

21.23.8 Riverbank Road: Schedule of Landscape Values

General Description of the Area

The Riverbank Road area roughly corresponds to the relatively low-lying riverside terrace along the true left side of the Ōrau (Cardrona River), near the northern entrance to the Cardrona Valley. The area forms a roughly triangular area of rural land. To the west is Mount Alpha PA (ONL) and to the east is Cardona River / Mount Barker Road PA (RCL). The northern boundary of the area adjoins Rural Lifestyle zoned land or the Wānaka Urban Growth Boundary.

Physical Attributes and Values

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

Landforms and land types

1. The surficial geology of the area includes both outwash gravels and glacial till from the glaciers that formed the Upper Clutha Basin and Lake Wānaka.
2. The sequence of landforms includes:
 - a. the contemporary alluvial bed of the Ōrau (Cardrona River);
 - b. a clearly defined terrace riser at the eastern side of Cardrona Valley Road and Riverbank Road, beyond which (to the east) are alluvial terraces and the floodplain of the Cardona River;
 - c. outwash gravel terraces, with some degradational terraces stepping down to the river where fluvial processes have eroded into the glacial outwash gravels;
 - d. an outwash plain extending north-eastwards and roughly corresponding to the land on the western side of Riverbank Road; and
 - e. a small area of the Alpha Fan in the north-western quadrant of the area comprising glacial moraine overlaid with more recent alluvial fan material.
3. The relatively free-draining brown and pallic soils making the area suitable for pastoral farming and more intensive farming under irrigation.
4. The semi-arid climate with hot dry summers and cold dry winters, leading to dry brown grasslands where there is no irrigation, and summer dust clouds from the Cardrona riverbed or exposed soils.

Hydrological features

5. The section of Ōrau (Cardrona River) adjacent to the area is seasonally ephemeral due to natural losses to groundwater and extraction for irrigation. There is relatively poor water quality (nitrogen, E coli, ammonium) in this reach.
6. Water races and irrigation / amenity ponds.
7. The Wānaka Basin Cardrona gravel aquifer, which underlies the area and Wānaka township.

Ecological features and vegetation types

8. Distinctive vegetation types include:
 - a. Mature conifer and Lombardy poplar shelter belts throughout much of the area.
 - b. Amenity plantings (native and exotic) associated with dwellings, gardens, roadside hedges and driveway avenues.
 - c. Extensive areas of broom along the Ōrau (Cardrona River) corridor.
 - d. Areas of improved and semi-improved pasture used for grazing and cropping are favourable seasonal feeding grounds for Paradise shelduck, South Island oystercatcher, Black-billed gull and Spur-winged plover.
9. The Ōrau (Cardrona River) is a habitat for longfin eels, kōaro, upland bullies and Clutha flathead galaxias (nationally critical) and brown and rainbow trout.
10. Rank exotic grassland along road margins and across terrace embankments may be utilised by skinks.

Land use patterns and features

11. Pastoral farming or cropping, with irrigation from the Ōrau (Cardrona River) / Timber Creek water races and bores to the Wānaka Basin Cardrona gravel aquifer.
12. Rural living is common, mainly on lots of around 1ha in size. Areas of this type of land use dominate the triangle formed by Cardrona Valley Road, Orchard Road, and Riverbank Road (and which corresponds to a cluster subdivision set within a larger rural landholding, with an overall approximate density of 1 lot/4ha), and are present along either side of High Country Lane, the eastern side of Riverbank Road (along the top of the floodplain scarp) and the north-western portion of the area, accessed from the established Rural Lifestyle zoning associated with Studholme Road. Many of the consented platforms have not yet been built.
13. Larger rural living and/or pastoral farming properties ranging from approximately 10 to 25ha are located towards the southern end of the area and its western, north-western and eastern margins.
14. Rural living dwellings are generally well set back from roads, and, in the case of older properties screened and integrated by planting. Dwellings include substantial homes or visitor accommodation lodges with large gardens and curving tree-lined driveways. More recent rural living dwellings are generally on the eastern side of Cardrona Valley Road, appear to be clustered and are reasonably visible.
15. Neighbouring land uses which have an influence on the landscape character of the area due to their scale, character, and/or proximity include:
 - a. Rural Lifestyle zoning and the Wānaka Urban Growth Boundary to the north.
 - b. The Mount Alpha PA (ONL) and working farmland at the base of the Alpha Range to the west.
 - c. The mixed rural and rural living landscape of Cardrona River / Mount Barker Road PA (RCL) to the east.
 - d. Rural Lifestyle Zones, the Criffel Range ONL and working farmland on terraces at the base of the Criffel Range to the south.
 - e. The area forms a transitional area of pastoral farming and rural living between Wānaka township and the more open rural land to the south (Cardrona valley), west (Alpha Range), and east (Ōrau / Cardrona River terraces and Mount Barker / Criffel Range).
 - f. The area is identified for future urban development in the Queenstown Lakes Spatial Plan 2021.

Archaeological and heritage features and their locations

16. Water races associated with the Wānaka Station irrigation scheme alongside Riverbank Road and along the Mount Alpha foothills.

Mana whenua features and their locations

17. The entire area is ancestral land to many whānau within the iwi of Kāi Tahu whānui and, as such, all landscape is significant, given that whakapapa, whenua, and wai are all intertwined in te ao Māori.
18. The eastern part of the area overlaps the mapped wāhi tūpuna Ōrau (Cardrona River).

Associative Attributes and Values

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

Mana whenua associations and experience

19. Kāi Tahu whakapapa connections to whenua and wai generate a kaitiaki duty to uphold the mauri of all important landscape areas.
20. The Ōrau is a traditional ara tawhito (travel route) linking Whakatipu-wai-Māori with Lakes Wānaka and Hāwea. It also provided access to the natural bridge on the Kawarau River.
21. Ōrau is also recorded as a kāika mahika kai where tuna (eels), pora ('Māori turnip'), āruhe (fernroot) and weka were gathered.
22. The mana whenua values associated with the area include, but may not be limited to, mahika kai, ara tawhito, nohoaka.

Historic attributes and values

23. The area is notable as being one of the first areas in Otago to employ a systematic irrigation scheme during the early 20th century.
24. The area is associated with early commercial fruit growing.
25. The agricultural history and development of the area is typical of the Wānaka and Upper Clutha area, with low-intensity pastoralism giving way to denser agricultural settlement during the late-19th to early-20th centuries. This latter farming was primarily focused on grazing, but some cropping was also carried out where viable.

Shared and recognised attributes and values

26. Cardrona Valley Road valued as a scenic rural entrance to Wānaka township from the south and as a rural gateway to the Cardrona Valley (ONL).
27. Valued as a pleasant rural living location close to Wānaka, with a high level of visual and rural amenity.
28. The identity of the area as a 'predominantly pastoral green belt' on the south-western edge of Wānaka, providing a sympathetic transition to the vast ONLs surrounding the triangle.
29. The popularity of Cardrona Valley Road as a vehicular and cycling scenic route.
30. The popularity of Riverbank Road (SH6) as a shortcut route between Cardrona Valley Road and Albert Town that bypasses the Wānaka town centre.

Recreation attributes and values

31. Recreational use of the Ōrau (Cardrona River) riverbed and its margins for fishing, swimming, walking, and cycling. A walkway/cycleway is planned for the true left bank of the river.

Perceptual (Sensory) Attributes and Values

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

Legibility and expressiveness attributes and values

32. The flat outwash plain wrapping around the Alpha Range and the escarpment where the Cardrona River has cut into the terrace are expressive of the landscape's formative processes.

Particularly important views to and from the area

33. The intermittent sequence of attractive and varied mid to longer range views across the area from Cardrona Valley Road and Riverbank Road. In these views the area is seen framed by the dramatic and large-scale proximate landforms of the Mount Alpha Range and the Criffel Range, with views to Mount Barker in places. The broader mountain context of the Upper Clutha Basin and Lake Wānaka forms the backdrop to the area in places, adding a sense of connection to the vast and rugged landscape context to the north and south. Roadside evergreen shelterbelt and amenity plantings serve to frame and obstruct longer range western views for much of the state highway corridor, creating a strong degree of enclosure and serving to accentuate the appeal and memorability of the mid and longer-range eastern views across the flat terraces of the Upper Clutha Basin.
34. The public and private views across parts of the area comprised of a mix of pastoral land, shade and shelter plantings, riverside plantings (including distinctive groupings of Lombardy poplars) and extensive amenity plantings (and in which buildings are obscured from view), creates an appealing rural outlook.

Naturalness attributes and values

35. Perceptions of naturalness and of working rural character are largely maintained for people visiting the landscape, although this is undermined to some extent by the presence of clusters of dwellings within the Orchard Road subdivision, driveways, gateways, signage, and the like.
36. Overall, there is a moderate level of naturalness with a predominance of natural, rather than built, elements; but human intervention as managed farmland and rural living is evident, particularly within the triangle formed by Cardrona Valley Road, Orchard Road, and Riverbank Road.

Memorability attributes and values

37. Memorable to residents and locals as a 'gateway' and 'green belt' to the south-western side of Wānaka and for the lines of mature and dense, evergreen shelterbelt plantings lining Cardrona Valley Road.

Transient attributes and values

38. Autumn leaf colour and seasonal loss of leaves associated with the exotic trees.
39. Seasonal pasture colours.
40. The varying water flow characteristics of the Ōrau (Cardrona River).
41. The changing shadow patterns from shelter belts and the presence of stock and wildlife such as hawks.

Remoteness/wildness attributes and values

42. A dark night-sky impression contributes to feelings of wildness along the river corridor.
43. Along the river corridor, the subservience of built development along with the rough broom vegetation and proximate connection of the area to the surrounding mountains imbues an appealing perception of wildness.

Aesthetic attributes and values

44. The experience of all of the values identified above from public and private viewpoints.
45. More specifically, this includes:
 - a. the highly attractive views, often framed by trees, across pastoral land to the Alpha Range, Criffel Range, Mount Barker, and the mountain ranges surrounding the Upper Clutha Basin and Lake Wānaka;
 - b. juxtaposition and contrast between the smooth pastoral 'tamed' appearance of the area and the rougher, browner, and more visually complex rangelands of the Alpha Range and the Criffel Range slopes; and
 - c. the distinctly rural character of the area deriving from the dominant pastoral or cropping land uses, a sense of spaciousness and rural living development integrated by vegetation.

Summary of Landscape Values

Physical • Perceptual (Sensory) • Associative

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

very low	low	low-mod	moderate	mod-high	high	very high
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The physical, associative, and perceptual attributes and values described above for the Riverbank Road area can be summarised as follows:

46. **Moderate physical values** relating to the productive soils (with irrigation) and associated agricultural land uses, the natural attributes of the Ōrau (Cardrona River), the sequence of glaciofluvial landforms extending between the river and Alpha Range, the patterns of rural shelterbelts, hedgerows, and mature exotic trees framing open areas of pastoral land, and the mana whenua features associated with the area.
47. **Moderate associative values** relating to mahika kai, ara tawhito, nohoaka, the historic heritage of European pastoral farming, the recreational use of the Ōrau (Cardrona River) and the shared and recognised values of the area as a gateway/rural edge to Wānaka township, a gateway to the Cardrona valley and a pleasant rural living location.
48. **Moderate perceptual values** relating to the expressiveness of the downland landforms, the coherence of vegetation and land use patterns, the rural character, the framed scenic views across open pasture, the low-key rural tranquillity and quietness (in places), and the moderate level of naturalness, with rural living remaining subordinate to pasture/cropping and vegetation.

Landscape Capacity

The landscape capacity of the Riverbank Road area for a range of activities is set out below.

- i. **Commercial recreational activities – limited** landscape capacity for small-scale and low-key activities that: integrate with and complement/enhance existing recreation features; are located to optimise the screening and/or filtering benefit of natural landscape elements; designed to be of a small scale and 'low-key' rural character; integrate landscape restoration and enhancement (where appropriate); and enhance public access (where appropriate).
- ii. **Visitor accommodation and tourism related activities – some** landscape capacity for activities that are located to optimise the screening and/or filtering benefit of natural landscape elements; designed to be of a small scale and 'low-key' rural character; integrate landscape restoration and enhancement (where appropriate); and enhance public access (where appropriate). **Extremely limited** landscape capacity for small-scale and low-key tourism-related activities that are: visually recessive; designed to be small scale and have a low key 'rural' character; integrate landscape restoration and enhancement (where appropriate); and enhance public access (where appropriate).
- iii. **Urban expansions – some** landscape capacity as identified in the QLDC 2021 Spatial Plan. From a landscape perspective, the area suggests a logical expansion area as its 'outer' boundaries correspond to legible and defensible 'landscape' boundaries (i.e. river and ONL/mountain boundaries).
- iv. **Intensive agriculture – some** landscape capacity where the quality of views and aesthetic attributes and values are maintained or enhanced.
- v. **Earthworks – limited** landscape capacity to absorb earthworks associated with trails, farming and rural living/visitor accommodation/tourism related activities that maintain naturalness and expressiveness values and integrate with existing natural landform patterns.
- vi. **Farm buildings – some** landscape capacity for modestly scaled buildings that reinforce the existing rural character.
- vii. **Mineral extraction – limited** landscape capacity for ongoing gravel extraction from the Ōrau (Cardrona) riverbed in accordance with Otago Regional Council river management strategy. **Very limited** landscape capacity for farm-scale quarries elsewhere within the area that maintain or enhance the quality of views, naturalness values and aesthetic values.
- viii. **Transport infrastructure – very limited** landscape capacity to absorb additional infrastructure that is of a modest scale and low-key rural character.
- ix. **Utilities and regionally significant infrastructure – limited** landscape capacity for additional district-scale infrastructure that is buried or located such that they are screened from external view. In the case of utilities such as overhead lines or cell phone towers which cannot be screened, these should be designed and located so that they are not visually prominent. In the case of the National Grid, **limited** landscape capacity in circumstances where there is a functional or operational need for its location and structures are designed and located to limit their visual prominence, including associated earthworks. **Very limited** landscape capacity for other larger-scale regionally significant infrastructure.
- x. **Renewable energy generation – some** landscape capacity for small-scale wind or solar generation located where topography or mature vegetation ensures it is not highly visible from public places. **Very limited** landscape capacity for larger-scale commercial renewable energy generation.
- xi. **Forestry – limited** landscape capacity for scattered woodlots of up to 2 hectares in area.

- xii. **Rural living – extremely limited or no** landscape capacity to absorb additional rural living, given that the area has been earmarked for urban expansion in the QLDC 2021 Spatial Plan and rural living development is likely stymie efficient urban use in the future.

Plant and Animal Pests

- A. Plant pest species include wilding conifers, hawthorn, crack willow, broom, and lupin.
- B. Animal pest species include rabbits, stoats, feral cats, possums, hedgehogs, rats, and mice.