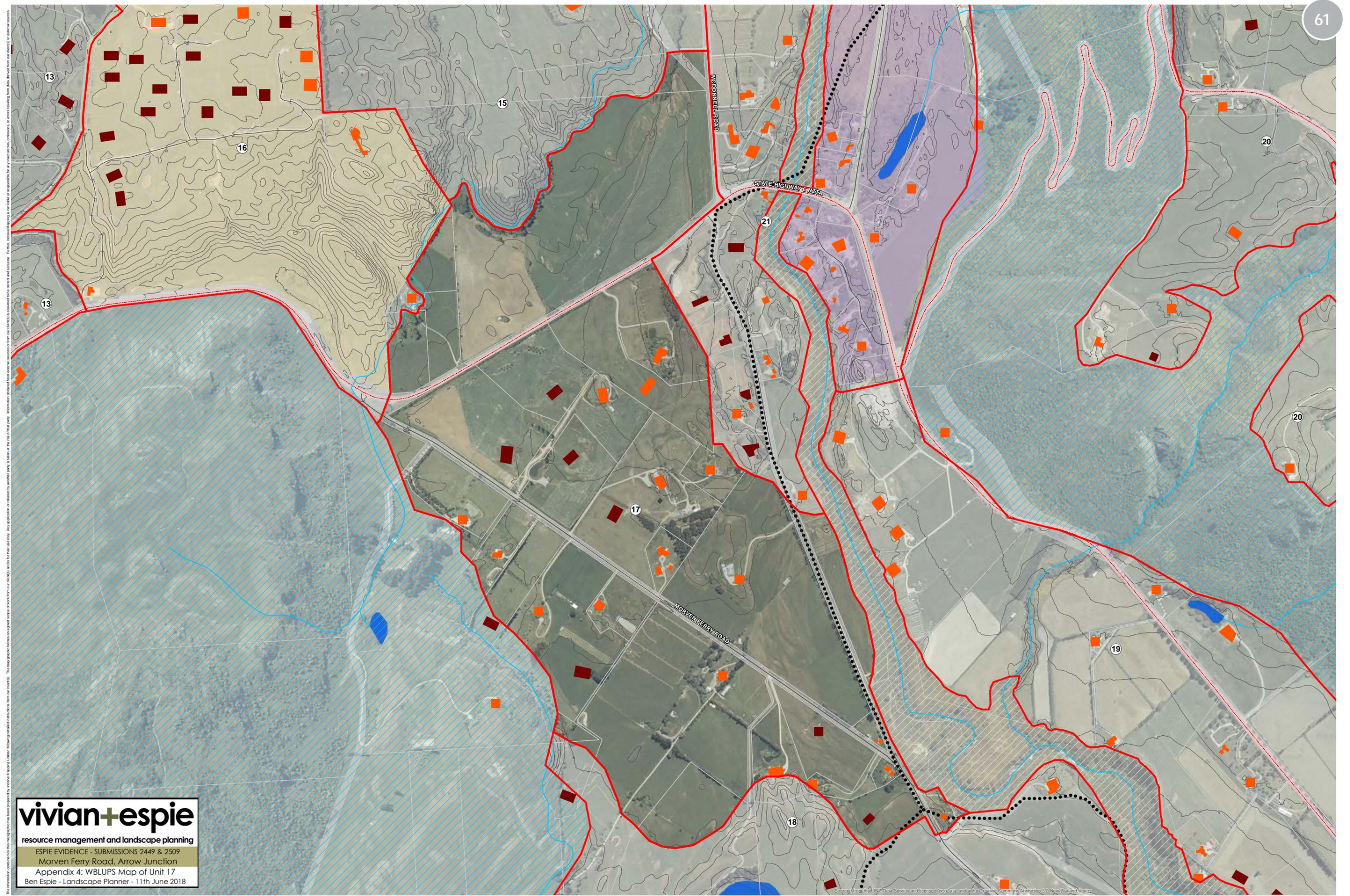
- ▬ Landscape Character Units (2016)
- Council Walkways and MTB Trails
- ▬ Contours (5m)
- ▬ RAMM Carriageway Centrelines
- ▬ Rural Scenic Roads
- ▬ Lot Boundaries
- ▬ Special Zones
- ▬ Rural Lifestyle
- ▬ Rural Residential
- ▬ Road Zones
- ▬ Approved SHAs
- ▬ Approved SHAs & Resource Consent Issued
- ▬ Rural Building Status
- ▬ Existing Dwellings
- ▬ Consented Platforms
- ▬ Urban Growth Boundary
- ▬ Waterfall
- ▬ Water Race
- ▬ River
- ▬ River (Wide Channel)
- ▬ Lake / Pond
- ▬ Swamp
- ▬ Indigenous Forest
- ▬ Outstanding Natural Feature
- ▬ Outstanding Natural Landscape

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Wakatipu Basin Landscape Study
 Landscape Character Unit (2016)
 18 Morven Eastern 'Foothills'
 Date: 16 December 2016

Landscape Character Unit	18: Morven Eastern 'Foothills'
Landform patterns	Elevated moraine landform with plateaus, hummocky hills, swamps and remnant kettle lakes.
Vegetation patterns	Exotic shelterbelts and hedgerows in places. The odd scattered woodlot and patches of scrub in gullies. Pond edge plantings. Exotic pasture grasses dominate.
Hydrology	Stream, amenity and farm ponds, and wetland features evident.
Proximity to ONL/ONF	Adjoins ONL (WB) on west and south sides and Arrow River ONF on eastern side.
Character Unit boundaries	North: Toe of the moraine landform East: Arrow River ONF South: ONL(WB) / study area boundary West: ONL(WB) / study area boundary
Land use	Predominantly rural lifestyle / hobby farming and more generously proportioned working rural lots with a limited amount of rural residential development evident.
Settlement patterns	Dwellings reasonably evenly dispersed along road or stream edges, and well integrated by plantings. A few consented but unbuilt platforms evident (5). Typical lot sizes: majority of unit > 10ha with approximately half of the unit 50ha or greater.
Proximity to key route	Not located near a key route. Morven Ferry Road is a dead-end road.
Heritage features	Four heritage buildings / features identified in PDP.
Recreation features	Council walkway / cycleway passes through the area (forms part of Queenstown Trail 'Twin Rivers Ride' and 'Arrow River Bridges Ride').
Infrastructure features	No reticulated sewer, stormwater or water.
Visibility/prominence	The somewhat sleepy backwater location (on a dead-end road), together with its (relatively) lower-lying topography means that the unit is not particularly prominent in terms of the wider basin landscape. The area is visible from the western edges of the Crown Terrace, the tracks throughout the ONL to the east (Mt Beetham environs) and the zigzag lookout. The diminishing influences of distance and relative elevation, in conjunction with the relative unimportance (visually) of the unit within the wider panorama reduces the unit's prominence.
Views	Key views relate to the dramatic mountain, Morven Hill and Crown Terrace escarpment views available from the walkway / cycleway network, local roads, and dwellings.
Enclosure/openness	A variable sense of openness and enclosure as a consequence of the landform patterning (west of Morven Ferry Road) and vegetation patterning (east of Morven Ferry Road).
Complexity	A correspondingly variable degree of complexity as a result of the landform and vegetation patterns.

Landscape Character Unit	18: Morven Eastern 'Foothills'
Coherence	A low level of landscape coherence. Vegetation patterns generally do not reinforce landform features.
Naturalness	Generally, a moderate perception of naturalness as a consequence of the limited visibility of buildings, the open hummocky pastoral character (particularly to the western side of Morven Ferry Road), and the close proximity and open views to the mountain setting and Crown Terrace escarpment.
Sense of Place	Generally, the area reads as a mixed rural and rural lifestyle / hobby farming area that functions as a transition between the mountain ONL and the lower-lying and more 'developed' river terrace to the north and east.
Potential landscape issues and constraints associated with additional development	The unit's very close proximity to ONLs and ONFs, location on a popular walkway/cycleway route together with the role of the area as a transition between the mountain ONL and the lower-lying and more 'developed' river terrace to the north and east, makes it sensitive to additional development.
Potential landscape opportunities and benefits associated with additional development	Hummocky landform on western side of Morven Ferry Road, and vegetation patterns on eastern side of Morven Ferry Road, suggest the potential to absorb additional development. Larger-scaled lots suggest the potential for subdivision. Riparian, pond, and wetland restoration potential. Dead-end road – limited 'profile'.
Environmental characteristics and amenity values to be maintained and enhanced	Landform patterning. Integration of buildings with landform and/or planting.
Capability to absorb additional development	Low



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 Morven Ferry Road, Arrow Junction
 Appendix 4: WBLUPS Map of Unit 17
 Ben Espie - Landscape Planner - 11th June 2018

INCISIVE MAPPING
 Author: Matt Daniels (matt.daniels@incisivemapping.co.nz) | Reviewed: Bridget Gilbert
 Data Sources: LINZ/Engle (Aerial), LINZ (NZTopo Database: Crown Copyright Reserved), Landscape Research (LCRB), Queenstown Lakes District Council (Buildings, Sites, Landscape Units, Zones, ONI/ONP, Contours, Recreation, Lots, Roads), Bridget Gilbert, Incisive Mapping
 File Ref: 2016-13, Wakatipu_Basin_Landscape_Character_Units_2016_Map_Series_A1_RevB.mxd



- Landscape Character Units (2016)
- Contours (5m)
- RAMM Carriageway Centrelines
- Rural Scenic Roads
- Council Walkways and MTB Trails
- Other Walkways and MTB Trails
- DOC Walkways
- Lot Boundaries
- Special Zones
- Rural Lifestyle
- Rural Residential
- Road Zones
- Approved SHAs
- Approved SHAs & Resource Consent Issued
- Rural Building Status
- Existing Dwellings
- Consented Platforms
- Urban Growth Boundary
- Waterfall
- Water Race
- River
- River (Wide Channel)
- Lake / Pond
- Swamp
- Indigenous Forest
- Outstanding Natural Feature
- Outstanding Natural Landscape

Landscape Character Unit	17: Morven Ferry
Landform patterns	Generally flat alluvial terrace landform.
Vegetation patterns	Exotic shelterbelts, scattered shade trees, the odd exotic woodlot planting, exotic amenity plantings around dwellings. Exotic pasture grasses dominate.
Hydrology	No streams, wetlands or ponds evident.
Proximity to ONL/ONF	Adjoins the Arrow River ONF along part of eastern edge and the Morven Hill ONL (WB) along western edge.
Character Unit boundaries	North: cadastral boundaries East: McDonnell Road, Arrow Junction rural residential land use edge (cadastral boundaries), Arrow River ONF South: Toe of moraine landform east of Morven Hill West: Morven Hill ONL boundary, Bendemeer Special Zone, toe of Hogans Gully hillslopes.
Land use	Predominantly rural residential and hobby farming type uses. Some areas of more open pastoral land particularly adjacent McDonnell Road.
Settlement patterns	Dispersed patterning with some consented but unbuilt platforms (7). Typical lot sizes: large lots on west side of McDonnell Road (>20ha). Elsewhere mix of under 4ha and 4-10ha with the odd lot between 20-50ha in size.
Proximity to key route	SH6 passes through the unit. McDonnell Road also traverses the unit – a popular route between SH6 and Arrowtown.
Heritage features	No heritage buildings / features identified in PDP.
Recreation features	Council walkway / cycleway passes through the unit. Forms part of Queenstown Trail 'Arrow Bridges Ride'.
Infrastructure features	No reticulated sewer or stormwater. Very limited water reticulation.
PDP zoning	Rural
Visibility/prominence	The northern portion of the unit enjoys a reasonably high public profile as a consequence of its location adjacent SH6 and McDonnell Road in conjunction with the relatively open nature of this part of the unit. In contrast, the southern portion of the unit is considerably more visually discreet as a result of its quiet rural road context and vegetation patterns. The popular walkway/cycleway route that passes through this area increases its 'profile'. The area is visible from the western edges of the Crown Terrace, the tracks throughout the ONL to the east (Mt Beetham environs) and the zigzag lookout. The diminishing influences of distance and relative elevation, in conjunction with the relative unimportance (visually) of the unit within the wider panorama reduces the unit's prominence.

Landscape Character Unit	17: Morven Ferry
Views	Key views relate to the memorable vista from SH6 and the walkway/cycleway to the Crown Terrace escarpment and ONL ranges to the south, and the highly attractive open views across the area from SH6 and the walkway/cycleway to Morven Hill and the flanking moraine 'foothill' landscape to the north. With respect to the view out over the area from the tracks throughout the ONL to the east (Mt Beetham environs) and the zig zag lookout, the unit reads as a part of the swathe of relatively low lying, flat rural/rural residential land flanking Morven Hill.
Enclosure/openness	The unit displays a variable sense of openness and enclosure largely as a consequence of vegetation patterns.
Complexity	Similarly, the unit exhibits a variable degree of complexity, largely as a consequence of vegetation patterns.
Coherence	The fragmented patterning of vegetation features detracts from the underlying coherence associated with the relatively uniform flat topography. The range of building styles evident does not reinforce the landscape coherence.
Naturalness	Generally, a moderate to low level of naturalness as a consequence of the patterning and visibility of rural residential development.
Sense of Place	Generally, the area reads a mixed rural and rural residential landscape on the edge of the established Arrow Junction rural residential 'node'.
Potential landscape issues and constraints associated with additional development	The location of the northern portion of the area adjacent to scenic routes, in combination with its relatively open pastoral character, makes it sensitive to landscape change. Absence of legible edges to the rural residential enclave to the east associated with Arrow Junction makes the unit vulnerable to development creep. Potential for development in northern portion to read as sprawling into Hogans Gully and northwards to Arrows town. Walkway/cycleway proximity.
Potential landscape opportunities and benefits associated with additional development	Large-scaled lots suggest potential for subdivision. Vegetation provides containment in places. Proximity to good roading infrastructure. Integration of defensible edges with additional subdivision. Potential for development to form a legible node, as a consequence of 'junction' function, landform pattern (contrasting 'flats') and noting that this patterning is already emerging immediately to the east. Easy topography.
Environmental characteristics and amenity values to be maintained and enhanced	Open views from SH6 and McDonnell Road to the Crown Terrace escarpment and ONL ranges to the south. Open views from SH6 and McDonnell Road to Morven Hill and the flanking moraine 'foothill' landscape to the north. Integration of buildings with planting.
Capability to absorb additional development	Moderate-Low

Landscape Character Unit	17: Morven Ferry
<p>Recommended landscape planning strategies</p>	<p>Assessment criteria to address building height, building colours/materiality, building coverage, accessory buildings, domestic infrastructure, external lighting, fencing/gates, framework planting to integrate buildings, views from public places and neighbouring dwellings to the surrounding mountain context and integration of development layout with walkway/cycleway route.</p> <p>Integration of a clearly legible and robust defensible edges.</p> <p>Encouraging a comprehensive development plan approach on larger lots to achieve a coordinated and cohesive development outcome.</p> <p>Retention of covenanted vegetation features.</p> <p>Minimum 75m setback along SH6 and McDonnell Road frontages.</p> <p>Coordinated of landscape treatment along SH6 and McDonnell Road to maintain and frame key viewshafts to the mountain ranges, Crown Terrace escarpment, Morven Hill and the flanking moraine 'foothill' landscape to the north.</p>