

Hearing Streams 1A + 1B

1. My experience in the QLDC area has been set out in my evidence. I wish to note here, however, that as a consequence of the seven and a half years working for Civic Corp and Lakes Environmental, plus further work since as a consultant, I consider that I have significant experience in applying landscape provisions of the QLDC ODP. I have provided Council with a number of technical reports over the years which have informed aspects of the development of the Proposed District Plan. The first was a report entitled 'Landscape Lines in Queenstown Lakes District' completed in July 2011. This was expanded and modified and resubmitted in 2014 as the 'Report to Queenstown Lakes District Council on appropriate landscape classification boundaries within the District, with particular reference to Outstanding Natural Landscapes and Features'. Following its peer review this report was further amended. In addition I undertook a landscape character assessment of the Wakatipu Basin and provided a report to Council recommending, among other things, the establishment of new Rural Lifestyle zones within that area.
2. I have, over the past year or so, worked with Mr Barr on the development of the Landscape Chapter of the Proposed District Plan. This has largely entailed reviews by me of his written proposals, and reasonably extensive discussions. I did not have any direct input into the preparation of the Strategic Directions chapter.
3. In order to explain why the Council is promoting a different approach in the PDP, I have outlined in my evidence a number of problems which I have become aware of during my time working in the District through directly applying the landscape provisions of the Operative District Plan. These can be summarised as follows:
 - a) Confusion regarding the status of the boundaries of the Outstanding Natural Landscapes (**ONLs**) and Outstanding Natural Features (**ONFs**) as drawn on the maps in Appendix 8A of the PDP;
 - b) The use of the term 'arcadian' in the description of the Visual Amenity Landscape;
 - c) The application of descriptions and assessment matters developed with regard to the landscape of the Wakatipu Basin to the Upper Clutha Basin which has quite different features and character;
 - d) The requirement that all Rural General land must be ascribed one of the ODPs three landscape classifications leaving remnants of landscapes vulnerable to inappropriate development;

- e) The landscape classification of the Frankton Arm, which I have seen ascribed each of four out of the five possibilities;
 - f) Difficulties identifying and preventing the occurrence of cumulative adverse effects within the landscapes of the District, particularly in the Wakatipu Basin.
 - g) The overly visual focus of the landscape provisions which fail to adequately consider landscape character and its importance in providing a sense of place.
4. The QLDC area includes some of the most spectacular landscapes of the country and these landscapes are highly valued by both residents and visitors. It is also one of the fastest growing districts in the country. Consequently it is important, in my view, to manage the landscape and the growth in order to protect both the intrinsic and the economic value of the landscape.
5. Under the ODP the rural landscapes of the District must all be classified as one of Outstanding Natural Landscapes (Wakatipu Basin); Outstanding Natural Landscape (District Wide); Outstanding Natural Feature; Visual Amenity Landscape; or Other Rural Landscape. The Outstanding Natural Landscapes and Features are those landscapes which are required, by Section 6(b) of the RMA to be protected against inappropriate use, subdivision and development. The Visual Amenity Landscapes are those landscapes for which particular regard to the maintenance and enhancement of amenity values is required under Section 7(c) of the RMA. The Other Rural Landscapes are the landscapes which do not qualify as ONL, or VAL.
6. The ODP requires that, in the assessment of discretionary or non-complying resource consent applications for development within the Rural General zone the landscape classification of the site and its environs must be determined. There are two problems with this. The first is that it is time consuming, and as a consequence convention tends to be relied upon. Secondly, it means that landowners are left with varying degrees of uncertainty regarding the development potential of their land and the possible issues that they might have to address should they wish to undertake many (but not all) types of development.
7. Appendix 8 of the ODP provides maps which provide landscape categorisations in the Wakatipu and Upper Clutha Basins. These include solid lines which indicate delineations determined by the Environment Court and dotted lines which are a mix of convention, in the case of the Upper Clutha Basin, and products of the Environment Court in the C180/99 case on the landscapes of the Wakatipu. Most people's understanding of this Appendix is that the solid lines are determined and are not up for further debate and in fact the maps actually state, 'These boundaries are fixed and are not subject to change or further analysis'. I have come to understand, however, that as these boundaries have never been notified they are not, in fact, a part of the Operative District Plan. The lines reflecting Environment Court

decisions are specific to the application that was before the Environment Court in that instance.

8. In contrast, the Proposed District Plan aims to identify all of the ONLs and ONFs of the District and maps showing the location of their boundaries have been notified. Except to the extent that landowners wish to challenge their locations on their properties, once established they will provide a level of certainty which should enable the appropriate management of the landscapes and provide certainty to landowners so as to enable them to make appropriate decisions about their land.
9. The Strategic Directions Chapter of the PDP provides the high level framework for the management of the District's landscapes into the future. The objectives and policies direct future development into areas with the potential to absorb it, and emphasise the importance of managing cumulative effects on the landscape.
10. The Landscape Chapter of the PDP provides the more specific policy framework. I consider that this framework is marginally more restrictive than the current regime, which in my opinion has been shown to be inadequate, particularly in regard to the Wakatipu Basin. This opinion is supported by Council's Rural General Zone monitoring report. I consider that the PDP approach is much clearer and more user friendly than the approach of the ODP.
11. One specific change which has been made within the Landscape Chapter of the PDP is to identify the Frankton Arm as an area of Rural zoning to which the landscape classifications do not apply. It is my opinion that the landscape classification system of the ODP failed to assist in the management of Frankton Arm, and that the PDP allows for the recognition of the particular character of the Arm as a location for recreational, tourist and commuter boating.
12. In all, the PDP provides what I would characterise as a refinement of the existing approach to managing the landscapes of the District, taking into account the weaknesses and strengths of the existing framework. It is my opinion that this will provide more certainty for landowners and a simpler and more streamlined planning process.