

Before Queenstown Lakes District Council

In the matter of The Resource Management Act 1991

And The Queenstown Lakes District Proposed District Plan Topic
13 Queenstown Mapping – Group 1C (Queenstown Urban,
(Central, West, and Arthurs Point))

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF BEN ESPIE FOR

Gertrude's Saddlery Limited (494)

Larchmont Developments Limited (527) and (1281)

Dated 9 August 2017

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SUMMARY EVIDENCE

- 1 My name is Ben Espie.
- 2 My Evidence in Chief dated 9 June 2017 outlines my experience and qualifications relevant to this evidence in respect of the Queenstown Mapping Hearings of the Proposed District Plan (**PDP**).
- 3 The submissions seek to extend the LDRZ over the relevant land to the line shown on Appendices 1 and 2 of my Evidence in Chief. This would restrict the LDRZ to the rolling sloping land and would exclude it from what Dr Read and myself agree to be the Shotover Gorge ONF (demarcated by the green line on Appendices 1 and 2 of my Evidence in Chief).
- 4 The proposed and operative LDRZ boundary is illogical in terms of landscape planning. The landscape character of the area requested to be rezoned is not particularly natural or outstanding in itself. It accommodates three dwellings, accessory buildings, associated curtilage and driveways. It is otherwise covered in self-seeded exotic trees. It is of rolling, sloping topography and, prior to wilding tree infestation, was used as improved pasture. Dr Read and I agree that it is distinct from the Shotover Gorge.
- 5 Dr Read considers that this strip of land that sits between the operative LDRZ boundary and the identified Shotover Gorge is part of a broad ONL. I disagree because:
 - It is physically separated and isolated from the broader ONL. It is bounded on the west, south and east by the ONF of the Shotover Gorge and is bounded to the north by the LDRZ.
 - Its landscape character is not akin to that of the broader ONL (which by comparison is much more dramatic and memorable) and is not particularly natural or outstanding. Unlike the broader ONL, it accommodates considerable elements of human modification / occupation and (prior to its current state) took the form of improved pasture.
- 6 I consider that the strip of land that sits between the operative LDRZ boundary and the identified Shotover Gorge ONF is a remnant area of RGZ (or RZ) that is separated from the broader landscape. In the past, it has been found that the appropriate landscape category for such pieces of land is Other Rural Landscape (ORL).
- 7 Even if this strip of land is found to be part of a broader ONL, it must be considered to be a particularly modified part of that ONL and one that does not particularly

contribute to the overall broader ONL characteristics (which are described in my Evidence in Chief in paragraphs 5.12 and 5.14). Even Dr Read's (and Mrs Devlin's) recommendation provides for some urban development in this currently RZ area.

- 8 Overall, I do not consider that an adverse landscape character effect that is more than negligible will result from the requested LDRZ. A logical and appropriate pattern of land uses and elements will be evident in which the Shotover Gorge ONF is preserved, the suburban area resulting from the rezoning will have a logical and appropriate boundary that relates to landform, and the broader mountainous ONL has its important qualities preserved.
- 9 On Appendix 1 of her rebuttal evidence, Dr Read identifies an area demarcated by a black dotted line as a "schistose knob". This is a fair label for the rounded hummocky topography between the Mathias Terrace area and the Shotover Gorge. She opines that this knob:
- *provides a highly memorable backdrop to the existing LDR development¹;*
 - *provides a sense of containment, both actual and visual, to the southern side of the residential area².*
- 10 In is apparent that Dr Read is referring to the backdrop and visual containment function that this rounded hummocky topography provides when seen from the Mathias Terrace area to the north. I consider that the visual backdrop function that this hummocky topography serves when seen from the north cannot be relied upon because:
- As can be seen on Dr Read's Appendix 1, and Appendices 1 and 2 of my Evidence in Chief, the operative LDRZ extends up the northern slopes of this hummocky topography right to the highest point, therefore the backdrop will be built out in any event;
 - The trees that currently cover this backdrop area could be removed at any time which would significantly change its appearance and reduce its apparent height or elevation. This would reduce its prominence in views. Foreground built form would often screen it even if it were not built on as described above.
- 11 I therefore find that the hummocky topography does not perform an important backdrop function.

¹ Rebuttal Evidence of Marion Read on behalf of QLDC, dated 7th July 2017, paragraph 6.10.

² Ibid, paragraph 6.13.

12 For all of the reasons set out in this summary and in my Evidence in Chief, I consider that, in landscape assessment terms, there is considerable logic in the requested relief.

Dated this 9th day of June 2017

Ben Espie