

**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** **SARAH BURDON (282)**  
**GLEN DENE LIMITED (384)**  
Submitters

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

**4<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2017**

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## 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 various parts of the Upper Clutha Basin, in relation to a number of proposed plan changes in the area and in relation to many resource consent applications.
- 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 a statement of evidence prepared by Helen Mellsop dated 17 March 2017 (**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 282 and 384 on the Proposed District Plan. In relation to these two submissions, I have been asked by Sarah Burdon and Glen Dene Limited to prepare evidence in relation to the landscape and visual effects of the proposed:

- Rural Lifestyle Zoning (**RLZ**) in the area of Glen Dene homestead;
- Rural Visitor Zoning (**RVZ**) in the area of the Lake Hawea Holiday Park.

## **3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

3.1 It is agreed by Ms Mellsop and myself that the proposed area of RLZ in the area of Glen Dene Homestead is appropriate in terms of its landscape and visual effects. We also agree that the proposed Building Restriction Area should most appropriately be expanded.

3.2 In relation to the proposed area of RVZ, Ms Mellsop's evidence expresses general agreement that the relevant area can absorb development but has some concerns regarding the degree of certainty that the operative RVZ provisions give in relation to the ultimate form of development that will occur. The relief sought in relation to the proposed RVZ has been amended in that additional restrictions are now proposed in relation to the future development of this area of zoning. I consider that the relief that is now sought is appropriate in terms of its landscape and visual effects and I consider that Ms Mellsop's concerns have been appropriately alleviated.

## **4. RLZ IN THE AREA OF GLEN DENE HOMESTEAD**

- 4.1** The submissions detail a 13-hectare area of RLZ that is sought in the area of the Glen Dene homestead, as can be seen on Appendix 1 of this evidence. This 13-hectare area currently contains a number of buildings including the homestead dwelling, two other smaller dwellings, a large woolshed, a number of small sheds, yard areas and significant (often evergreen) mature trees (these elements can be seen on the aerial photograph that forms the base for Appendices 1 and 2 to this evidence). The proposed area of RLZ (as per Appendix 1) includes a building restriction area of approximately 1.75 hectares. Under the Operative and Proposed provisions, the proposed area of RLZ would provide for a maximum of 6 dwellings, each on their own lot.
- 4.2** Areas of RLZ around the district generally mature to become relatively treed. Owners often wish to mark their boundaries, provide shelter, privacy and shade, but preserve important views. Dwellings are often large with expansive gardens. Outside of the gardens, the remainder of an owner's block is often used for accommodating some hobby stock (horses, ponies, sheep, alpacas), for hay-making, of some other hobby crop such as grapes or olives. Generally, a green, leafy but fragmented pattern landscape pattern develops over RLZ areas. Examples are Riverbank Road, the south side of Mount Aspiring Road (west of Bill's Way) or Dalefield in the Wakatipu.
- 4.3** With reference to Appendix 1, it is likely that the proposed area of RLZ would develop into 6 lots, each with a dwelling. Views to the north, northeast and east would provide the primary visual amenity for future owners. Topography and existing evergreen trees provide separation for the RLZ area from SH6. Future owners are likely to seek to preserve and bolster this separation. Owners will seek to preserve views to the lake, hence dwellings are likely to be oriented to the east and north. Owners may seek to gain as much proximity to the lake as possible and hence development may push building platforms towards the eastern part of the zone (although, obviously, the building restriction area would exclude dwellings). I imagine that the existing homestead dwelling is likely to remain in place. The smaller dwelling may be removed as the area of zoning develops. The yards and sheds may remain (one dwelling may remain as the farm homestead), or they may be relocated. In any event, a total of up to 6 dwellings would be provided for.

- 4.4** I have assessed the effects of the proposed area of RLZ with reference to Sections 6(b), 7(c) and 7(f) of the Act. I have also considered the District Wide provisions of both the Operative and Proposed District Plans (**ODP and PDP**) that relate to landscape matters. Obviously, the final form of the relevant District Wide provisions cannot be predicted, so while I have borne these provisions in mind, assessment is largely from first principles with reference to the abovementioned sections of the Act.

#### **EFFECTS ON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

- 4.5** The area of the Glen Dene homestead is part of a vast mountain-and-lakes landscape that is categorised as an ONL by both the ODP and the PDP. Landscape categorisation is obviously something that needs to be done at a very broad scale and I concur with this categorisation; the landscape is dominated by natural patterns and elements and is majestic, dramatic and highly memorable.
- 4.6** At a finer scale, the area of the proposed RLZ sits on a fan/terrace toe of the Mount Maude Range (which can be seen on the aerial photograph of Appendix 2). This terrace toe takes in all of the Glen Dene land to the east of SH6 and a considerable area west of it as well. The terrace lands are easily distinguishable from the steeper mountain slopes when on site or examining a topographic map. The terrace lands have deeper soils and have traditionally been more intensively farmed as the home paddocks of Glen Dene Station. They have a land use pattern of improved farm pasture lands as opposed to the extensively farmed, rugged high country pattern of the mountain slopes.
- 4.7** At a finer scale again, the area around the homestead (i.e. the area shown on Appendices 1 and 2) is the most intensively modified and used part of the terrace lands. It accommodates a number of buildings, as discussed. It also accommodates farm base activities and the densest proliferation of farm tracks and shelter vegetation. It reads as a farm base area; a node of intensive farming activity set within a large, extensive farming station.
- 4.8** The proposed zoning would have the effect of altering this farm base node into a node dominated by rural living activities (although it may well also continue to provide farm base activities as well). The pattern of the area would change as described above; it would be made up of up to 6 lifestyle-block type properties, would be likely to become more treed over time and may accommodate

more variety of land use. In relation to the RLZs of the District in general, the proposed area would be a particularly small area of RLZ. Therefore, it would retain something of a node-like character, rather than that of a broad rural living area such as Dalefield. Due to proximity, the new RLZ area would have some association with Hawea township, in the way that Gladstone currently does. The Gladstone Rural Residential Zone is of a very similar size to the proposed RLZ.

**4.9** There are many RLZs in the ONLs of the district, such as Emerald Bluffs, Camp Hill, Wyuna, Bob's Cove and Lakeside Estate. Generally, these take the form of a discrete node of rural living activity set within a broad landscape that remains unsullied by the presence of the area of more intense land use. Without placing weight on the specific wording of Objectives and Policies (since these are uncertain), the district wide ONL provisions of the ODP and PDP generally seek to:

- maintain landscape openness;
- avoid development in those parts of the ONLs that have little or no capacity to absorb change, while allowing development in those areas with higher potential to absorb change;
- maintain landscape character and visual amenity as experienced from public places, particularly formed roads;
- avoid development that degrades the important qualities of the landscape character and amenity<sup>1</sup>.

**4.10** I consider that the outcomes sought by these provisions are generally logical in light of the relevant sections of the Act set out in paragraph 4.4. Regarding landscape character (leaving aside visual effects momentarily), I consider that the important qualities of landscape character associated with the Lake Hawea landscape are:

- its vastness and openness;

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<sup>1</sup> This bullet-point list represents a paraphrasing of Policy 4.2.5(2) of the Operative District Plan and Objectives 6.3.1, 6.3.2 and 6.3.4 of the notified Proposed District Plan and the Policies that relate to those Objectives.

- its generally unmodified character when assessed as a whole, i.e. considerably intact natural biophysical / ecosystem patterns and processes, geomorphological processes and the fact that the vast majority of its margins are unoccupied;
- its dramatic and sublime aesthetic characteristics, particularly very long views across its surface to surrounding mountain ranges;
- its legibility as a naturally formed lake, being immediately recognisable as such; and
- constantly changing and dramatic transient values (largely aesthetic) associated with the seasons, changing light throughout the day, atmospheric and climatic conditions.

**4.11** Notwithstanding the above, it must be noted that the outflow and level of Lake Hawea are controlled and the lake level is significantly higher than its natural level.

**4.12** Around Lake Hawea, there are only a few locations where a node of human occupation exists. These are locations such as Hawea Township, Gladstone, Dingleburn Valley, Hunter Valley Station homestead and Kidd's Bush, as well as Glen Dene homestead. I consider that the existence of visual enclosure by mature vegetation and topography, as well as the presence of human occupation, modification and buildings (including dwellings), mean that the specific location of the Glen Dene homestead area does not particularly contribute to the important landscape character qualities that make the Lake Hawea landscape and ONL. I therefore consider that, in terms of landscape character, this is a location with potential to absorb some change; much more so than most locations within this landscape.

**4.13** I consider that a total of 6 dwellings and associated rural lifestyle land uses in this location will alter the character of the immediate vicinity but I do not see that this would degrade the characteristics of the landscape overall. I consider that a green, treed, visually soft rural living node can sit comfortably in this location without diminishing the character of the Lake Hawea ONL.

## EFFECTS ON VIEWS AND VISUAL AMENITY

**4.14** The extent of the proposed RLZ is shown on the plan that forms Appendix 1 to this evidence. This plan was attached to the relevant submissions. In relation to views of the RLZ area:

- There are limited views available into the proposed RLZ area from SH6. This is generally due to topography, the RLZ area being at a lower elevation than the road and there being a significant rounded hill landform between the road and the proposed RLZ area. An existing mature shelterbelt along the northern edge of the proposed RLZ also assists in this regard.
- The proposed RLZ area is visible from a broad area of the surface of Lake Hawea that lies to its east. It is also visible from a corresponding part of Timaru Creek / Dingle Burn Station Road on the far side of Lake Hawea (at distances of at least 5.5 kilometres and often much more). In these views, a viewer that is within approximately 2 to 3 kilometres of the Glen Dene homestead area can recognise it as an area of more vegetative enclosure with a number of visible buildings. I consider that most viewers of this sort would recognise it as a farm base area.

**4.15** With reference to the issues set out in my paragraph 4.9 above, I consider that the visual enclosure of the Glen Dene homestead area, its limited visibility from SH6 and the fact that it already reads as a node of human modification/occupation, mean that this location has a capacity to absorb visual change without degrading the visual amenity that is experienced by observers in the landscape.

**4.16** I consider that for users of SH6, visual amenity can be appropriately maintained while providing for the RLZ as proposed. Some careful treatment of the very northern and southern parts of the western edge of the zone will be important but I consider that this can be appropriately addressed at the stage of subdivision design and consent. I consider that the provisions of the RLZ and Subdivision chapters of the ODP/PDP are appropriate to deal with this issue. Any subdivision will be of at least a controlled status with matters relating to visual effects and landscaping treatment being within consent authority's control. Overall, I find that for users of SH6, the visual amenity that is enjoyed will change very little, The Glen Dene homestead area



appearing as a slightly more intense, vegetated and enclosed node than it currently does; a minor exception from the broad open views across the lake that are available.

- 4.17** For users of the relevant area of lake surface (that are within approximately 3 kilometres of the proposed RLZ), the visual change will be more pronounced since the new buildings that will emerge are likely to be relatively unscreened. The node of activity will appear more intense and slightly more expansive than it currently does. Given the existence of the current node of activity, the controls that the consent authority will have at the time of development, and the relative importance of this node in relation to the views that are had, I consider that the visual effects of the new zone will be relatively slight on these viewers. I consider that the ultimate result will be that a cluster of buildings will be apparent, although the visual prominence of any given building will be mitigated by way of building and landscape design. Within the cluster, built form will be balanced with considerable green open space and this cluster will emerge in the location of the existing homestead cluster. The vast, open and highly natural surrounding landscape will very much dominate the visual experience that is had by observers on the relevant part of the lake surface.
- 4.18** In an overall sense, I consider that the proposed RLZ can sit comfortably within its ONL setting and in relation to the relevant district wide provisions of the ODP and PDP.

#### **THE EVIDENCE OF MS MELSOP**

- 4.19** No further submissions raise opposition to the proposed area of RLZ. Ms Mellsop's evidence comments on the proposed area of RLZ in her paragraphs 8.4 to 8.7. Ms Mellsop generally agrees that a total of 6 dwellings and associated activity can be appropriately absorbed in this location without adversely affecting landscape character of visual amenity<sup>2</sup>. Notwithstanding this, Ms Mellsop finds that the eastern open sloping land within the proposed RLZ is prominently visible from the lake, Gladstone and the Gladstone-Hawea walking track. She therefore recommends an expansion of the Building Restriction Area that is proposed<sup>3</sup>. I agree that this open sloping area is more visually exposed, although I note that the consent authority will retain control over design and layout at the time of subdivision. In any event, for extra certainty, I

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<sup>2</sup> Statement of Evidence of Helen Mellsop, dated 17 March 2017, paragraph 8.6.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

agree that the building restriction area within the zone could be usefully expanded as I illustrate on my Appendix 3.

## **5. RVZ IN THE AREA OF THE LAKE HAWEA HOLIDY PARK**

**5.1** The submissions seek RVZ over an area as shown on Appendix 4 of this evidence. The area consists of 3 parcels:

- Lot 1 DP 418972 of 1.4ha;
- Lot 2 DP 418972 of 5.6ha;
- Pt Sec 2 Blk II Lower Hawea SD of 15.7ha.

**5.2** As can be seen on the aerial photograph that is the base of Appendix 4, I understand that the bulk of Pt Sec 2 Blk II Lower Hawea SD is currently used for the commercial camping operation. I also understand that:

- the existing designation that provides for camping activities (Designation 175) only covers a small part of the area that is used for camping;
- Submissions 282 and 384 seek to extend the area of Designation 175 so as to cover all of Pt Sec 2 Blk II Lower Hawea SD;
- The issue of expanding the designation has already been heard by the Hearings Panel. There were no further submissions opposing the expanded designation and the reporting QLDC planer recommended approval of the expanded designation.

**5.3** Since the time of lodging the submissions the relief sought has been refined in that it is now sought that the following additional restrictions in relation to the area of RVZ are incorporated into the relevant provisions (as will be detailed in the evidence of Mr White):

- The maximum total building coverage for the proposed area of RVZ shall be 7%;

- There shall be a variable allowable building height for buildings within the area of RVZ as per the plan that I attach to this evidence as Appendix 5;
- Residential activity shall be non-complying.

**5.4** In general terms, the RVZ provides for dense visitor accommodation / residential / commercial nodes of development set within rural landscapes. Existing RVZs are at Cecil Peak, Walter Peak, Cardrona, Blanket Bay, Arthurs Point, Arcadia Station and Windermere (Wanaka Airport). None of these zones have been developed to capacity but the relevant provisions envisage “*retention of the predominant rural character of the surrounding areas while providing the potential for consolidated areas to be used for visitor facilities*”<sup>4</sup>.

**5.5** The particular relief that the Submissions seek will bring about the above result but at a much lower density than the other areas of RVZ. I understand that the submitters envisage the proposed RVZ area developing as a green, treed lakeside area with a low building coverage that provides detached visitor accommodation units, camping opportunities (including permanent or semi-permanent “glamping” tents<sup>5</sup>), and associated facilities such as ablutions, eateries, etc. The maximum 7% building coverage rule would mean that the majority of the RVZ area consists of outdoor space. I consider that this outdoor space is most likely to develop as treed spaces combined with open lawn spaces and smaller areas of paving, paths, etc. I note that any subdivision or building activity will be at least a controlled activity, with landscaping is one of the aspects of control. I consider that the consent authority will be able to use its controls to ensure:

- a consistent, appropriate and high-amenity landscape outcome across the area of the RVZ;
- that built form is visually softened and integrated into its setting;
- the external materials and colours of buildings are such that they are integrated into their landscape setting and have consistency and logic across the zone area.

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<sup>4</sup> Queenstown Lakes Operative District Plan, Section 12.3.5(i).

<sup>5</sup> Glamping is a term that is defined by en.oxforddictionaries.com as “A form of camping involving accommodation and facilities more luxurious than those associated with traditional camping”.

## **EFFECTS ON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

- 5.6** As discussed above in relation to the homestead area, the Rural General Zoned land adjacent to Lake Hawea is part of a vast mountain-and-lakes landscape that is categorised as an ONL by both the ODP and the PDP. Landscape categorisation is obviously something that needs to be done at a very broad scale and I concur with this categorisation; the landscape is dominated by natural patterns and elements and is majestic, dramatic and highly memorable.
- 5.7** At a finer scale, the area of the proposed RVZ is already considerably used as a commercial camping operation. The character of this particular area is typical of a New Zealand motor camp with tent sites, permanent caravans, cabins, ablutions, kitchens and common-room buildings. This pattern generally covers the 15.5 hectares of Pt Sec 2 Blk II Lower Hawea SD, however, the block is also considerably treed with a mix of mature exotics, both evergreen and deciduous.
- 5.8** The existing camping activity extends in a western direction to the western boundary of Pt Sec 2 Blk II Lower Hawea SD. Lot 2 DP 418972 to the immediate west of this (that is proposed to be contained within the RVZ) is currently covered in dense trees (mostly sycamore and eucalypt). Very roughly, the eastern two-thirds of this block is sloping but not prohibitively steep, while the western third of this block is very steep. Therefore, most of this block is considerably lower than the road (SH6). Much of this steep western part of the block would be within the 20 metre road required by Site Standard 12.4.5.1(i).
- 5.9** Lot 1 DP 418972 of 1.4ha is a small parcel to the north of the other two. The southernmost part of this parcel takes the form of a small rounded hill landform that is largely covered in self-seeded exotic conifers. The rest of the parcel is open and rolling, generally covered in rank grass and bracken fern.
- 5.10** The proposed zoning would have the effect of extending a disbursement of buildings and associated activity out from the existing camping area and over the entirety of the proposed RVZ area. As discussed above, the actual density of built form would be low and the consent authority would have control over landscape treatment, which (when considered in light of the Objectives, Policies and Anticipated Environment Results of the RVZ) means that a relatively green, soft and vegetated type of pattern will emerge. Human activity in the form of camping, accommodation

buildings and associated built form will certainly be a prominent part of character within the RVZ, but open green spaces and treed areas will balance with this.

**5.11** The RVZs of the district are largely located within ONLs. As discussed, the intention of these areas of zoning is that they take the form of a discrete node of activity set within a broad landscape that remains unsullied by the presence of the area of more intense land use. Again, without placing weight on the specific wording of Objectives and Policies (since these are uncertain), the district wide ONL provisions of the ODP and PDP generally seek to:

- maintain landscape openness;
- avoid development in those parts of the ONLs that have little or no capacity to absorb change, while allowing development in those areas with higher potential to absorb change;
- maintain landscape character and visual amenity as experienced from public places, particularly formed roads;
- avoid development that degrades the important qualities of the landscape character and amenity<sup>6</sup>.

**5.12** As set out in relation to the proposed RLZ above, I consider that the important qualities of landscape character associated with the Lake Hawea landscape are:

- its vastness and openness;
- its generally unmodified character when assessed as a whole, i.e. considerably intact natural biophysical / ecosystem patterns and processes, geomorphological processes and the fact that the vast majority of its margins are unoccupied;
- its dramatic and sublime aesthetic characteristics, particularly very long views across its surface to surrounding mountain ranges;
- its legibility as a naturally formed lake, being immediately recognisable as such; and

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<sup>6</sup> This bullet-point list represents a paraphrasing of Policy 4.2.5(2) of the Operative District Plan and Objectives 6.3.1, 6.3.2 and 6.3.4 of the notified Proposed District Plan and the Policies that relate to those Objectives.

- constantly changing and dramatic transient values (largely aesthetic) associated with the seasons, changing light throughout the day, atmospheric and climatic conditions.

**5.13** In relation to landscape character, the proposed area of RLZ is immediately adjacent to Hawea township. It is in an area that is already used as a commercial camping operation. In terms of landscape patterns, I consider that the existing modification and occupation in this area means that this specific location is different to the vast majority of land adjacent to Lake Hawea (which is generally open, unoccupied and very largely unmodified). I therefore consider that the extension of visitor accommodation activities that the proposed RVZ represents will not significantly detract from the important landscape character qualities that make the Lake Hawea landscape an ONL (as listed above). I therefore consider that, in terms of landscape character, this is a location with potential to absorb some change; much more so than most locations within this landscape.

**5.14** Overall, I consider that the proposed RLZ will bring about an extension and intensification of existing visitor-associated activity over a logically contained area that is already modified and is immediately adjacent to Hawea Township. I consider that there is considerable logic and merit in this outcome in terms of landscape planning, I also consider that the important qualities of the Lake Hawea ONL will be maintained.

## **EFFECTS ON VIEWS AND VISUAL AMENITY**

**5.15** In relation to views of the proposed RVZ area:

- There are views available into the area from the immediately adjacent stretch of SH6. However, bearing in mind the 20 metre setback from the road boundary<sup>7</sup>, the proposed zone area is considerably lower in elevation than the road surface. Therefore, views are very largely over the proposed zone area to the lake and mountains beyond.

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<sup>7</sup> Queenstown Lakes Operative District Plan, Site Standard 12.4.5.1(i).

- The proposed RVZ area is visible from the southernmost part of the surface of Lake Hawea; very roughly south of a line running between the northern end of the proposed RVZ and Bushy Creek.
- The proposed RVZ area is visible from parts of Hawea township that are oriented to the north and from parts of the lake edge between the township and approximately Bushy Creek, including the collection of dwellings at Gladstone. Indicative views from these locations are depicted in the photographs of Appendix 6.

**5.16** In current views that are available from the above locations, the site currently appears as a heavily treed, relatively flat terrace or fan area in front of the steep, dramatic mountain slopes. Looking at Photograph 2 of Appendix 6, the exotic trees of the site appear connected to the exotics that cover the lower mountain slopes to the immediate left (i.e. opposite the junction of SH6 and Hawea Control Structure Road). As one's eyes move to the right (north), the exotic trees stop and the landscape becomes the open, majestic mountain-and-lakes landscape that epitomises the Lake Hawea ONL. Within the site of the proposed RVZ, visitor accommodation activity is visually apparent and, at times of the year, very obvious.

**5.17** As mentioned, views from the relevant stretch of SH6 are very largely over the site to the lake beyond. I consider that a node of visitor accommodation development in the subject location would appear logical and not discordant with an expected aesthetic pattern. However, I consider that high or prominent built form close to the road could block or significantly alter the visual amenity that is gained by northbound travellers passing Hawea. Dense or enclosing built form in this location could degrade the visual amenity experience of passing Hawea. In this regard, I consider that the proposed density standard, 20 metre setback for built form from SH6 and the consent authority's control over landscaping are all important measures. These will ensure that:

- The visual pattern that develops across the zone area will be dominated by greenspace and vegetation;

- All buildings will be significantly lower in elevation than the road surface and will be at least 20 metres from it in horizontal distance. The predominant views from the adjacent stretch of SH6 will be over the top of future development to the mountain-and-lakes vista;
- The consent authority will have control over the treatment of the 20 metre setback area. This could appropriately be used to enhance natural character while framing views, perhaps by creating a native revegetation strip adjacent to the highway, for example.

**5.18** I therefore consider that for users of SH6, visual amenity can be appropriately maintained while providing for the RVZ as proposed.

**5.19** For observers that are to the east of the proposed zone location (i.e. those on the lake, in Hawea township or on the lake edge), the proposed zoning will alter the visual appearance of the zone area. With reference to the photographs of Appendix 6, the zone area itself is likely to become more visually complex. More built form will be visible (albeit in a scattered pattern with considerable greenspace and vegetation). More activity, people and general busyness are likely to be apparent.

**5.20** I consider that given the:

- location of the visual change that will occur; i.e. in an area that already accommodates visible human modification and visitor activity and is immediately adjacent to Hawea township and SH6;
- nature of the visual change that will occur; i.e. one that consists of scattered buildings within a defined area in conjunction with considerable greenspace and vegetation;

the effect of the proposed zoning on the views and visual amenity that is enjoyed by observers to the east will not be adverse to any significant degree. Again, the development that will ultimately occur will appear logical, tied to existing development and not visually unattractive. The composition of views that are currently available will not fundamentally change.



## THE EVIDENCE OF MS MELSOP

**5.21** No further submissions raise opposition to the proposed area of RLZ. Ms Mellsop's evidence comments on the proposed area of RVZ in her paragraphs 8.8 to 8.16. Ms Mellsop finds that:

*“the land has the ability to absorb additional campground buildings and development without degrading the natural character, coherence, legibility or visual quality of the surrounding landscape. The site is already perceived as a node of development and domestication within the landscape and the numerous mature exotic trees mean that there is a relatively high capacity to absorb buildings without adverse visual effects. In addition the site is close to Lake Hawea township and further development on the site is unlikely to be perceived as sporadic or sprawling.”*<sup>8</sup>

**5.22** However, Ms Mellsop goes on to find that the provisions of the RVZ are such that:

*“In theory these controls would allow potential adverse effects on landscape character and views to be avoided”*<sup>9</sup>

but that

*“The provisions of the Rural Visitor zone in the ODP may not allow the Council to ensure appropriate development”*.<sup>10</sup>

**5.23** Ms Mellsop is commenting on the relief sought by the submissions prior to the additional restrictions being added that I set out in my paragraph 5.3. I generally agree with her comments but consider that the additional restrictions now proposed (in relation to building coverage, building height and residential activity), deal with any potential issues. As discussed above, I consider that the RVZ as now proposed will not lead to significant adverse effects in terms of landscape character or visual amenity.

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<sup>8</sup> Statement of Evidence of Helen Mellsop, dated 17 March 2017, paragraph 8.12.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, paragraph 8.15.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, paragraph 8.13.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

- 6.1** I consider that the areas of RLZ and RVZ sought by the relevant submissions are appropriate in terms of their landscape character and visual effects. They are both located in specific discrete parts on the ONL that have a high capacity to absorb change due to containment and existing human modifications and activity. The important qualities of the broader ONL will be maintained. Visual effects will be well mitigated. Again, due to location and existing modifications, but also due to the controls that the consent authority will have in relation to the ultimate design and form of development that occurs.

## **ATTACHED APPENDICES**

- 1 A PLAN OF THE RLZ AS SOUGHT BY THE RELEVANT SUBMISSIONS.
- 2 AN AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH SHOWING THE LOCATIONS OF THE PROPOSED RLZ AND RVZ.
- 3 A PLAN OF MY SUGGESTED EXTENSION TO THE RLZ BUILDING RESTRICTION AREA.
- 4 A PLAN OF THE PROPOSED RVZ.
- 5 PROPOSED BUILDING HEIGHT STANDARDS WITHIN THE PROPOSED RVZ.
- 6 PHOTOGRAPHS.

**Ben Espie**

**vivian+espie**

**4<sup>th</sup> April 2017**



Location:  
**Homestead Area, Glen Dene Station**

Purpose & Drawing Title:  
**Area to be Rezoned Rural Lifestyle**

Scale:  
**1:2500 @ A3**

Date Created:  
**23/10/2015**



APPENDIX 2: Proposed Rural Lifestyle and Rural Visitor Zones Location Plan.



Haweia Rd

**LEGEND**

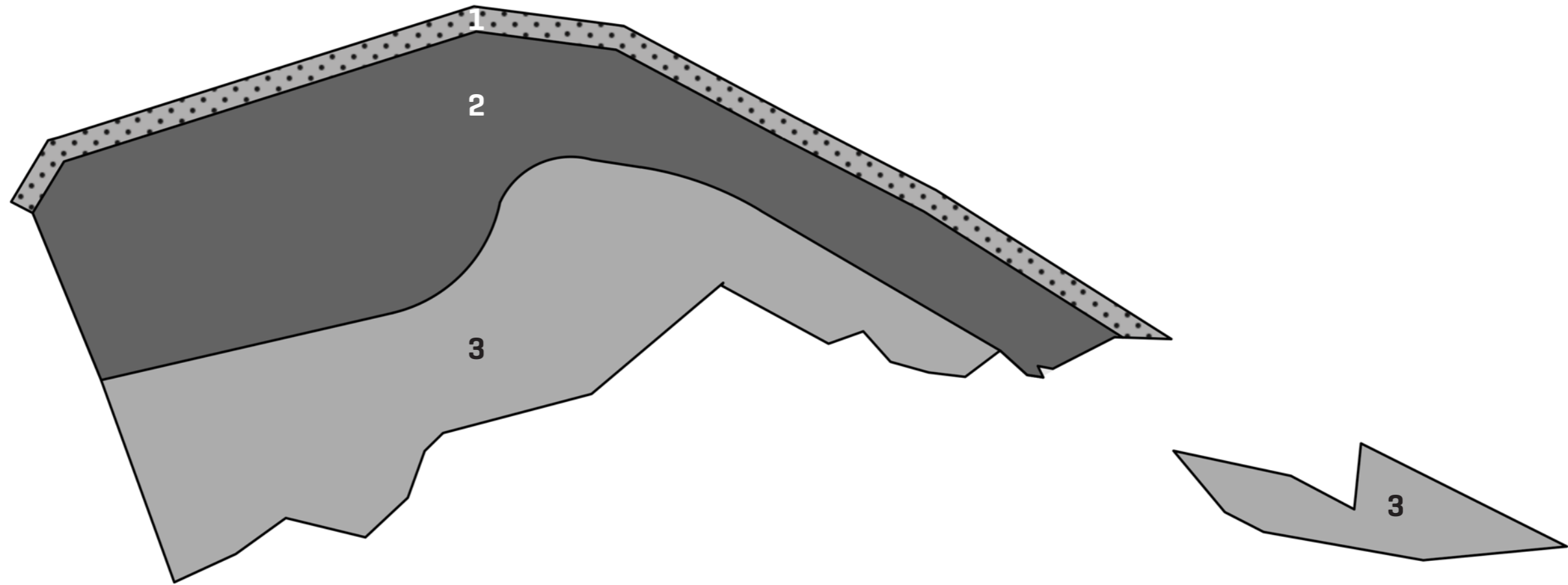
-  Proposed Rural Lifestyle Zone.
-  Proposed No Build Areas.

**APPENDIX 3:** Proposed Rural Lifestyle Zone sought by the submission.



APPENDIX 4: Proposed Rural Visitor Zone sought by the submission.

- 1 - 20m vegetation buffer
- 2 - 8m height limit
- 3 - 5.5m height limit



APPENDIX 5: PROPOSED RURAL  
VISITOR ZONE BUILDING HEIGHT STANDARDS





**APPENDIX 6:** PANORAMA PHOTOGRAPH 1 - Looking towards the proposed Rural Visitor Zone from the reserve land adjacent to Flora Dora Parade.



**APPENDIX 6:** PANORAMA PHOTOGRAPH 2 - Looking towards the Rural Visitor Zone from the beach adjacent to Hawea Esplanade Road.

**APPENDIX 6:** All photos taken on the 10th of March 2017 with a fixed focal length of 50mm. Photos point locations are as described above.