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GIBBSTON VILLAGE – FAST TRACK PROJECT APPLICATION

GIBBSTON VALLEY STATION

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Project No. 2024_020 / C

Gibbston Village Proposal

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Landscape Visual Impact assessment (LVIA) has been written in response to a proposed urban development in Gibbston, Queenstown. The development includes a small commercial village, a school for up to 350 children, and a mixture of residential housing topologies, new roads, walking trails and an open space network. The design utilises the underlying consented development potential of the Gibbston Resort Zone in the Queenstown Lakes District Council's Proposed District Plan (PDP).

The purpose of the report is to assess the likely visual impacts of the proposed development and the potential effects it might have on landscape character within the wider Gibbston area. There are three components to the assessment:

1. Identification of the receiving environment and a description of the existing landscape character, including natural character;
2. The landscape assessment is an assessment of the proposal against the existing landscape values;
3. The visual impact assessment is primarily concerned with the effects of the proposal on visual amenity and people, evaluated against the character and quality of the existing visual catchment.

The methodology used within this report is based on the Te Tangi a Te Manu - Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guides (July 2022) further details on the methodology are described in full within Appendix 1.

The proposed development has been assessed against the relevant policies and rules as set out in the PDP, section 45, with regard to effects on visual amenity and landscape character. The LVIA report is supported by several maps, diagrams and a series of representative viewpoints (refer to Appendix 2).

Overall, it is considered that the proposed Gibbston Village integrates well into the receiving environment. It will be visually recessive to existing landscape elements and the character of the wider landscape will be maintained utilising a mix of landscape plantings, building setbacks and design controls. There are four proposed development areas, The Vines, The Orchard, Gibbston Commons, and the Commercial Vintners Village. Residential housing will be a combination of three different house typologies, Standalone dwellings, and Terrace units.

In terms of effects on visual amenity, the highest visual effects are likely to be felt by road users when travelling along SH6. This is evident from viewpoints VP5, VP6 and VP7 (Appendix 2) which have views looking towards the proposed Gibbston Commons and the Vintners Village development areas, where partially screened views of the proposal within these areas may be experienced briefly when traveling along SH6 in both directions. There is extensive enhancement planting proposed along SH6 and further south of the Gibbston Commons Area which is aimed at effectively softening and screening the built environment of the proposal. As a result, views of the development will be intermittent and temporary, until the proposed planting matures to soften and screen the development.

To mitigate potential visual impacts of the development, a set of mitigation measures are outlined in Section 5. These include the use of recessive colours and materials for the proposed buildings, building height restrictions, extensive planting initiatives, and additional earth mounding. These measures ensure that any residual adverse effects on visual amenity, landscape values and landscape character caused by the proposal will be **Low-Moderate** or at most **Minor**, with effects likely to reduce further as the existing and proposed vegetation establishes and the proposed built forms 'integrate' further into the landscape. Vineyards have been used throughout the development and play a pivotal role in mitigating perceived visual impacts by serving as a buffer between development nodes and the state highway. They provide a sympathetic transition between the proposed urban areas and the more rural landscapes, effectively preserving the integrity of open spaces while accommodating

urban growth. Development within the Gibbston Valley Resort Zone (GVRZ) is an anticipated outcome, and the proposed Gibbston Village is similar in terms of density and urban form to what is permitted within the zone.

2. INTRODUCTION AND PROPOSAL

DCM Urban Design Limited has been commissioned by Gibbston Valley Station to undertake a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of the proposed Gibbston Village development. The report assesses only the effects on the landscape amenity and character values, a full Urban Design Assessment has been completed and can be read in conjunction with this report. The proposed development is to be progressed through the Fast-Track consenting process.

The proposed development is situated on the Gibbston Valley Station land and is located within the Gibbston Valley Resort Zone, under the PDP with the Rural and Gibbston Character Zones directly adjacent to the site. The Wahi Tupuna planning overlay extends over small portions of some of the northern boundary, however no built form is located within this. The proposal is situated on the outskirts of Queenstown and is approximately 9km from Lake Hayes/ Ladies Mile Development, 9km from Arrowtown, 20km from Frankton, 25km from central Queenstown, and 35km from Cromwell. The development is framed by the Kawarau River to the north and the surrounding ONL foothills to the south with State Highway 6 (SH6) passing through the site for approximately 2.5km.

The overall activity status for resource consent would be non-complying in relation to the GVRZ structure plan and chapter 45 of the PDP, however the project is being progressed under the Fast Track-Approval Bill and its related eligibility criteria.

2.1 THE PROPOSAL

The proposed Gibbston Village development comprises of approximately 900 dwellings of varying densities and typologies, providing a diverse range of housing options for people of all demographics and lifestyles. The development is separated into four different development areas, The Vines, The Orchard, Gibbston Commons and Vintners Village. There will be 3 different house typologies:

TYPE 1 – Standalone Dwellings (336 in total)

TYPE 2 – Duplexes (generally 3 bedrooms) (326 in total)

TYPE 3 – Multiplex / Terrace Units (238 in total)

The Gibbston Village development will contribute to the growth and housing capacity of Queenstown and provide wider connections within the region. The design principles of the development and the built form will focus on integrating with the natural landscape of Gibbston Valley, aiming to protect existing landscape character values and maintain or enhance visual amenity. Every aspect of the development, from architecture to community spaces, will reflect and celebrate the unique identity of Gibbston Valley, fostering a strong sense of place and sustainability. The architectural style of the development will be tailored to reflect the distinct character and identity of Gibbston Valley and builds on existing design controls and consent conditions already established for the Resort Zone underlying the Site. The full set of design principles are set out in the urban design assessment.

The proposed development includes the establishment of a local community / commercial centre and school to serve as a hub for amenities and community activities, as well as to provide educational facilities for local residents. Those living in the proposed Gibbston Village will have access to a range of amenities and activities, including the Gibbston Trail, to promote an active and healthy lifestyle and active transport. The development will provide residential housing opportunities, including a considerable proportion of affordable housing, as well as establishing

connections within and beyond Gibbston Valley, contributing to the housing needs of Queenstown and its population growth projections. This report is supported by:

- Appendix 1 – Methodology
- Appendix 2 – Figures which includes, maps, plans, and viewpoints of the site.
- The Gibbston Village Urban Growth Strategy Proposal Masterplan & Design Guides document completed by DCM Urban Design Limited and Urban Design Assessment

3. METHODOLOGY

Refer to Appendix 1 for the assessment methodology and terms used when assessing landscape and visual effects of the proposal.

3.1 STATUTORY DOCUMENTS

Relevant statutory documents in terms of Landscape Values and Visual Amenity referred to below are; the Resource Management Act 1991, National Policy Statement on Urban Development and the Queenstown Lakes Proposed District Plan in particular PDP Chapter 45 GVRZ.

3.1.1 Resource Management Act 1991

Section 6 of the RMA identifies matters of national importance:

“In achieving the purpose of this Act, all persons exercising functions and powers under it, its relation to managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources, shall recognise and provide for the following matters of national importance:

- s.6 (a) The preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment (including the coastal marine area), wetlands, and lakes and rivers and their margins, and the protection of them from inappropriate subdivision, use and development;*
- s.6 (b) The protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development;*
- s.6 (c) The protection of areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna.”*

The application site, GVRZ and wider valley floor comprising the Gibbston Character Zone are exempted from the Outstanding Natural Landscape (**ONL**) or Outstanding Natural Feature (**ONF**) categories and plan provisions under the PDP.

Beyond the application site and Gibbston Valley floor, the wider Rural Zoned land is identified in the PDP Maps as ONL. The Kawarau River adjacent to the Site is included in the PDP Maps as part of the ONL and is also identified in the Council’s proposed landscape schedules as a priority area ONF.

Other matters are included under Section 7:

“In achieving the purpose of this Act, all persons exercising functions and powers under it, in relation to managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources, shall have particular regard to:

- (c) The maintenance and enhancement of amenity values.”*

The GVRZ and the Gibbston Character Zone have landscape and visual amenity values which are relevant in terms of section 7(c) of the RMA.

3.1.2 National Policy Statement on Urban Development

The National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD) is part of the urban planning focus for the Gibbston Village proposal. It directs councils to provide for responsive planning decisions and plan for growth, both up and out.

3.1.3 Queenstown Lakes Proposed District Plan

The GVRZ was confirmed by way of the consent order in 2019 and is understood to be treated as operative. Therefore, the Operative District Plan zoning of Gibbston Character Zone is not relevant, and this Landscape and Visual Assessment only considers the relevant Objectives, Policies and Rules of the PDP.

4. ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

4.1 EXISTING SITE AND LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

4.1.1 Wider Landscape

The site is located within Gibbston Valley, situated on the outskirts of Queenstown, approximately 20km from Frankton and 25km from Queenstown's CBD. State Highway 6 (SH6) runs through the site for approximately 2.5km. The Development Areas within the Gibbston Village proposal have a northerly aspect looking out towards the Crown Range, Mount Hocken (+1,375masl), Rock Peak (+1,490masl) and Mount Malcolm (+1,000masl). To the south views are possible of Ben Cruachan (+1,895masl) and to the east there are views of Mount Mason (+1020masl), the Antimony Saddle and Mount Rosa (+1,324masl). These topographical features characterise the landscape, they are dominant and significant landscape features with steep bluffs, rocky outcrops, incised watercourses, and active natural processes. Native grey shrubland vegetation cloaks the mountainside as a backdrop to the south of the site, in sporadic patterning which responds to the climatic and underlying geological process and soil profiles.

4.1.2 The Gibbston Character Zone

The extent of the wider Gibbston Valley, much of which is zoned Gibbston Character Zone generally has a productive rural character to it and an overall sense of openness. The area is predominantly pastoral farmland or productive land such as vineyards, with SH6 passing through the middle of the valley. Existing built form is limited along this section of SH6. The few buildings that are scattered through the valley are generally associated with farming, winemaking, residential dwellings, or visitor accommodation.

4.1.3 The Gibbston Valley Resort Zone (GVRZ)

The GVRZ comprises an approximately 170ha area located on either side of SH6, for a length along SH6 of approximately 3km. The environment on the southern side of SH6 includes the established Gibbston Valley Winery facility and visitor accommodation buildings. The northern side of SH6 is characterised by a resort zone which is under development, including from west to east, a recently installed intersection onto SH6 opposite the Gibbston Valley Winery facility, bulk earthworks for roading and infrastructure associated with The Vines Development Area, Toms Creek Road which leads to The Reserves subdivision (AA5 RM210524), which consists of a 33 lot fee simple subdivision, landscape screen and amenity planting. The Open Space and Recreation area east of Toms Creek in the foreground of The Reserve is being developed as a Golf Course. The area east of the Orchard Development Area is characterised by rocky outcrops and uneven topography.

4.1.4 Strategy Plan

The Vines and The Orchard Development Areas are proposed for residential allotments, these areas are derived from a former river terrace and the landform is predominantly flat sitting low on the valley floor, sloping down towards the Kowarau River. The area comprises a recently rehabilitated grassed area that has been used as a haul out area and depot for contractors associated with The Vines bulk earthworks and The Reserves subdivision development. Prior to this, the proposed Vines, Orchard, Gibbston Commons and Vintners Village Development Areas would have been vegetated in pastoral grasses. The main vegetation cover is exotic pasture grass with Crack Willow trees located along Toms Creek. The site is considered to have no vegetation or topographical features of significance.

The Orchard and The Vines sit for the most part below the elevation of the state highway corridor and are separated from the road by a large, grassed mound planted with specimen olive trees installed as part of The Reserves subdivision development. The mound has a gentle slope on the roadside face rising to approximately 4m at its highest point. Behind the mound is Toms Creek Road, an internal access road providing a link between The Vines and The Reserves. It is understood that the mound was installed to provide screening of Toms Creek Road and to also avoid potential for headlight glare from vehicles on Toms Creek Road onto SH6. The access road crosses Tom's Creek close to the state highway in a small gully below the highway. There is an existing weathered galvanised corrugated iron shed located to the west of The Orchard development area which is visible from the state highway and contributes to the rural character of the area.

Where buildings are proposed, vegetation cover is a mix of pasture grass. The bike and walking trail runs around the edge of the site before the land drops away down the Kowarau River embankment, which is covered in a mix of native and exotic scrubland species, with signs of localised slips visible.

The Gibbston Commons and the Vintners Village are located on the foreground of adjoining foothills of Crown Hill (+789masl) and Mount Edward (+1,334masl). The landform for these areas is gentle slopes that descend towards the levelled ground surface modifications of SH6. Prior to its existing use, the proposed development areas would have been vegetated in pastoral grasses. The existing vegetation is a mixture of exotic pastureland with macrocarpa, pine or cypress trees forming a shelter belt. Dense vegetation comprising of predominantly Willow tree species line nearby waterways and property boundaries.

4.2 EFFECTS ON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND VALUES

Landscape character is the combination and composition of biophysical elements such as topography, vegetation, built form and sensory qualities perceived by humans. Landscape character also encompasses spiritual, cultural, and social associations. Change to the character of a landscape may not necessarily be adverse, whether effects are adverse or not depends to a large extent on public expectation of what can be reasonably anticipated to occur in the landscape. Linked to this is the landscape context in terms of its existing degree of naturalness/modification, patterns, scale, visibility and levels of public appreciation, and the capacity of the landscape to absorb change.

The wider environment is considered to have a high natural landscape character value due to the largely unmodified Kowarau River gorge and wider mountain context. There is extensive native vegetation on the steeper slopes of the gorge and large rock outcrops, with many natural patterns and processes evident in these areas. Adjacent to the Site are flatter terraces, including the development areas and SH6 have been modified for productive farming purposes and more recently, the commencement of development in the Gibbston Valley Resort area; and are considered to have a high level of rural amenity but lesser natural character. Rural amenity in this location is reduced somewhat by the presence of the state highway.

Vegetation associated with the proposal is planned to be a mixture of both native and exotic species including Central Otago Orchard tree species for The Orchard and within the Vintners Village, which is in keeping with the existing vegetation patterns including native grey shrubland, and exotic productive planting (primarily grapes). These clearly defined vegetation patterns are dispersed not only throughout the Gibbston Valley Resort, but also throughout the wider Gibbston Valley and are anticipated as part of the GVRZ. There is extensive native planting proposed throughout the development, including riparian planting along Tom's Creek, and native revegetation / grey shrubland planting to the south of the Gibbston Commons Development Area. The proposed native, exotic and orchard / olive tree planting within the Gibbston Village development area will not be considered out of place or have any adverse effects on the landscape character of the receiving environment.

The mounding which exists alongside the state highway and approved as part of the existing Resort developments, has modified the landscape by enclosing the immediate area when viewed from the state highway. This is the existing environment in which the proposal needs to be considered. The proposed buildings, associated streets, planting, and mounding will modify the landscape character from a remnant pastoral and working farm rural character, to a generally more urban and horticulture developed resort character. The degree of openness of the landscape in this location will be reduced as a result of the development, though not to a degree that is inconsistent with the site as it currently exists. The balance of the open green spaces will retain a sense of openness and will remain the predominant character throughout the proposed Gibbston Village development.

The proposal is consistent with the landscape character of the environment and will not detract from the openness or character of the wider area. Views of the wider landscape and the valley will remain readily accessible from the state highway. The proposed Gibbston Village development consists of clusters of development areas that will be developed in stages. When viewed as a whole, alongside the green spaces throughout the development it presents a visually segmented landscape. The existing waterways, as well as the existing and proposed shelterbelts further break up the visual continuity of the overall development. This means that the proposed built structures, planting, and mounding are still subservient to the wider rural landscape. The proposed buildings will be set below SH6 and will be screened by a combination of existing and proposed earth mounds that will be planted, and a mix of existing and proposed planting along the boundaries.

Riparian planting along the waterways provides a separation to the green spaces and proposed development areas to increase biodiversity along Toms Creek which is identified in the GVRZ Structure Plan as a landscape management area. The proposed Central Otago Orchard planting within The Orchard Development Area will provide screening from the Gibbston River Trail and will filter views of the development from the Trail.

Overall, the Gibbston Village site is considered to have a moderate sensitivity to change noting the level of development which is anticipated by the underlying Resort zoning and current consented developments which are yet to be constructed. I consider that the Gibbston Valley proposal is consistent with the anticipated character, albeit at a higher residential density which maintains a high level of open space and open character when viewed from the state highway. Effects on character and values of landscape are therefore Low-Moderate at most.

4.3 EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY

A 1000m offset from the edge of the proposed development (The Vines to the north and the Gibbston Commons in the south) has been used to give visual context of the receiving environment. This distance has been determined by the scale of the proposal and the openness of the receiving environment. At distances further than 1000m the proposed development is unlikely to be discernible. A series of key viewpoints were selected to show a representative sample of the likely visual effects which could result from the proposal (refer to Appendix 2 Figures

for the relevant photos) all the viewpoints have been located on public land. In assessing the potential effect of the proposal, the quality and openness of the view is considered. The viewpoints selected are as follows:

- 1) VP1 – View looking east from State Highway 6 towards The Vines.
- 2) VP2 – View looking east from State Highway 6 towards The Vines & The Orchard.
- 3) VP3 – View looking southeast from State Highway 6 towards The Orchard & The Gibbston Commons.
- 4) VP4 – View looking southeast from State Highway 6 towards The Gibbston Commons.
- 5) VP5 – View looking south from State Highway 6 towards The Vintners Village.
- 6) VP6 – View looking southwest from State Highway 6 towards Vintners Village and The Gibbston Commons.
- 7) VP7 – View looking southwest from State Highway 6 towards The Gibbston Commons and the Vintners Village.
- 8) VP8 – View looking west from State Highway 6 towards the Gibbston Commons and the Vintners Village.

In assessing the potential effects on visually sensitive receptors, the key viewpoints outlined above have been used as a reference point. Each viewpoint is a representative view, as close as possible to the view likely to be experienced from a public place, these views have been obtained from a public location.

The following table outlines the potential visual effects each Visually Sensitive Receptor might receive and how the effects may potentially be mitigated. The effects from each viewpoint are discussed below taking into account the likely sensitivity of the receptor combined with the likely magnitude of effects (a combination of distance from the proposal and degree of change) to determine what the likely residual effects from the proposal will be. Mitigation measures are then outlined in Section 5 Mitigation Measures.

Table 1: Assessment of Effects on Visually Sensitive Receptors (Summary)

Viewpoint	Visually Sensitive Receptors (VSR)	Type of View (open, partial, screened)	Magnitude of Change	Mitigation Measures	Effects after mitigation
VP1	Vehicle users travelling southeast along State Highway 6	SCREENED	Indiscernible	Nil	Indiscernible
VP2	Vehicle users travelling southeast or northwest along State Highway 6	PARTIAL/SCREENED	Low	MM3	Very Low
VP3	Vehicle users travelling southeast along State Highway 6	PARTIAL/SCREENED	Low	MM1, MM2, MM3	Very Low
VP4	Vehicle users travelling southeast along State Highway 6	SCREENED	Indiscernible	Nil	Indiscernible
VP5	Vehicle users travelling southeast or northwest along State Highway 6	OPEN	Low-moderate	MM1, MM2, MM5	Low
VP6	Vehicle users travelling southeast or northwest along State Highway 6	OPEN	Low-moderate	MM1, MM2, MM5	Low
VP7	Vehicle users travelling southeast or northwest along State Highway 6	OPEN	Low-moderate	MM1, MM2, MM5	Low
VP8	Vehicle users travelling northwest along State Highway 6	SCREENED	Indiscernible	Nil	Indiscernible

VP1 – Looking east from State Highway 6 towards The Vines

Description of Existing View – The view consists of the valley foothills with relatively flat topography, humanly modified to accommodate the SH6. It features roading related infrastructure such as low wooden posts and free-standing NZTA signages. At this section of SH6, the roadway precedes a gentle curve along the southern valley slope leading up to the Gibbston Valley Winery. This southern edge of SH6, right side of the viewpoint, is framed by a dense exotic shelterbelt (macrocarpa and pine). The northern edge of SH6, left of the viewpoint, features a flat to gently slope ascending towards the steep sloping terrain of the Crown Range. It is characterised by native tussock grasslands and scattered shrubs and trees (exotic and native). The gentle curve features an earth bund along the northern road edge, which the topography ascends to approximately 2.5m. Each side of the road features a setback of post-wire fencing, delineating property boundaries while retaining a sense of openness.

Description of Effects – Views of The Vines residential development area will be entirely screened by the ascending topography along the gentle curving section of the road (earth bund). When travelling southeast along SH6, vehicles will experience no views of the overall development. It is anticipated that the proposed urban growth will have an **indiscernible** magnitude of change and the potential effects are considered to be **indiscernible**.

VP2 – Looking east from State Highway 6 towards The Vines & The Orchard

Description of Existing View – The view features a balance between the built and natural environment. The viewpoint is from the foothills of the valley that has undergone modifications to accommodate SH6 and Vines Way roading infrastructure. SH6 features 3 lanes, including a dedicated turn lane into Vines Way. The wide intersection corner features a formal Gibbston Valley Resort sign, facing oncoming traffic and those entering Vines Way. Both sides of the road features NZTA signage presenting location (Queenstown, Cromwell, and Gibbston Valley Resort) direction and give way. Other prominent signage is related to the bike trail including, directional, hazards and advertisement. On the northern side of SH6, left of the viewpoint, there is an unvegetated earth bund with a group of vegetation, juvenile and mature trees, on each end of the descending edges. There is a large setback between the mounding and the steep ascending terrain towards the Crown Range. The steep terrain is characterised by native grasslands and sparse groups of vegetation. Further along the northern edge of the road, there are viniculture related infrastructure including medium-large format sheds. The southern edge of the SH6, right of the viewpoint, also feature earth bunding with a break to allow passing cyclist along the Gibbston River Trail. It features a mix of juvenile and mature vegetation, serving as an effective natural barrier to screen the built environment. There is a solid fencing along the bund adjacent to the Gibbston Lodge, which further enhances screening measures. Other notable human modifications, include a gravel vehicle road that can be seen past the earth mounds and curving around the sloping valley.

Description of Effects – Views of the proposed Vines development area will be partially screened by proposed layers of trees setback from the state highway, densely planted in a way that still supports growth. Vehicle users travelling southeast, or northwest will experience intermittent views of the urban development. Screening will increase as they mature, creating a natural buffer between the urban development and its surroundings, preserving both privacy and the area's green characteristics. Considering the existing accommodation adjacent the proposal and behind the solid fencing, it is anticipated that the proposed residential development will have a **Low** magnitude of change. The mitigation measure **MM3** will minimise any potential effects which are considered to be **Very Low**.

VP3 – View looking southeast from State Highway 6 towards The Orchard & Gibbston Commons

Description of Existing View –The view consists of a curving corner along SH6, earth bunding with one side vegetated with juvenile trees and one side unvegetated, a temporary gravel road off the corner of SH6 leading between the gap of the earth mounds and into Toms Creek Road to accommodate heavy vehicles for the ongoing Toms Creek Road development. The mounds and the established vegetation (exotic) are blocking much of the view of the ranges, with only the tops visible.

Description of Effects – Views of the proposed Orchard area from this section of SH6 will be partially screened by the retainment of the established earth mounds and vegetation, the break between the mounds will be closed as a solid and continuous mound once construction reaches completion. Vehicle users travelling southeast along SH6 will experience intermittent views of the proposal until the mounds are completed, and the planting established. Due to the speed, it is anticipated that the proposed residential development will have a **Low** magnitude of change. The mitigation measures **MM1**, **MM2** and **MM3** will minimise any potential effects and after the mitigation measures are implemented the effects are considered to be **Very Low**.

VP4 – View looking southeast from State Highway 6 towards The Gibbston Commons

Description of Existing View –The view consists of the valley foothills modified to a levelled surface to accommodate SH6. It gently slopes around the descending topography along the northern edge of SH6, left side of the viewpoint, leading down to Tom's Creek. This is framed by densely aligned vegetation varying in scale and type. The southern edge features more open land vegetated with low tussocks and scattered shrubs. It also features wooden post-wire fencing to delineate the property boundary while retaining a sense of openness. The valley ranges can be seen in the background with some obstructions from roadside vegetation.

Description of Effects – Views of the proposed Gibbston Commons development area along the public SH6 road will be entirely screened by the descending topography, which the roads gently curve around. This prevents a continuous view into the development for vehicles travelling southeast along this section of SH6. It is anticipated that the magnitude of change and the potential effects of the proposed urban growth will be **indiscernible**.

VP5 – View looking southeast from State Highway 6 towards The Gibbston Commons

Description of Existing View –The view consists of an open lot at the foothills of the valley with cleared vegetation, while the valleys are densely vegetated with tussocks and medium to large shrubs. The change in topography from steep to flat is defined by either the clean line of cleared vegetation or the dense line of trees aligning it, primarily Salix and macrocarpa. The property boundaries are delineated with wooden post-wire fencing, retaining the open characteristic of the area.

Description of Effects – Views of the proposed Gibbston Commons development will be partially screened. There will be a large setback between the residential dwellings and SH6. The space in between will be reserved for vineyards and viticultural related activities, which will see an increase in extensive expanse of vegetation. The residential lots will feature hedging, post and rail fencing and trees along the boundaries, delineating the private lots from the viticultural activities. This will maintain the privacy of individual lots but also retain the green characteristic of the area and soften the built environment. Views will be maintained within the Gibbston Commons area due to shelterbelts that frame the perimeters of the development areas, preventing a continuous view of the entire development and thereby creating an illusion of reduced scale. Future residents will be outlooking the vineyards, while vehicle users travelling southeast/ northwest along this section of SH6 will experience intermittent views of the vineyards, proposed vegetation and the residential dwellings. The mitigation measures **MM1**, **MM2**

and **MM5** will minimise any potential effects and after the mitigation measures are implemented the effects are considered to be **Low**.

VP6 – View looking southwest from State Highway 6 towards The Vintners Village

Description of Existing View – The view consists of an expanse of land situated at the foothills of Camp Hill, gently sloping towards the steep topography of the hills. Both the hills and the open land feature scattered vegetation, tussocks and low shrubs on the slopes and streets across the open land site. The steep slopes feature scattered vegetation, predominantly tussock and low shrubs. The open land features a scattered trees varying in scale and type. The properties are delineated by wooden post-wire fencing, which retains the open characteristic of the area.

Description of Effects – Views will be partially screened from this section of the public SH6 road, across the proposed Vintners Village commercial area. An expansive area along the SH6 will be a reserve for vineyards and viticultural activities with a proposed road crossing through the vineyard reserve and towards the school site. An array of street trees will be located on each side of the proposed road (species as per DCM Design Guidelines). The residential dwellings will be located behind the vineyards, and orchard tree planting, the residential properties will include amenity planting and hedge screening along the property boundaries. The overall introduction of additional vegetation across a large expanse of open area, will soften the overall built environment and maintain privacy of individual lots. It retains the open and green characteristic of the existing area. Vehicle users travelling southeast or northwest along this section of SH6 will experience open views of the vineyards and school, but partial and intermittent views of the proposed residential dwellings. Natural screening of residential lots is anticipated to increase as vegetation grows and mature. The mitigation measures **MM1**, **MM2** and **MM5** will minimise any potential effects and after the mitigation measures are implemented the effects are considered to be **Low**.

VP7 – View looking southwest from State Highway 6 towards the Gibbston Commons

Description of Existing View – The view consists of the Camp Hill foothills where the landscape transforms from a rugged incline to an expanse of gentle slopes and relatively flat terrain. The foothills are characterised by established vineyards that span across a long expanse of land along SH6. There are multiple groups of vegetation (exotic), varying in scale and type, scattered around the vineyard in the backdrop and foreground. The property boundaries are refined by low permeable fencing that retains the open characteristic of the area. Other notable infrastructure includes roading and related infrastructure (utility post).

Description of Effects – Views will be partially screened from this section of the public SH6 road, across the eastern part of the Gibbston Commons. The vineyard expanse will be retained with a proposed road. This will create a dense vegetation backdrop from street trees, as well as amenity planting and hedge boundaries for residential dwellings. The overall introduction of additional vegetation across a large expanse of open area, will soften the overall built environment and maintain privacy of individual lots. It retains the open and green characteristic of the existing area. Vehicle users traveling southeast or northwest along this section of SH6 will experience open views of the vineyards and the roundabout, but partial and intermittent views of the proposed residential dwellings. Natural screening of residential lots is anticipated to increase as vegetation grows and mature. The mitigation measures **MM1**, **MM2** and **MM5** will minimise any potential effects and after the mitigation measures are implemented the effects are considered to be **Low**.

VP8 – View looking west from State Highway 6 towards The Gibbston Commons

Description of Existing View – The view consists of the Crown Hill foothills where the most levelled surface is modified to accommodate roading infrastructure. An existing vineyard that spans along the southern edge of the SH6, left of the viewpoint, and characterises this gentle slopes of the foothill. The established shelterbelt (macrocarpa) as the backdrop and along the sloping topography, prevents the continuity but defines the property edge from afar. The property frontage is delineated by low wooden permeable fencing that helps retain the open characteristic of the area. The opposite property features open land cleared of vegetation with little human modification other than wooden post-wire fencing that maintains sightlines throughout the property.

Description of Effects – Views will be partially screened when looking west from this section of the public SH6 road and will include the Gibbston Commons and the proposed. The shelterbelt at the backdrop defines the Gibbston Commons boundary and indicates the roundabout location within the viewpoint. This section of SH6 gently slopes down towards the roundabout, which will be partially seen from the viewpoint location. The development proposal includes vegetation along the property and road boundaries, as well as a shelterbelt along the southeastern part of the Gibbston Commons development area. Vehicle users travelling west from SH6 will experience partial views of the roundabout but screened views of the overall urban development. It is anticipated that the proposed urban development will have an **indiscernible** magnitude of change and the potential effects and after the mitigation measures are implemented the effects are considered to be **indiscernible**.

4.4 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Cumulative Effects of a proposal can be defined as a combination with those (effects) of previous developments and come into play in circumstances where an additional effect takes a landscape beyond a 'tipping point', a saturation and inability to further absorb the change, or the 'capacity' of a landscape to accommodate development before compromising its landscape values.

The existing Resort zoning anticipates and outlines areas of development where buildings are a controlled activity. The Gibbston Village development is generally consistent with these areas and perceived effects are not considered to be cumulatively adverse when considering the proposal with the existing consented development not yet built, such as in AA2, and the already built development compared to the now proposed Reserves subdivision. I consider there is sufficient space between each of the development areas to create a sense of separation which enables the open character to be retained. Existing and proposed landscape bunds combined with planting assist with compartmentalising areas of the resort and provide screening without disrupting wider, open views of the valley, river corridor and mountains beyond. Views over the bunds are maintained and contribute to the overall sense of openness in this location, allowing the landscape to absorb the proposed changes and not give rise to cumulative effects.

On the southern side of SH6, the environment is characterised by rocky bluffs and the foothills of the wider mountain range beyond and is in the OSR area. The Gibbston Commons development area is located to the southeast and opposite The Reserves development. The setback of The Gibbston Commons from SH6, the state highway itself and visual buffer created by the proposed vines fronting the state highway, provides a sense of separation and is considered sufficient distance from The Reserves development. The Gibbston Commons is also considered to be located an acceptable distance from The Orchard and screened by the PL (6) productive planting area and Toms Creek does not give rise to cumulative effects.

For these reasons, potential cumulative effects of the Gibbston Village development are considered to be **Low (or Less Than Minor)**.

4.5 SUMMARY OF EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY

The highest visual effects are likely to be felt by road users when travelling along SH6, particularly from viewpoints VP5, VP6 and VP7 towards the Gibbston Commons and Vintners Village development areas where partially screened views of the proposal may briefly emerge when traveling west towards Queenstown. The proposed extensive planting throughout the site is aimed at effectively softening and screening the built form of the proposal. As a result, views from SH6 are expected to be temporary and intermittent, offering fleeting glimpses of the development for a relatively short duration.

To mitigate potential visual impacts, a comprehensive set of measures has been proposed. These include the use of recessive colours and materials for the proposed buildings, maximum building heights, extensive planting initiatives, and additional earth mounding. These measures collectively aim to ensure that the proposed Gibbston Village development remains subservient to the local and wider landscape context. While some degree of enclosure of the immediate area adjoining the development is anticipated, owing to the presence of established mounding and planting strategies, any loss of the current degree of openness is expected to be minimal and viewed in the wider landscape context.

Vineyards have been used throughout the development and play a pivotal role in mitigating the visual impacts by serving as a buffer between development nodes and the state highway. They provide a sympathetic transition between the proposed urban areas and the more rural landscapes, effectively preserving the integrity of open spaces while accommodating urban growth. Development within the existing GVRZ is an anticipated outcome, and the proposed Gibbston Village is similar in terms of overall extent of urban form to what is permitted within the underlying zone.

Despite the changes to visual amenity that may be experienced along SH6 as a result of the proposed development, the magnitude of these changes are assessed to be **low-moderate**, and at most, falling within the **"Minor"** category in terms of Resource Management Act (RMA) considerations. The mitigation measures ensure that the proposed development integrates into its surroundings while preserving the scenic qualities and visual amenity of the area for both residents and passersby along SH6.

5. MITIGATION MEASURES

MM1 – Maximum Building Heights

Building heights for residential buildings will be restricted to two storeys and a maximum of 7.0m above finish lot level. The commercial buildings within Vintners Village will be restricted to a maximum of 8.0m above the finished lot level.

MM2 – Building Materials and Colour

Any future buildings shall be finished in a recessive colour not exceeding 35% LRV, recessive stained timber or schist, for further details and specifications refer to the Gibbston Valley Village Design Guide.

MM3 – State Highway 6, Landscape Bunding (existing)

There have been a series of landscape bunds constructed along SH6 including the 15m landscape strip for the consented Reserves residential development (AA5 RM210524) which included extensive planting of native grey shrubland species and trees. In some places the earth bunding is roughly 1.5 - 2m in height providing partial

screening until planting matures over time and full visual screening is achieved. This planting and bunding will provide screening for both the visitors staying at the accommodation and those travelling along SH6.

MM4 - Fencing

Solid fencing should be avoided throughout the development to ensure an open character is retained. Where screening is desired, planting should be considered as an alternative for internal boundaries. See the design guidelines for further details on fencing locations and types.

MM5 – Planting

The mix of native and exotic vegetation is considered appropriate given the existing vegetation patterns within the receiving environment. The use of fruit trees also adds to the productive landscape values within the Gibbston Village and will benefit the wider community by producing local produce. The amenity planting is expected to provide screening and will likely offer higher vegetation/ soft landscaping coverage to what is currently pastoral farmland. Extensive native revegetation is proposed along the southern boundary of The Gibbston Commons area, other planting includes, native grey shrubland planting, vineyard planting, hedging and street tree planting.

6. STATUTORY DOCUMENTS

Located within the Gibbston Valley Resort Zone, the proposal has been assessed against the Objectives, Policies and Rules of the Queenstown Lakes Proposed District Plan. The following landscape related objectives and policies of the GVRZ have been considered below. The Town Planning Group report is referred to for the full statutory assessment of the objectives and policies which are relevant to the proposal.

OBJECTIVES

3.1B.6 *The following Strategic Objectives and Strategic Policies (or specified parts thereof) do not apply to the consideration or determination of any applications for any subdivision, use or development within any of the Exception Zones except in so far as the receiving environment includes an Outstanding Natural Feature or Outstanding Natural Landscape (or part thereof) that is outside the Exception Zone: a. SO 3.2.1.7.a, SO 3.2.1.8.a, SO 3.2.5.1, SO 3.2.5.2; and b. SP 3.3.2.a, SP 3.3.21.a, SP 3.3.23.a, SP 3.3.29, SP 3.3.30, SP 3.3.31. For avoidance of doubt, the above identified Strategic Objectives and Strategic Policies apply to plan development, including Plan Changes.*

Response: The proposed Gibbston Village development is generally within the anticipated areas of development under the existing GVRZ and is exempt from the ONL categories and plan provisions. Though of higher density, the Gibbston Village development will include residential dwellings, commercial buildings, a school and other community facilities. In total approximately 900 lots are proposed throughout the four different development areas these areas have thoughtful consideration and integration with the wider receiving environment including landscape character, landscape values, visual amenity values, and natural landscape features.

6.3.1.3 *Provide a separate regulatory regime for the Gibbston Valley (identified as the Gibbston Character Zone), Rural Residential Zone, Rural Lifestyle Zone and the Special Zones within which the Outstanding Natural Feature, Outstanding Natural Landscape and Rural Character*

Landscape categories and the policies of this Chapter related to those categories do not apply unless otherwise stated. (SO 3.1B.5 and 3.1B.6).

Response: Given the natural landscape values that surround the proposed Gibbston Village development, it is essential to carefully assess how the proposed development complies with the specific provisions outlined for the Gibbston Character Zone. While also considering any potential effects on the wider ONL and ONF. The proposal has been assessed against the relevant objectives and policies to ensure where possible, alignment with the designated zoning. The proposal has been setback from the adjacent (ONF), ensuring it does not compromise the inherent values of this feature the (Kawarau River). Notably, the natural topography, distance, and implemented mitigation measures collectively prevent any views of the site from being experienced from the ONF.

Part 6 – 45 GIBBSTON VALLEY RESORT ZONE

The relevant objective is:

45.2.1 Objective – Visitor accommodation, viticulture, horticulture, commercial, tourism and limited residential activities developed in an integrated and planned manner with particular regard to the maintenance and enhancement of landscape, ecological values, soil values, productive land use and economic sustainability.

Response: The proposed Gibbston Village including the residential dwellings, commercial area, and school facility are integrated into the landscape in a planned manner. It is also a visually discreet area within the Gibbston Valley Station land. We understand from the Town Planning Group report that this location is readily serviced by existing infrastructure that runs to AA5 (The Reserves subdivision) and also from the internal roading network for the resort. Extensive planting is proposed throughout the development and includes vines, orchard tree planting, riparian planting along Tom's Creek, and large areas of native revegetation south of The Gibbston Commons as part of the developments efforts to improve the biodiversity and ecology of the wider receiving environment. The proposed vineyards and Central Otago orchard tree planting align with the productive land use of the Gibbston Valley and provides a layer of economic sustainability to the Gibbston Village. The sensitive siting of any built form enables the proposed development to integrate into the existing landscape, coupled with mitigation of any perceived adverse effects on landscape character and visual amenity values.

The relevant policies are:

Policies - Structure Plan and Resort Development

45.2.1.4 Ensure that any additional use and development in the Open Space and Recreation Area in proximity to the Gibbston Character Zone, or the Rural Zone Outstanding Natural Landscape has particular regard to views from the Kawarau River and its margins and does not compromise the landscape values of those areas.

Response: There are no views of the proposed development from the Kawarau River or its margins due to the natural topography and vegetation. Despite the Orchard development area being located within the existing GRVZ 'OSR' the proposed buildings have been sited with sensitivity to natural landscape, and by providing mitigation for any perceived adverse effects on landscape character and visual amenity values. This enables the OSR area to absorb the change. Views of the Orchard development are only experienced from the north for a short section (128 metres in length) of the Gibbston River Trail which runs along the northwestern boundary of the site. The proposed Orchard tree planting and native grey shrubland planting will soften any future buildings and views of the mountain

ranges beyond provide an uninterrupted backdrop from SH6 and the Gibbston River Trail. Mitigation measures such as maximum building heights, recessive materials and colours will seek to further blend buildings into the landscape reducing potential adverse effects.

The development will not diminish views or compromise the landscape character values, visual amenity, or the appreciation of views from SH6 or other public places within the wider landscape, including the Gibbston Character Zone and Rural Zone Outstanding Natural Landscape.

45.2.1.5 Recognise that further use and development of the Open Space and Recreation Area adjoining Activity Area 5 may be appropriate providing that development is located where it will not:

- (a) Result in significant risk from flooding hazard from Toms Creek;**
- (b) Compromise landscape character and visual amenity values with particular regard to the important function of the Open Space and Recreation Area to maintain openness across the balance of the Zone;**
- (c) Result in a loss of rural working character and openness due to residential activity within the Zone and adjoining Gibbston Character Zone.**

Response: This policy recognises that further use and development of this area may be appropriate.

(a) relates to flooding and is not relevant to landscape effects.

(b) this has been identified and assessed above, The Orchard development area is the only area that is proposed within the OSR, and the mitigation measures consisting of mounding and planting will result in a 'closing in' of the immediate development area, and while this will result in some loss of what was part of the OSR's open character. The loss is minimal due to the location of the built form being nestled into a hollow, adjacent to Toms Creek, in a part of the GVRZ where this is a distinct break in the orientation of the OSR area, adjoining the State Highway, and to a more subtle extent the valley landform itself changes orientation from an east to west orientation to a more northwest to southeast orientation. The result is that despite the Orchard development area modifying the OSR by approximately 3ha, the overall integrity and role of the OSR area to provide breathing space between nodes of development is not diminished. The part of the OSR being affected by the Orchard is bookended by the break in direction and Toms Creek. The development is not considered to result in fragmentation of the OSR area and the important function of the OSR to maintain openness across the balance of the Zone will be retained.

(c) relates to the loss of rural working character and openness due to residential activity. The activity for the proposed Orchard development area is not residential but visitor accommodation. However, for the absence of doubt the policy has been assessed. The proposed development site is not located adjacent to the Gibbston Character Zone and will not effect any perception of openness or rural character as it relates to the Gibbston Character Zone. For the same reasons as provided for above, the loss of working rural character to the OSR area is confined and will not fragment or undermine the role of the OSR area.

Policies - Buildings

45.2.1.8 Require the external appearance of buildings to maintain or enhance overall landscape character of the Zone through sympathetic and innovative design, cladding, materials and colours.

Response: The proposed buildings will adopt the use of recessive materials, colours and low Light Reflective Values as shown in the Condon Scott Architectural Designs and the DCM Urban Design Guidelines. The colour and material specifications, along with the mitigation measures of MM1 and MM2 will help to retain the character

of the area and further blend the dwellings into the landscape. Consistent with other buildings developed on the Gibbston Valley Resort Zone, future buildings will be sympathetic with the rural landscape character and will be required to be built according to design guidelines and design controls imposed by consent conditions.

Policies – Landscape and Amenity

45.2.1.14 Maintain the overall sense of openness within the Zone, particularly in respect of views from State Highway 6.

Response: The proposed development runs along both sides of SH6 and slopes down towards the Kowarau River to the north and bound by the foothills to the south. The existing mounding alongside the state highway and approved as part of The Vines and The Reserves developments has modified the landscape by enclosing the immediate area when viewed from the state highway. The degree of openness of the landscape in this location will be reduced as a result of the development, but not to a degree that is inconsistent with the site as it currently exists. The balance of the OSR areas will retain a sense of openness and will remain the predominant character throughout the proposed Gibbston Village development.

45.2.1.15 Avoid or mitigate the adverse effects of buildings on the landscape character of the Zone through implementing the Structure Plan, productive landscape plantings, enhancement of landscape management areas, retention of open space and building design, materials and colours.

Response: Mitigation measures as described in section 5 of this report aim reduce any perceived adverse effects on landscape character through addressing various types of planting, enhancing both the amenity and biodiversity of the area. Recessive building materials and colours will be used to further blend any future buildings into the landscape, ensuring the landscape character of the area is maintained. The relatively small number of buildings, combined with design controls, ensure that existing landscape elements remain the dominant features.

45.2.1.18 Enhance or restore indigenous biodiversity within the Landscape Management Areas and promote the protection of cultural heritage features, including through the integration of these features with development.

Response: There is a substantial amount of proposed native and riparian planting along Tom's Creek, the northern boundary of The Orchard and the southern boundary of The Gibbston Commons. This will enhance the biodiversity of Tom's Creek and the wider Gibbston Valley. The proposed native grey shrubland and riparian species enhance and are consistent with the surrounding vegetation patterns providing a **positive effect** from the development.

45.4 Rules – Activities (Table 1)

The key rules are:

Rule 45.4.10 Visitor Accommodation in AA4, AA7 and OSR

Response: Visitor accommodation is proposed within The Orchard (OSR) and Gibbston Commons (AA7) and is a discretionary activity as described in the PDP. Proposed mitigation measures, design guidelines and other design controls integrate the visitor accommodation within the development.

Rule 45.4.35 Access and Parking

Response: Vehicle access will be from various points along SH6, including the already existing Vines Way intersection to the west of the development, and proposed access to the school, Gibbston Commons and the

commercial Vintners Village areas. Each development area will all be accessed from these points through internal roads which are shown on the plans in Appendix 2.

45.4 Rules – Standards (Table 2)

Rule 45.5.6 & 45.5.7 – Building height, The maximum building height shall be:

- (a) AA2 – 5.5m
- (b) AA3 – 5.5m
- (c) AA4 – 5.5m
- (e) AA6 – 7m
- (f) AA7 – 5.5m
- (g) AA8 – 7m
- (h) PL and OSR - 7m

Response: The proposed building heights of the standalone dwellings, duplex units, and multiplex / terrace units will all have a maximum building height of 7.0m from finished lot level with a 1m allowance for gable roof forms. Within Vintners Village (AA4) the buildings will have a maximum proposed height of 8m from finished lot level. The increased building heights have been mitigated through MM2, MM3 and MM5.

45.5.12 – Setback from Roads, Standards for Buildings

Response: The rule states a minimum 40m setback from a state highway is required, the proposed Gibbston Village and all four development areas comply, any proposed buildings are set back more than 40m from SH6.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Overall, it is considered that the proposed Gibbston Village integrates well into the receiving environment albeit at a higher density than anticipated by the underlying resort zone. It will be visually sympathetic to existing landscape elements with the existing character of the immediate and wider landscape maintained by utilising a mix of landscape plantings, building setbacks and design controls.

In terms of visual amenity, the proposed mitigation measures outlined above in Section 5 will ensure that any perceived residual effects on the visual amenity, landscape values and landscape character, when viewed from SH6 are **Minor**. Effects are likely to reduce further as the existing and proposed vegetation establishes and the proposed built forms 'integrate' into the landscape. Proposed orchard, vine, specimen trees, and native grey shrubland and riparian planting will also assist with restoring indigenous biodiversity across the Village proposal.

The proposed Gibbston Village development has been assessed overall as having a **Low** magnitude of change or **Less than Minor** effects on the receiving environment landscape character and associated landscape values due to the proposed and existing landscape bunding, extensive proposed planting including the establishment of vineyards, and good design guidance and principles. Evident throughout the development the high quality of architecture, built form, planting, community and open spaces, each reflecting and celebrating the unique identity of Gibbston Valley. While providing for a diverse range of housing options and lifestyle opportunities, the proposal will contribute positively to the broader sustainability and growth of the Queenstown Lake District.