

Urban Intensification Variation – Statement of Evidence – Arthurs Point Community Association – Further Submitter 1359

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 My full name is Andrew James Blackford.
- 1.2 I hold the qualifications of a Bachelor of Engineering with Honors from the University of Canterbury and a Bachelor of Science from the University of Otago. I am a Chartered Member of Engineering New Zealand.
- 1.3 I have 21 years of experience in the consulting civil engineering and construction industries.
- 1.4 I am familiar with submission 1260 by Arthurs Point Trustees Limited on the - Proposed Urban Intensification Variation to the Queenstown Lakes Proposed District Plan (PDP).
- 1.5 I am presenting evidence today in my capacity as Chairman of the Arthurs Point Community Association, a role that I have held for the previous three years.
- 1.6 The Arthurs Point Community Association (APCA) made a further submission (FS 1359) on Submitter 1260's request to remove the building height overlay that currently applies to the mid terrace at 182D Arthurs Point (Rule 8.5.1.1a), thereby increasing permitted building height (the evidence for Submitter 1260 proposes an 11m building height). In our further submission we opposed the relief sought by Submitter 1260. The reasons for our opposition are set out in our further submission. In this oral presentation I will further elaborate on the reasons for our opposition.

2.0 Arthurs Point Landscape Characteristics

- 2.1 The landscape of Arthur's Point and surrounding areas is immensely important to the Arthur's Point Community. We are an isolated, small, urban village inside a much larger ONL & ONF environment.

- 2.2 The isolation and separation from the rest of the urban environment within the wider Wakatipu Basin is key to the identity of Arthurs Point.
- 2.3 In a similar view, the Shotover / Kimi Ākau River, an outstanding natural feature, is integral to our identity as a community, a place of significant cultural importance and a valued place of recreation.
- 2.4 To synthesise the community's objectives to protect and enhance these views, and to help guide and inform development in and adjacent to Arthurs Point, the APCA commissioned Landscape Architect Phil Blakely to prepare a Landscape Master Plan for Arthurs Point. The masterplan was referenced in our Further Submission, but unfortunately was not attached in error. A copy of the masterplan is attached to this evidence.
- 2.5 The APCA has actively campaigned on the protection of these landscape matters and has been successful in several RMA hearings and appeals recently. Specifically:
 - 2.5.1 Landscape Schedules – Topic 2 appeals – the APCA was successful, through mediation, in having landscape issues protected in the West Wakatipu PA.
 - 2.5.2 Atley Road Rezoning – The independent hearing panel agreed with the APCA (and others) that development at the margins of Shotover River was not compatible with the landscape environment and rejected the rezoning application.

182D Arthurs Point Road

- 2.6 Of relevance to the Submitter 1260 land at 182D Arthurs Point Road, the viewshafts to the North from Murdoch Park (public reserve land) and the lower Shotover River terrace (public conservation land), as well as other public and private locations in Arthurs Point, are identified in the Arthurs Point Landscape Masterplan as important, iconic views that the community wishes to protect and retain.
- 2.7 The panoramic views available from Murdoch Park, a highly frequented community park are in Mr Milne's evidence for Submitter 1260 as View Point Location 3 and similar views from the very popular walking track along the Shotover River Margin as View Point Location 4 (at pages 6 and 7 of Mr Milne's evidence).

- 2.8 Unfortunately, the image quality in Mr Milne's evidence for View Point 3 is not particularly good, with the subject site heavily shaded. This has the consequence of blurring the Upper and Mid Terraces into one feature.
- 2.9 The presence of the 30m+ tall wilding conifers also masks that the two terraces are at very different elevations, with a high degree of separation. This is evidenced by Mr Milne's evidence in Paragraph 22 (paraphrased) *while identifiable, is more difficult to discern with it's current vegetation cover* and Paragraph 13 that records that the Mid Terrace elevation is 20m below the Upper Terrace. Explained another way – when looking at the total escarpment height from river level to the Upper Terrace, the Mid Terrace sits $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way up the escarpment i.e., distinctly separate from the Upper Terrace and once developed would read as two very separate developments.
- 2.10 It is highly likely that any any development of the subject site would involve the removal of the exotic, wilding species – therefore their presence should not be used as a mitigating measure, as it appears in Mr Milne's evidence.
- 2.11 The APCA does not support Mr Milne's assessment that the views to the Mid Terrace of the Submitter 1260 land are intermittent, distant and limited, as stated in his Paragraph 29. Broad parts of Arthur's Point look to the north, or downstream of the Shotover River, and the subject site is highly visible from multiple, public locations.
- 2.12 Notably, views from public reserve Murdoch Park to the Submitter 1260 land, being the views depicted in Mr Milne's Viewpoint 3, are close, unobstructed and open. Murdoch Park provides panoramic views across the Shotover River and the wider river corridor and it is regularly utilised by the community for recreation purposes. The mid terrace of the Submitter's land is highly visible from this location (and others).
- 2.13 The APCA encourages the hearing panel to visit Murdoch Park and undertake their own assessment of this important and largely undeveloped view.

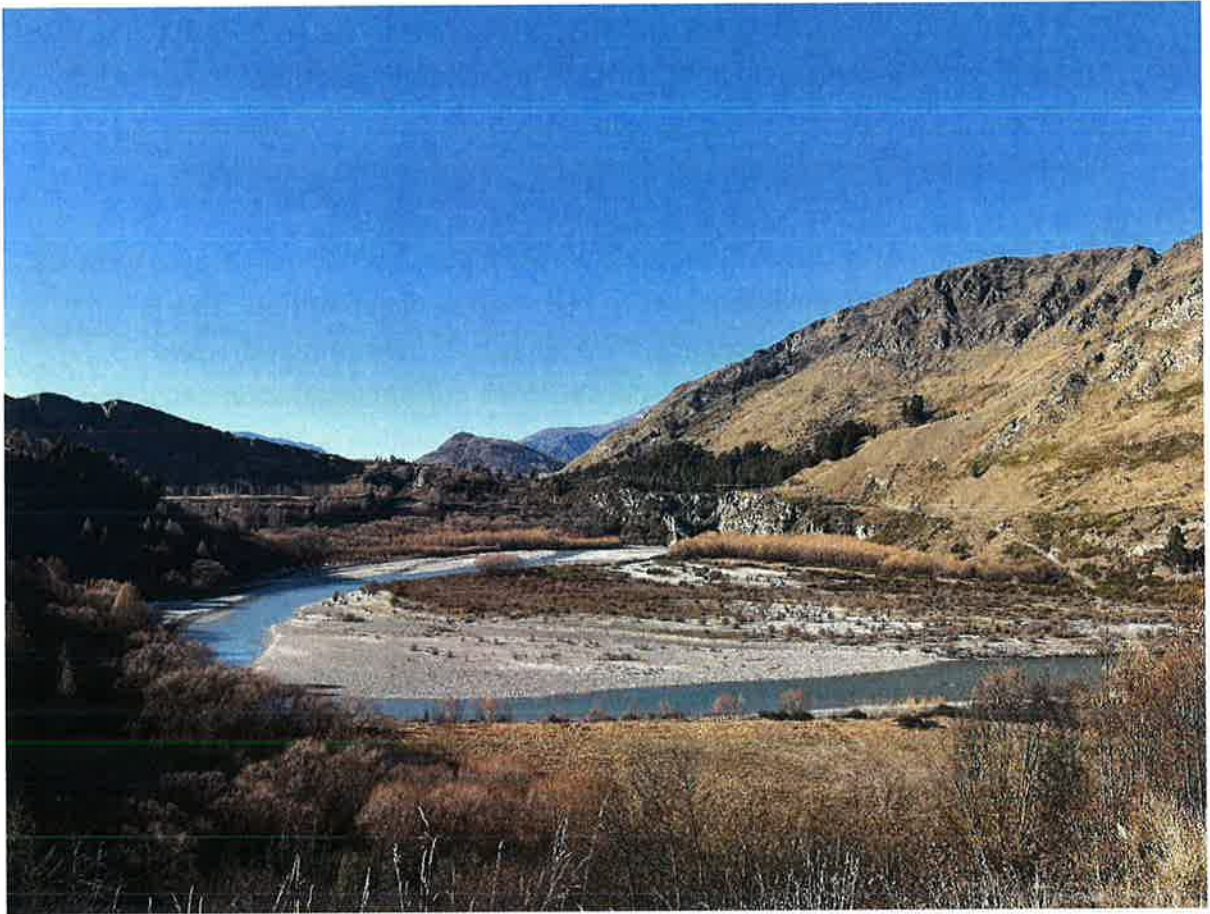


Figure 1 View from Murdock Park (Public Reserve) – with unobstructed, open views to the north. Submitter 1260 land is just to the left hand side of the frame

- 2.14 The APCA would also like to draw the Hearing Panel's attention to the important point that all, bar two, of the existing buildings along Arthurs Point Road sit on, or near to, the top of the Shotover River escarpment, i.e mainly out of the river gorge. Therefore, development largely aligns with the Upper Terrace of the subject site, with it's higher permitted / proposed building height. The two buildings that sit an elevation similar to the Mid Terrace, but approximately 300m to the west , are relatively modest in height and certainly much shorter than 11m.
- 2.15 We also note that while Mr Milne supports an 11m high building height on the Mid Terrace, his support is highly conditional on a raft of provisions, as listed in his evidence.
- 2.16 The logical lay-person conclusion is that, in a highly sensitive receiving environment (as identified by Mr Milne and other recent RMA hearings) that as you move towards an Outstanding Natural Feature (The Shotover River) and

move away from more built up areas, development controls should become more stringent and built form should reduce in scale and height.

- 2.17 The APCA therefore agrees with Corinne Frischknecht in paragraph 4.121 of their S42A report - that any increase in building height (above 8m) should be assessed on its merits through a resource consent process- where the specific building location, design and the adequacy of any mitigation measures can be assessed.

Removal of the 8m height rule and provision for taller, up to 11m high buildings through zone provisions would reduce the level of scrutiny that could be applied to the development and could result in inappropriate outcomes incongruous with this sensitive location.

- 2.18 The APCA supports the recommendations of the S42a reports that the 8m building height overlay on the subject site (Rule 8.5.1.1a) is retained.

A Blackford

5 August 2025

Arthurs Point Landscape Concept Plan

Arthurs Point is encircled by Outstanding Natural Landscape (ONL) classifications and is divided by an Outstanding Natural Feature (ONF), as categorised under Chapter 21 of the Proposed Queenstown Lakes District Plan. The mountains that surround the Arthurs Point community and the Kimiakau (Shotover River) provide context and are central to our identity and special character. The goldmining heritage provides an additional important cultural overlay which also contributes to its sense of place and identity.

Arthurs Point has been developed over different timeframes and stages. It is generally considered to have three distinct development areas:

- 'Old Arthurs Point', located on the western side of the Edith Cavell Bridge
- 'New Arthurs Point' which is generally described as being those subdivisions located on the eastern side of the Edith Cavell Bridge, flanking Morning Star Terrace and Atley Roads, located to the north and south of Arthurs Point Road
- Bullendale and the mixed commercial and residential developments heading east along Arthurs Point Road toward Lyttles Road.

The uniqueness of Arthurs Point is presently protected by an Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), as set out in the District Plan. Those areas located internal of the UGB are appropriately zoned for residential and commercial development. Those areas located external of the UGB are zoned Rural and are subject to the additional ONL and ONF landscape character units. The Arthurs Point Community seeks to uphold the UGB, as it is presently depicted in the District Plan and supports the landscape character classifications provided for in the Proposed District Plan. Further, the community supports – Proposed Schedule 21.22 as it relates to:

- 21.22.3 Shotover River PA ONF Schedule and those areas visible from Arthurs Point
- 21.22.12 West Wakatipu Basin ONL
- 21.22.15 Central Wakatipu Basin Coronet ONL

The unique landscape character of the Arthurs Point is defined and expressed by the important view shafts that the community seeks to protect, as gained from:

- The Edith Cavell Bridge,
- The Oxenbridge Tunnel,
- Redfern Terrace looking west to Bowen Peak and Moonlight Track,
- Murdoch Park looking north-east,
- Moonlight track looking east
- Morningstar Beach looking both and and down river
- The river view point opposite the old Arthurs Point hotel and
- Views of Mt Dewar, as gained from most locations in Arthurs Point.[NR1] [NR2]

The Arthurs Point community feels passionately about protecting the quality and character of our rural landscapes and is generally opposed to further urban development in rural areas. The community also seeks to manage development within the UGB so that it is consistent with existing patterns of development and character of urban form and is sympathetic to the surrounding landscape. This includes street scaping, lighting, and character of built form.

The community has further synthesised their objectives in the following landscape strategy.

Key Landscape Strategies [NR3]

1. Uphold a clear urban/rural edge at both the southern and northern entrance. Avoid urban bleed.
2. Establish clear and distinctive 'gateway' entrances at both the north and south entry's.
3. Retain and protect the distinct character and differences of old and new Arthurs Point.
4. Edith Cavell Bridge and the Shotover Gorge are defining physical and spiritual focal points of Arthurs Point. Maximise opportunities for use, enjoyment and viewing (separate from vehicles).
5. Eco-sourced native roadside planting (especially of main arterial road) provides a key means of creating cohesion, softening built form and strengthen natural character.
6. Ensure infrastructure upgrades are compatible with the character of Arthurs Point.
7. Transition to a more pedestrian focused zone on the main arterial route and minimize excessive traffic and road clutter (parking, traffic signs, bollards etc).

8. Retain key views to natural landscape and avoid losing views and visual degradation.
9. Continue wilding tree removal and weed removal/control on reserves and Crown Land and transition to eco-sourced native planting.
10. Establish junctions or nodes for the different parts of Arthurs Point to form community gathering points/precincts

Conservation, Recreation and Heritage

Conservation land, heritage features and recreational opportunities are important aspects of the Arthurs Point community's physical spaces and cultural identity. Maintaining and enhancing these aspects has been an important focus for community members and other stakeholder groups, recognising that they benefit the wider Queenstown community and visitors to the area.

There are a number of land parcels within and surrounding Arthurs Point that are held by The Crown and managed by the Department of Conservation (DoC). The majority of land parcels directly adjoin the river, with some areas also placed in reserves, such as Morningstar Reserve. The majority of these land parcels have been poorly managed over time, developing large populations of exotic and weed plant species and have been a problem for mammalian pests, including deer, goats, mustelids and possums. The community are passionate about restoring the ecological and biodiversity values of these areas and have a voluntary pest trapping and monitoring programme as well as a native planting programme. Assistance is provided by other organisations, including QLDC, the Whakatipu Reforestation Trust and the Whakatipu Wildlife Trust. Maintaining these programmes and continued work to enhance the natural values of Arthurs Point is part of our long term vision. The APCA has a planting plan for multiple areas of Arthurs Point that has been developed in consultation with ecological experts.

Included in conservation values, though not in relation to conservation land, is the intention of the community to protect the night sky of Arthurs Point. Currently, there are only low levels of lighting, with few street lamps over two metres in height, with most lighting downcast and limited to approximately only 1-1.5m above ground. As such, rich views of the night sky can be obtained from most locations. Such rich views are a rarity in urban areas and are highly valued by the community. The APCA therefore seeks to restrict and control lighting in the area to ensure these values are not compromised and are generally opposed to standard suburban street lamps.

Like many residents in Queenstown, recreation and access to facilities to undertake recreational activities is an important part of enjoying and forming connections with our surrounds, maintaining social connections and enhancing mental health. There is a vast network of trails that traverse both public and private land that residents use for walking and biking and gaining access to the Shotover / Kimi Akau River. Those trails located on conservation land are generally formalised, including the Morning Star Beach Track, Oxenbridge Tunnel track and Moonlight Track, whilst some are informal, but yet frequently used, such as the Atley River Loop.

In recent years, a blanket permit was granted to the community enabling access to the Shotover / Kimi Akau River on Wednesday and Friday evenings during the hours of 17:30 - 21:00 on non-motorised river craft. 'River floats', as they have been commonly termed, are quickly becoming a favourite summer pastime for the community, with people riding paddle boards, rafts, kayaks and the like down the pristine river gorges and open flats. The experience is extremely unique and rare within a semi-rural / urban setting. Access to the river prior to 2021 was otherwise limited to commercial operators or only granted on an individual permit basis - all other informal access, including for swimming was otherwise prohibited.

Maintaining recreational access and enhancing the network of trails, including on a more formal basis is an ambition of the APCA and will be developed in consultation with land owners and relevant authorities.

Arthurs Point has a rich human history. It is our understanding that the Shotover / Kimi Akau River was a travel route for Māori travelling to areas such as Skippers and Moke Lake and down to the Kawarau River. The River was also rich in gold and was inhabited by miners during gold rush years. There are numerous land marks and features that bear the story of these activities which the APCA would like to preserve for current and future generations as well as share with visitors to the area.

In summary, there are many distinct and unique features within Arthurs Point Community that provide varying ways to connect with and enjoy the area. The APCA is passionate about enhancing and restoring these areas in a manner consistent with the cultural, recreational and conservation values held by residents. It is the view of the community that no further urban development encroach on or compromise these values.





- LEGEND**
- Public Road (QLDC)
 - Private Road
 - Mixed use trail (Cycleway/Pedestrian)
 - Footpath
 - Junction Node (Coaching Area)
 - Transportation Hub (Bus Stop)
 - Gateway

11/10/2020 11/10/2020 11/10/2020		Project Name Arthur's Point Community Area Arthur's Point Community Plan Connectivity		Date 11/10/2020 L02 11/10/2020	
BLAKELY WALLACE ASSOCIATES Landscape Architects and Urban Planners 100/100 Arthur's Point Road, Arthur's Point, Tairāwhiti Phone: 06 342 0077 Fax: 06 342 0077 Email: info@blakelywallace.co.nz					