



patch

LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT REPORT



Northbrook
Arrowtown

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The proposal seeks to establish a pocket of urban character in the form of a retirement village within a discrete landscape unit. The visual effects of the proposed development will be well contained within a foil of vegetation, landform and open space protection areas. The receiving landscape holds a diverse set of landscape characters and the proposal will sit between rural living, urban parkland and pastoral character areas. It is considered the proposal will result in no more than **low** adverse effects on landscape character values and will result in no more than **very low** adverse effects on visual amenity.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. This report provides an assessment of the landscape character and visual amenity effects of a proposed retirement village on a site near Arrowtown. The following report includes:
 - a) Assessment methodology
 - b) A description of the site and surrounding landscape,
 - c) A description of the proposal,
 - d) A landscape assessment,
 - e) Conclusion,
 - f) Attachments.

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3. ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

- 3.1. The applicant has undertaken significant design work on the development of this proposal. This report relies on and refers to the 'Landscape Strategy' document prepared by Waterfall Park Developments Limited and the 'Architectural Package' prepared by Studio Pacific Architecture.
- 3.2. In undertaking this landscape assessment, Patch visited the site on several occasions and viewed the site from surrounding public places and where available, from private places. Photographs were taken using a digital SLR camera and these photographs are attached to this report (**Attachment A, B and Images**).
- 3.3. An assessment of the proposal's actual and potential effects on landscape character and visual amenity is undertaken in the frame of the relevant statutory considerations directed by the District Plan(s). This report uses the following definitions:

- Landscape character effects – These effects derive from changes in the physical landscape, which may give rise to changes in its character and how this is experienced. This may in turn affect the perceived value ascribed to the landscape.
- Visual effects – Visual effects relate to the changes that arise in the composition of available views as a result of changes to the landscape, to people's responses to the changes, and to the overall effects with respect to visual amenity.
- Landscape – Landscape is the cumulative expression of natural and cultural features, patterns and processes in a geographical area, including human perceptions and associations.¹

Extent of Effect

3.4. In assessing the extent of effects, this report uses the following seven-point scale:

very high, high, moderate-high, moderate, moderate-low, low, very low.

3.5. An effects rating of moderate-low corresponds to a 'minor' adverse effects rating. An adverse effects rating of 'low' or 'very low' corresponds to a 'less than minor' adverse effects rating.

Landscape Category

3.6. The site is shown in the Operative District Plan (ODP), Appendix 8A – Map 2 as being part of a Visual Amenity Landscape (VAL). The Proposed District Plan (PDP), Stage 1 and 2, shows the site as being subject to appeal (ENV-2019-CHC-090), however the site is certainly part of the Wakatipu Basin and not part of an Outstanding Natural Landscape (ONL) where RMA91 Section 6 matters may apply.

Statutory Considerations

3.7. The QLDC District Plan is currently under review. Much of the relevant landscape matters in the ODP are contained within Chapter 5 – Rural General. In terms of the PDP (Decisions

¹ The Quality Planning Resource

Version), the landscape relevant matters are contained within Part 5 - *Tangata Whenua*, Part 6 - *Landscape and Rural Character* and Part 24 - *Wakatipu Basin*. Schedule 24.8 in the PDP recognizes the site as being part of the Speargrass Flat Landscape Character Unit (**LCU 8**).

- 3.8. This assessment is undertaken in the frame of the relevant assessment matters with particular regard to:

ODP 5.4.2.2 (3) – Rural General, VAL;

PDP 24.7.5 – Wakatipu Basin and LCU 8.

PDP 24.7.8 – Wakatipu Basin - Setback from boundaries, Queenstown Trail, roads and Escarpments, Ridgeline and River Cliff Features.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1. The complete details of the proposal are contained within the Assessment of Environmental Effects, the Landscape Strategy and Architectural Package.
- 4.2. In summary, this proposal seeks to develop approximately 12ha of the total 42.2ha area comprising the site as a retirement village. This village will take the form of an urban area set within a frame of parkland and pastoral character. The village will contain several precincts (refer Landscape Strategy page 14, Village Precinct Overview Plan and Figure 1) hosting various building typologies for housing, recreation, aged care, community, childcare, maintenance and medical purposes. The balance approximately 30ha will predominantly be retained in its existing open pastoral character.



Figure 1

- 4.3. All buildings have been designed comprehensively to create a cohesive, aesthetic and fit for purpose development which adheres to the Arrowtown vernacular. The details of each building are set out in the Architectural Package. On whole, buildings will be a rural form with gables and lean tos. Most buildings will be single storey although there are some two-story apartment buildings proposed and split-level semi-detached houses (to more appropriately deal with level changes). All buildings will be no higher than 8m from existing ground level. Buildings will be clad and coloured in a mix of:

- a) Timber in shingles, vertical shiplap and board and batten stained, painted or oiled;
- b) Local stone with a heavy render in a natural grey colour;
- c) Weathered steel, metal flat panel and vertical metal cladding coloured in the range of browns, greys and greens with an LRV of not greater than 30%;
- d) Rendered masonry and plaster.

One wing of the 'Active Recreation Building' (Building D) will have a timber shingle roof. All other buildings will have a metal roof coloured in a natural range of browns, greens and greys with a LRV between 5% to 20%. All joinery will be aluminium coloured to match the roof.

- 4.4. The landscape design within the retirement village also builds on the Arrowtown vernacular. The main roads will have a generous width and will accommodate grass verges, footpaths, street trees and vegetated boundary treatments. Deciduous, exotic specimen street trees will form the bulk of the interior vegetated structure while a diverse mix of amenity species will be used throughout the village. All internal private gardens will be designed comprehensively providing for outdoor living areas in a formal frame of hedges and ornamental plants. Hard landscaping including lighting, street furniture, retaining walls, bridges and other amenities will be of timber, steel and stone, typical in the Arrowtown environment.
- 4.5. The village's urban and formal landscape described above will be constructed within a more natural frame of existing and proposed vegetation (refer 'Landscape Strategy', page 42, 'Wild' Native Margin Landscape Character). Two riparian areas, including Mill Creek, pass through the site. Mill Creek already has substantial riparian planting recently completed but additional native vegetation is proposed in places. The incised gullies of Christine's Hill and the ephemeral stream that they feed will also be revegetated in appropriate native plantings. Existing trees in good health to the east of the Mill Creek riparian corridor will be retained. Existing and proposed Vegetation Protection Areas (**VPA**) to the south of the village will buffer the built development from the North Lake Hayes Rural Residential Zone (**NLHRRZ**). Existing and proposed vegetation to the west of the development area will buffer the built environment from the Countryside Ride portion of the Queenstown Hill near the site's western boundary.
- 4.6. The proposal presents significant landscape protections on vegetation and pastoral lands in the form of Landscape Protection Areas (refer 'Landscape Strategy', page 41 and Figure 5, Vegetation and Open Pastoral Protection Areas). This includes 5 large Open Pastoral Areas (**OPA**) totalling 20.2ha in area. VPAs will total 7.7ha in area. Overall, landscape protection for vegetation and open space will cover 66% of the site.

5. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE

- 5.1. The site is north of the NLHRRZ, west of the Arrowtown – Lake Hayes Road, south of the Waterfall Park Zone (**WPZ**) and the Millbrook Zone (**Millbrook**), and east of more rural areas associated with Speargrass Flat (Figure 2). It is approximately 42.2ha in area. It occupies the flatlands between Arrowtown - Lake Hayes Road and Mill Creek (the East Paddocks), a portion of the Mill Creek corridor, the flatlands between Mill Creek and the Queenstown Trail (the West Paddocks) and a large, south facing portion of the terrace riser known as Christine's Hill (Figure 3).

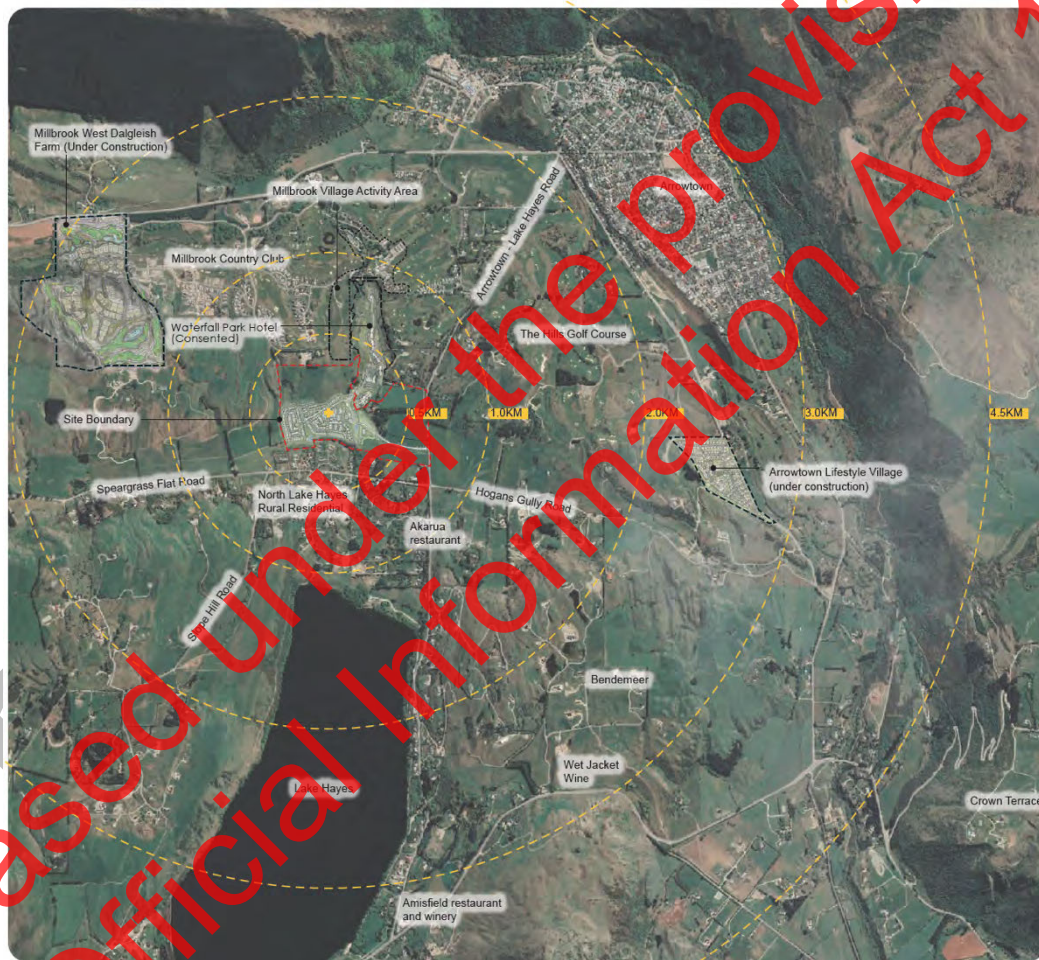


Figure 2

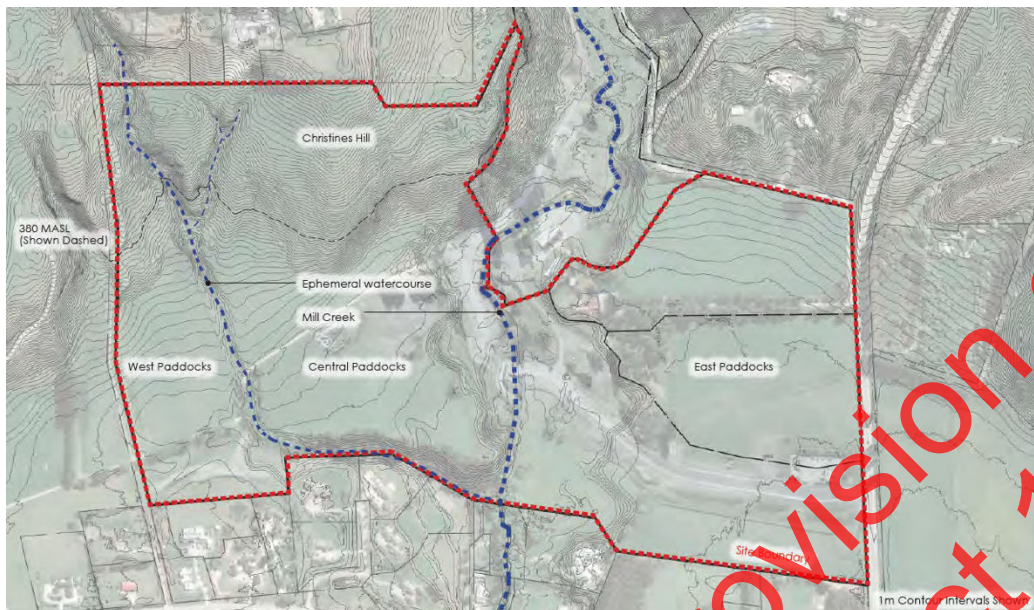


Figure 3

- 5.2. The southern extents of the site are bounded by mostly arbitrary patterns in the landscape which have resulted from development and planting within the NLHRRZ. The western site boundary adjoins a partially vegetated corridor which hosts the Queenstown Trail. Further west are areas of open land which are understood to be required to be retained as open pastoral areas. The northern portion of the site is defined by Christine's Hill and the incised gully which contains the WPZ. The land north of Christine's Hill contains the urban parkland character of Millbrook and further west, the rural and rural living areas associated with the 'Mooney Ponds' area.
- 5.3. East of the WPZ is the slope known as McEntyres Hill. Atop this hill is rural living type development and farther north, Millbrook. Christine's Hill is separated from McEntyres Hill by Mill Creek, which cascades down the slope between Millbrook and the WPZ. The Arrowtown - Lake Hayes Road splits McEntyres Hill to the east of the site and the land east of the road on the terrace riser is more densely vegetated holding a more dominant rural character, with a high ratio of open space to built form. South of the slope and east of the Arrowtown - Lake Hayes Road is an open paddock extending from the foot of McEntyres Hill to Hogans Gully Road. South of Hogans Gully Road are private properties and at least 12 unbuilt residential building platforms which in time will change the open character of this part of the landscape to a rural living character.

- 5.4. Just north of the centre of the site along the Mill Creek corridor is a collection of historic farm buildings (Ayrburn Domain) which, together with the Ayrburn Homestead located within the site, hold heritage values. A gravel drive through an avenue of protected trees accesses the Homestead within the site from the Arrowtown – Lake Hayes Road.
- 5.5. An access road has been approved (RM171280) across the lower part of the Eastern Paddocks. This access road provides access off Arrowtown – Lake Hayes Road to the WPZ, Ayrburn Domain and will provide access to the proposed development. This access road and associated landscaping are currently under construction.
- 5.6. Christine's Hill (west of the WPZ) and McEntyre's Hill (east of the WPZ) are the landforms which dominate the site and exist south of Millbrook and north of the site's flat paddocks. Christine's Hill is incised by two subtle gullies which lead to the flatlands creating a drainage and ephemeral watercourse. Mill Creek has formed a series of small terraces and risers generally running north-south through the site. The balance of the site is relatively flat.
- 5.7. The site has a complex existing vegetation pattern (Figure 4). The avenue that leads to the Ayrburn Homestead is lined with protected mature trees including Giant sequoia, Douglas fir and European larch. A large area of mixed exotic trees exists southeast of the Ayrburn Homestead. The Mill Creek corridor has more varied topography and its edges are adorned with mature rural character trees, including extensive swathes of willows and patches of specimen trees such as alders, birch and oaks. A large part of the site, south of the Central Paddocks, is lined with mature evergreen trees. Mounding and planting have recently occurred near the site's southwest corner. Planting has also recently occurred along the site's western boundary. There are some large poplar trees in the western gully of Christine's Hill and the lower ephemeral stream has some existing exotic trees, mainly willow. An existing farm track which cuts across the Central Paddocks is lined with deciduous avenue trees.



Figure 4

- 5.8. Large VPAs are proposed (Landscape Strategy, Page 41 and Figure 5, Vegetation and Open Areas) which will see most of the existing vegetation protected and enhanced. Open Pastoral Protection Areas will see the slopes of Christine's Hill and the site's Eastern Paddocks retained as open pastoral lands.

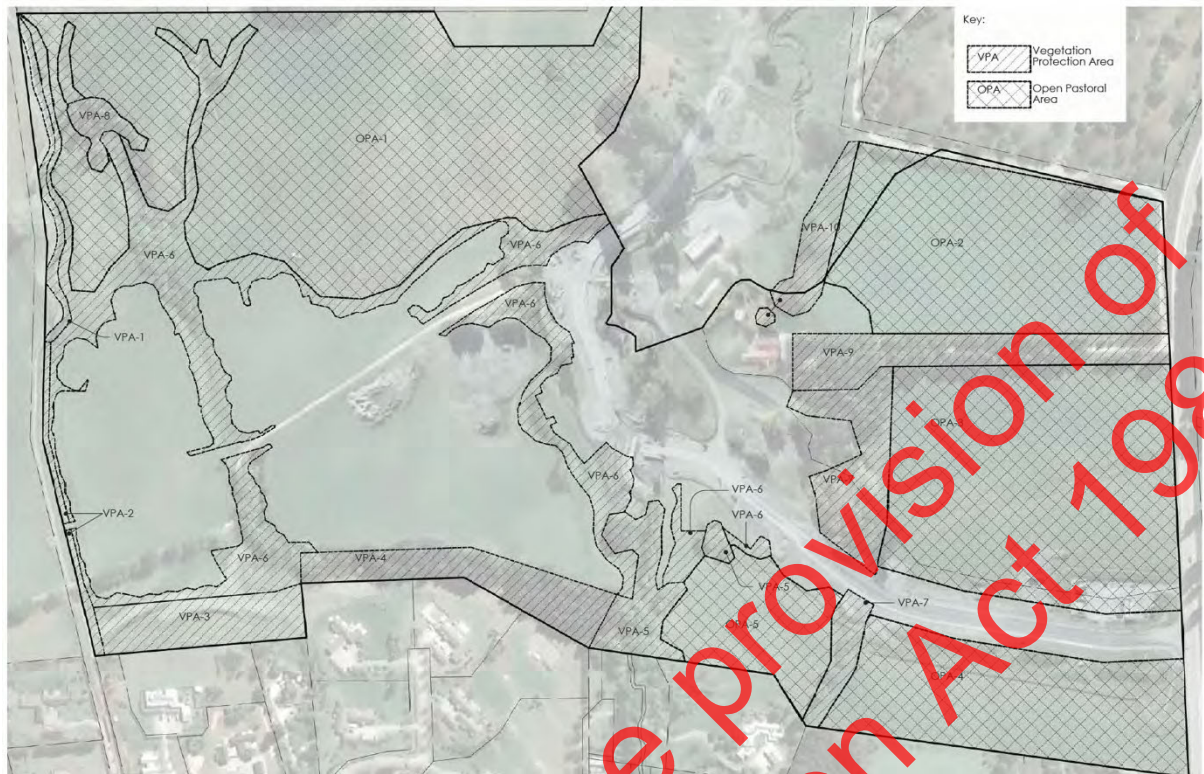


Figure 5

Experiential Qualities of the Landscape

5.9. The public road corridors of Arrowtown- Lake Hayes Road, Speargrass Flat – Hogans Gully Road and the Countryside Ride portion of the Queenstown Trail are in the vicinity of the site (**Attachments A and B**).

5.10. The Arrowtown - Lake Hayes Road corridor is predominantly influenced by residential and urban development. This corridor is bookended to the north by the urban areas of Arrowtown and to the south by Amisfield and the rural lifestyle areas on Morven Hill. The more southern portions of the road near Lake Hayes are lined by the Low Density Residential (LDR) areas on its eastern edge and the rural living areas on its western edge. The part of the road between Amisfield and the site is complemented with occasional open views of Lake Hayes to the west.

5.11. Farther north along Arrowtown - Lake Hayes Road, past Lake Hayes, is the NLHRRZ to the west and a steep terrace riser to the east. This riser gives way to open easterly views across a pastoral landscape near the intersection with Hogans Gully Road. The NLHRRZ continues to

the north of the Hogans Gully Road / Speargrass Flat Road intersection to meet the subject site which, in tandem with the lands to the east, offers some open relief from an otherwise rural living and urban character corridor. This open relief (the East Paddocks) is proposed to be maintained by the proposal. Despite this land being more open, it is influenced by the residential areas of the NLHRRZ, those south of Hogans Gully Road, and those atop Christine's Hill and McEntyres Hill. As discussed above, there are a number of consented but unbuilt building platforms south of Hogans Gully Road and east of Speargrass Flat Road.

- 5.12. As the Arrowtown - Lake Hayes Road ascends McEntyres Hill, it passes through a densely vegetated area before emerging to views of Millbrook's urban areas to the west (**Attachment A, Image 10**). Views to the east of the road into The Hills Golf Resort are restricted by mature vegetation. Near the intersection with Malaghans Road, the landscape displays an open character and this open relief continues before meeting the urban edge of Arrowtown.
- 5.13. The east-west corridor of Speargrass Flat Road – Hogans Gully Road displays a mix of rural living, pastoral and natural landscape characters. The eastern portion of Speargrass Flat Road, as it passes through the NLHRRZ, is entirely rural living in character. Along the central portion of this road adjacent to the NLHRRZ, only the south side of the road displays a rural living character. Much of the land to the north of this corridor outside the NLHRRZ (the land immediately west of the subject site) has an open character and it is understood this land is required to be retained in its open, pastoral state. The more open, westerly balance of the Speargrass Flat Road corridor, which passes through a narrow valley, has strong rural and natural character values.
- 5.14. From the Countryside Ride portion of the Queenstown Trail, the public experiences the site in between the more settled areas of Millbrook (**Attachment A and B, Image 14**) and the NLHRRZ. To the south, the Queenstown Trail passes through the NLHRRZ and connects to either the natural character of the Lake Hayes circuit trail or to the more rural and rural living areas of the Slope Hill Foothills. To the north, the Queenstown Trail passes through the urban parkland areas of Millbrook to meet the urban areas of Arrowtown. From the southern edge of Millbrook, at the high point of Christine's Hill near a bollard, elevated views are available

across the NLHRRZ towards much of Lake Hayes and the Slope Hill foothills to the Basin's distinct ONLs and ONFs including Slope Hill, Lake Hayes, Morven Hill and the Remarkables.

6. LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

Extent of Visibility

- 6.1. The following portion of this report will summarise the extent of visibility of the proposal from given locations. The assessment of visual and character effects will be addressed later under the provisions in the ODP and PDP.
- 6.2. The site has significant existing landform and vegetation which provides a high degree of screening of the proposed development area from the surrounding lands. Mitigation planting is proposed and both the existing and proposed landscaping will be protected within VPAs (Figure 5).
- 6.3. Potential visual effects from the west, including from Speargrass Flat Road and from the lower Countryside Ride portion of the Queenstown Trail will be mitigated by a Leyland Cypress shelterbelt planted near the site's western boundary along the flats (VPA 2). Similarly, a double row of Mountain Beech has been planted near the site's western boundary on the slopes within VPA 1. This VPA 1 and VPA 2 boundary planting will be further buffered by other >2m high native shrubs and trees adjacent to and east of VPAs 1 and 2 and a Portuguese laurel shelterbelt hedge east of VPA 1.
- 6.4. VPA's 7 and 10 will maintain and enhance the site's existing vegetation and screen views of the village from Hogans Gully and Arrowtown - Lake Hayes Roads. Over 100 oaks and Mountain Beech have been planted in VPA 7 to 'fill the gap' created by the consented road in views from the east toward the development area. VPAs 3 and 4 will protect and maintain existing vegetation which will screen the development area from views from private properties adjoining the southern boundary of the village.
- 6.5. For image location and images refer to **Attachments A and B** and **Images 1-27**.

Hogans Gully Road and Lake Hayes – Arrowtown Road

- 6.6. While the site's East Paddocks are highly visible from Arrowtown – Lake Hayes Road and the west end of Hogans Gully Road (**Images 1 – 9**), much of the proposed development area is visually contained by landform and vegetation near the margin of Mill Creek (VPAs 5, 6, 7 & 10). Significant tree planting has been undertaken in VPA 7 to increase the mitigating effects of existing trees and screen a viewshaft across the Eastern Paddocks along the new access road. The proposal will not be discernible from Hogans Gully or Arrowtown – Lake Hayes Roads.

Speargrass Flat Road

- 6.7. The rural residential development associated with the NLHRRZ, including buildings and vegetation, screen views of the site from Speargrass Flat Road. Vegetation near the site's western boundary including a recently planted Leyland Cypress shelterbelt in VPA 2 will ensure the existing screening effect of protected trees off the site and to the west is enhanced. Development within the site will be difficult to discern from Speargrass Flat Road, and within a few years, will be completely screened by the Leyland Cypress shelterbelt (**Images 11 – 13**).

The Countryside Ride portion of the Queenstown Trail on and near Christine's Hill

- 6.8. The only place from which the proposed development area will be visible is the Countryside Ride portion of the Queenstown Trail on and near Christine's Hill as it traverses the lands between Speargrass Flat Road and Millbrook (**Attachment B, Images 15 – 27**).
- 6.9. The trail on Christine's Hill is largely not considered to be a public place. The public place portions of the Queenstown Trail where the site may potentially be visible total approximately 119.6m in length. This includes approximately 67m between Image locations 16 – 20 (Figure 6 Section A), 31.8m containing Image location 22 (Figure 6 Section B), and 20.8m containing Image location 23 (Figure 6 Section C). Those three sections are coloured blue in Figure 6 below.



Figure 6

6.10. A key scenic view is from the highest public place shown at Section A in Figure 6 near the apex of Christine's Hill by a bollard (**Images 16 – 18**). From this elevated portion of the trail some of the southern portions of the proposed West Precinct, Central Precinct and South Precinct and East Precinct areas are currently visible. As the Mountain Beech in VPA 1 matures, development in the West and Central Precincts will be well screened from these elevated views. It may be possible to see the southernmost buildings proposed in the South and East Precincts adjacent to and north of VPA 4 from near the location of **Images 16 – 19**. From these elevated views, the Mountain Beech in VPA 1 will not screen the desirable views to the south of Lake Hayes, The Remarkables, Ben Cruachan, Cecil Peak and the other visible ONLs and ONF but in time the trees may screen some parts of the Remarkables and Ben Cruachan. This potential effect is addressed below by way of recommended condition.

6.11. From the lower two public places (Sections B and C as shown on Figure 6) the proposal will be well screened by the Mountain Beech trees. These trees will not screen the dominant southern views of Lake Hayes or the Remarkables. As the trail curves across the hill slopes there is a small portion of the trail (**Images 22 and 23**) where it is unlikely the Mountain Beech will grow high enough to completely screen a small part of the village in the southwestern extents of the Western Precinct near VPA 3.

6.12. To ensure that the important scenic views described above are maintained in the long term, it is recommended that a consent condition be imposed requiring the owner of the land

containing VPA 1 to trim and top trees within VPA 1 as necessary to ensure that a clear view of Lake Hayes, Ben Cruachan and the Remarkables shall be available from each of the three sections A, B and C identified on Figure 6.

- 6.13. From the lower public portion of the Queenstown Trail between the location of **Images 24 – 27**, the proposed development will be well screened by vegetation.

Private Places

Mill Vista Lane

- 6.14. The village will be well screened from private views. The existing dwellings in the rural living areas atop Christine's Hill are generally well set back from the crest of the ridge, which, I infer, is a design response to the Plan's statutory consideration of visibility of buildings on ridgelines and prominent slopes. The crest of the ridge screens most of the proposed development area from private dwellings atop Christine's Hill. It may however be possible to see part of the village from the southern edge of outdoor living areas in these elevated properties. The under construction dwelling at 4 Mill Vista Lane may have a narrow view through Christine's Hill's eastern gully to development in the Central Paddock. This view will be limited by landform and existing trees protected by VPA 8.

McEntyres Hill

- 6.15. McEntyres Hill is the land north of the East Paddocks and east of the WPZ. This hill contains a series of humps and hollows occupied by 5 rural living lots. Adjacent to and north of the East Paddocks is an elevated dwelling set within a vegetated context (legally described as Lot 3 DP27422). From this property and from other properties on McEntyres Hill, existing vegetation within VPAs 9 and 10 will provide a high level of screening such that the village will not be visible.

- 6.16. Extensive structural landscaping exists between the development area and the NLHRRZ including mounding, mature evergreens and recently planted native vegetation and Portuguese laurel shelterbelt. This existing landscaping provides a high-level of visual mitigation and screening from private places south of the site.
- 6.17. One elevated property east of Mill Creek (the Beadle property) has an elevated view into the site. This property would overlook open space (OPA 5), and may have views of the lower Recreation Area, although those views are partially screened by existing mature vegetation in VPA 5 and will be further screened as vegetation grows within the areas of VPA 6. VPAs 5 and 6 will largely screen distant views of the Lower Village and will provide a very high level of screening of development in the East Precinct such that it will not be visible from the Beadle property.
- 6.18. Existing evergreens in VPA 4 will provide a high level of screening such that the proposed development will not be visible from the rural residential properties immediately south of this VPA. Extensive new planting and mounding in VPA 3 will, once mature, provide a high degree of screening such that proposed buildings will not be visible from those properties adjoining the site to the south. Similarly, planting in VPA 2 will provide a high degree of screening such that no part of the development will be visible from the rural residential properties south west of the site on the west side of the Queenstown Trail.
- 6.19. It is understood that the open lands to the west of the site west of the Queenstown Trail will remain open and pastoral in character. While it may be possible to see the interior parts of the site from some elevated, sloping land on the adjoining site to the west, the proposed development will be well screened by vegetation in VPAs 1 & 2.

Operative District Plan - Visual Amenity Landscapes

Assessment Matters 5.4.2.2 (3)

(a) Effects on natural and pastoral character

In considering whether the adverse effects (including potential effects of the eventual construction and use of buildings and associated spaces) on the natural and pastoral character are avoided, remedied or mitigated, the following matters shall be taken into account:

- (i) where the site is adjacent to an Outstanding Natural Landscape or Feature, whether and the extent to which the visual effects of the development proposed will compromise any open character of the adjacent Outstanding Natural Landscape or Feature;*

6.20. The site is not adjacent to any ONL. It is over 1km from the northern shores of Lake Hayes. Significant rural living type development exists between the site, Lake Hayes and Slope Hill. The proposal will result in **no** adverse effect on the open character of any adjacent ONL or ONF.

- (ii) whether and the extent to which the scale and nature of the development will compromise the natural or arcadian pastoral character of the surrounding Visual Amenity Landscape;*

- (iii) whether the development will degrade any natural or arcadian pastoral character of the landscape by causing over-domestication of the landscape;*

- (iv) whether any adverse effects identified in (i) - (iii) above are or can be avoided or mitigated by appropriate subdivision design and landscaping, and/or appropriate conditions of consent (including covenants, consent notices and other restrictive instruments) having regard to the matters contained in (b) to (e) below;*

6.21. As discussed above in this report, the site is part of a mix of urban parkland, pastoral and rural living landscape characters. The proposed village will exist inside a foil of open space and vegetated areas such that the interior urban character will not spill beyond the boundaries of the site. The pastoral areas of the East Paddocks and the slopes of Christine's

Hill will be retained in their existing pastoral state. The arcadian pastoral character of the Speargrass Flat LCU will be affected to a **low** degree and the proposal will not lead to over-domestication of the landscape.

6.22. The pastoral character of the West and Central Paddocks will be changed by the proposal and supplanted with an area of urban character. However, these urban character effects will be well contained by a foil of vegetation and the pastoral slopes of Christine's Hill and the East Paddocks. The character effects of the proposal on the wider landscape is a product of the proposal's density and built form, rather than any visual effect. The use of OPAs and VPAs will mitigate and avoid adverse effects of the proposal on the character of the landscape.

6.23. The proposal will result in some positive effects on the landscape's natural character by celebrating and enhancing the riparian areas which pass through the site. Similarly, the upper gullies of Christine's Hill will be planted. This natural incised part of the landform will be better defined, and the formative process of the landscape will become more legible.

6.24. The proposal will see the development of an isolated pastoral unit into a well-considered, physically and visually contained urban village. When considered on a north-south axis, this village will exist between an urban parkland (Millbrook and WPZ) and a rural residential area (NLHRRZ). When considered on an east-west axis, the village will exist between a pastoral and natural area to the west and a predominantly pastoral area to the east; noting the eastern lands beyond the site boundary are likely to become increasing rural living in character.

6.25. The proposal presents appropriate vegetation and open space buffers in terms of scale and design along the urban edges of the village. In the context of the receiving environment it is considered the proposal will result in no more than **low** adverse effects on the landscape's natural or arcadian pastoral character.

(b) Visibility of Development

Whether the development will result in a loss of the natural or arcadian pastoral character of the landscape, having regard to whether and the extent to which:

- (i) *the proposed development is highly visible when viewed from any public places, or is visible from any public road and in the case of proposed development in the vicinity of unformed legal roads, the Council shall also consider present use and the practicalities and likelihood of potential use of unformed legal roads for vehicular and/or pedestrian, equestrian and other means of access;*
- (ii) *the proposed development is likely to be visually prominent such that it detracts from public or private views otherwise characterised by natural or arcadian pastoral landscapes;*
- (iii) *there is opportunity for screening or other mitigation by any proposed method such as earthworks and/or new planting which does not detract from or obstruct views of the existing natural topography or cultural plantings such as hedge rows and avenues;*
- (iv) *the subject site and the wider Visual Amenity Landscape of which it forms part is enclosed by any confining elements of topography and/or vegetation;*

6.26. The overall visibility of the proposal is discussed above in this report. From public places it is considered the proposal will be well contained visually. There may be some small, temporary visibility of the development from the Christine's Hill portion of the Queenstown Trail as vegetation in VPA 1 and VPA 2 matures (**Images 16 – 27**). In time views of the village will be largely screened and filtered by vegetation. By way of consent condition, this proposed vegetation will not screen views of the District's outstanding features such as the Remarkables, Lake Hayes or Slope Hill. From the few places where small parts of the proposal may be visible, development will be seen in the context of the NLHRRZ and will not detract from views otherwise characterised by natural or pastoral landscapes to a more than **very low** degree. All other public views will be well screened by existing and proposed vegetation.

6.27. The proposed development will be well screened and will not be visually prominent such that it detracts from public or private views otherwise characterised by natural or arcadian pastoral landscapes. It will be well contained by existing, natural confining elements such as Christine's Hill and the vegetation in VPAs 1, 2, 6 and 7 as well as the open space of the Eastern Paddocks.

6.28. From some private places in the NLHRRZ views have been carefully considered. Through the use of setbacks, planting and mounding, VPAs and OPAs. The private places in the NLHRRZ will continue to enjoy views of the northern mountains and hills landscape. The open character of Christine's Hill will continue to form the foreground to northern mountain views.

6.29. All proposed and existing vegetation adheres to either cultural or natural values and will reflect the existing sense of place in this part of the landscape. Existing vegetation, while restricting views across the site's western pastoral unit from the Queenstown Trail, will not detract from existing natural topography or cultural plantings such as hedgerows and avenues.

(v) *any building platforms proposed pursuant to rule 15.2.3.3 will give rise to any structures being located where they will break the line and form of any skylines, ridges, hills or prominent slopes;*

6.30. No building platforms or proposed buildings will give rise to any structures being located where they will break the line and form of any skylines, ridges, hills or prominent slopes.

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(vi) *any proposed roads, earthworks and landscaping will change the line of the landscape or affect the naturalness of the landscape particularly with respect to elements which are inconsistent with the existing natural topography;*

(vii) *any proposed new boundaries and the potential for planting and fencing will give rise to any arbitrary lines and patterns on the landscape with respect to the existing character;*

(viii) *boundaries follow, wherever reasonably possible and practicable, the natural lines of the landscape and/or landscape units;*

6.31. While much of the site's Western and Central Paddocks will be modified, the site's natural features, with particular regard to the south facing slopes of Christine's Hill, the ephemeral stream and Mill Creek, will be respected, maintained and enhanced by the proposal. No new

boundaries are proposed. The boundaries of the retirement village, and its associated recreational areas, reflect and respect the natural lines of this landscape unit.

- (ix) *the development constitutes sprawl of built development along the roads of the District;*

6.32. The development will not be discernible from Arrowtown - Lake Hayes Road or Speargrass Flat Road. The large areas of open space or rural living development between the proposed village and the public roads will avoid 'sprawl' along the roads of the District.

(c) Form and Density of Development

In considering the appropriateness of the form and density of development the following matters the Council shall take into account whether and to what extent:

- (i) *there is the opportunity to utilise existing natural topography to ensure that development is located where it is not highly visible when viewed from public places;*

6.33. As discussed above, the proposal is located within a part of the site where natural topography ensures that it will not be highly visible from public places.

- (ii) *opportunity has been taken to aggregate built development to utilise common access ways including pedestrian linkages, services and open space (ie. open space held in one title whether jointly or otherwise);*

- (iii) *development is concentrated in areas with a higher potential to absorb development while retaining areas which are more sensitive in their natural or arcadian pastoral state;*

6.34. The proposal will maintain a large open space buffer between the Arrowtown – Lake Hayes Road and the development area. It will be accessed off an approved common access way and development will be concentrated in the Western and Central Paddocks which have a higher potential to absorb change. These paddocks are not widely appreciated in their existing

pastoral state and are particularly less sensitive to development than the site's slopes or East Paddocks, which are more sensitive and will be retained in a pastoral state.

- (iv) *(iv) the proposed development, if it is visible, does not introduce densities which reflect those characteristic of urban areas.*

6.35. As discussed above, the proposal may be visible at the outset from elevated portions of the Queenstown Trail. In time this view will be largely mitigated by the recently planted vegetation along the trail. However, the proposal is certainly urban in character and the effects of this urban character are discussed above under the 'Effects on Natural and Pastoral Character' assessment matter.

- (v) *(v) If a proposed residential building platform is not located inside existing development (being two or more houses each not more than 50 metres from the nearest point of the residential building platform) then on any application for resource consent and subject to all the other criteria, the existence of alternative locations or methods:*

(a) within a 500 metre radius of the centre of the building platform, whether or not:

(i) subdivision and/or development is contemplated on those sites;

(ii) the relevant land is within the applicant's ownership; and

(b) within a 1,100 metre radius of the centre of the building platform if any owner or occupier of land within that area wishes alternative locations or methods to be taken into account as a significant improvement on the proposal being considered by the Council

- must be taken into account.

6.36. No building platforms are proposed.

- (vi) *recognition that if high densities are achieved on any allotment that may in fact preclude residential development and/or subdivision on neighbouring land because the adverse cumulative effects would be unacceptably large.*

6.37. The Western and Central Paddocks are particularly distinct in their context between the WPZ, Millbrook and the NLHRRZ and they have a very low level of public visibility. The proposed development will not preclude any residential development or subdivision on neighbouring land because adverse cumulative effects of such development would be unacceptably large regardless of whether the site is developed. The site is distinct in its ability to absorb change and any proposed developments on neighbouring land would likely be unaffected by the proposal.

(d) Cumulative effects of development on the landscape

In considering whether and the extent to which the granting of the consent may give rise to adverse cumulative effects on the natural or arcadian pastoral character of the landscape with particular regard to the inappropriate domestication of the landscape, the following matters shall be taken into account:

- (i) *the assessment matters detailed in (a) to (d) above;*
- (ii) *the nature and extent of existing development within the vicinity or locality;*
- (iii) *whether the proposed development is likely to lead to further degradation or domestication of the landscape such that the existing development and/or land use represents a threshold with respect to the vicinity's ability to absorb further change;*
- (iv) *whether further development as proposed will visually compromise the existing natural and arcadian pastoral character of the landscape by exacerbating existing and potential adverse effects;*
- (v) *the ability to contain development within discrete landscape units as defined by topographical features such as ridges, terraces or basins, or other visually*

significant natural elements, so as to check the spread of development that might otherwise occur either adjacent to or within the vicinity as a consequence of granting consent;

6.38. As discussed above the site is adjacent to the WPZ, Millbrook, the NLHRRZ and more pastoral lands to the east and west. The village will be built in a discrete landscape unit where development can be well contained. The landform of Christine's Hill to the north, the NLHRRZ to the south, the open pastoral area to the west and the proposed open space on the site's Eastern Paddocks will check the spread of the development.

6.39. The proposal will not visually compromise the existing natural and arcadian pastoral character of the landscape by exacerbating existing and potential adverse effects. The proposal is well considered in terms of scale, character and location. While it will insert an urban village into a pastoral area, the distinct, discreet nature of the Western and Central Paddocks and the well-considered design of the proposal will ensure the effects of the development will not cross a threshold with respect to the landscape's ability to absorb change. Any adverse cumulative effects will be low.

(vi) *whether the proposed development is likely to result in the need for infrastructure consistent with urban landscapes in order to accommodate increased population and traffic volumes;*

6.40. The proposal does present an urban development and it is likely traffic volumes will increase especially along the new access road from Arrowtown – Lake Hayes Road. It is understood the additional traffic volumes were assessed and approved under RM171280, so the development will not result in the need for additional roading infrastructure (outside the development itself).

(vii) *whether the potential for the development to cause cumulative adverse effects may be avoided, remedied or mitigated by way of covenant, consent notice or other legal instrument (including covenants controlling or preventing future buildings and/or landscaping, and covenants controlling or preventing future subdivision which may be volunteered by the applicant).*

6.41. The proposed retention of the open pastoral areas on the south facing slopes of Christine's Hill and the Eastern Paddocks, as well as the visual mitigation of the proposed and existing trees, will avoid adverse cumulative effects by maintaining the existing pastoral values experienced by the public.

(e) Rural Amenities

In considering the potential effect of the proposed development on rural amenities, the following matters the Council shall take into account whether and to what extent:

- (i) the proposed development maintains adequate and appropriate visual access to open space and views across arcadian pastoral landscapes from public roads and other public places; and from adjacent land where views are sought to be maintained;*
- (ii) the proposed development compromises the ability to undertake agricultural activities on surrounding land;*

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6.42. The south facing slopes of Christine's Hill and the site's Eastern Paddocks, which are the most publicly visible part of the site, will be maintained in their existing open pastoral character. These lands will be maintained as pastoral units and adequate and appropriate visual access to open space will be maintained. The ability to undertake agricultural activities on the lands to the west of the site will not be compromised by the proposal.

- (iii) the proposed development is likely to require infrastructure consistent with urban landscapes such as street lighting and curb and channelling, particularly in relation to public road frontages;*
- (iv) landscaping, including fencing and entrance ways, are consistent with traditional rural elements, particularly where they front public roads.*

6.43. The village will be urban in character and will require some urban infrastructure but none of that will affect any existing public road frontage.

- (v) *buildings and building platforms are set back from property boundaries to avoid remedy or mitigate the potential effects of new activities on the existing amenities of neighbouring properties.*

6.44. Significant setbacks and landscaped buffers are proposed to avoid or mitigate the potential effects of new activities on the existing amenities of neighbouring properties.

Proposed District Plan – Wakatipu Basin

Assessment Matters 24.7.5 – *New buildings (and alterations to existing buildings) including farm buildings and residential flats; and infringements of the standards for building coverage, building size, building material and colours, and building height.*

Landscape character and visual amenity

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- a) *Whether the location, form, scale, design and finished materials including colours of the building(s) adequately responds to the identified landscape character and visual amenity qualities of the landscape character units set out in Schedule 24.8 – Landscape Character Units and the criteria set out below.*

6.45. With respect to the landscape character values as set out in Schedule 24.8 of the PDP (PDP 24.7.3, a) for LCU 8 Speargrass Flat, the proposal responds to the landscape's characteristics in the following ways:

- a) **Landform patterns** – The hills to the north and Slopehill Foothills to the south of the site will not be affected by the proposal. The 'pastoral flats' of the LCU will be reduced slightly, but the more widely experienced flats to the west of the site and those in the Eastern Paddocks will be unaffected by the proposal.
- b) **Vegetation patterns** – Exotic pasture grasses and shelterbelts will remain dominant.
- c) **Hydrology** – Watercourses will be enhanced.
- d) **Proximity to ONL/ONF** – Open long-range views to the ONLs and ONFs will be maintained.

- e) **Land use** – The pastoral land use will be retained over the visually prominent parts of the site.
- f) **Settlement patterns** – Proposed buildings will be set onto the flat land and the development will be buffered from other rural living and rural areas by plantings and localised landform patterns.
- g) **Proximity to key route** – The proposed development will be located away from key vehicular routes.
- h) **Heritage features** – Existing, nearby heritage features are used as a cue for architecture and landscape design. The heritage Ayrburn Homestead and avenue of protected trees within the site will not be affected.
- i) **Recreation features** – A public trail easement will be formalised along the Mill Creek corridor to enable a future connection if the esplanade reserve to the south is developed for public use. A public link will also be created through the site linking the public cycle trail west of the site to the Access Road and future trails to the Waterfall Park waterfall as consented under RM180584. These will enable linkages to the wider trail network.
- j) **Visibility/prominence** – The parts of the site which have an open character and are highly visible from the public road network, being Christine's Hill and the East Paddocks adjoining the Arrowtown – Lake Hayes Road, will retain that open character.
- k) **Views** – The proposal will not adversely affect any key views from Speargrass Flat Road, (including the walking/cycle route) of the open and spacious pastoral Christine's Hill.
- l) **Complexity** – The proposal will not adversely affect the hillslopes and will enhance the vegetation patterns on these hillslopes.
- m) **Coherence** – The balance of the LCU which is highly visible from public places will continue to display a coherent open pastoral character. The proposal's landscaping will enhance the landscape's legibility in places.
- n) **Naturalness** – Buildings will exist in a foil of natural and open characters and the more natural lands of the hillslopes and riparian areas will be maintained and enhanced.
- o) **Sense of place** – The wider, more eastern part of LCU 8 will be unaffected by the proposal. Similarly, the retention of the open Eastern Paddocks in their existing open state will maintain a strong sense of the Speargrass Flats open, rural character which will continue to read as a 'breathing space' between development to the north and south of LCU8.
- p) **Potential landscape issues and constraints associated with additional development** – The proposal presents a robust eastern open edge to development and a landscaped buffer against the western boundary adjacent to the Queenstown Trail. The wider open

character of LCU 8, as experienced from the Queenstown Trail will not be adversely affected to a more than **low** degree.

The site makes use of the 'easy' topography and concentrates development in these areas. All riparian areas on the site are being maintained and revegetated in native plants.

q) ***Environmental characteristics and visual amenity values to be maintained and enhanced***

– The proposed development will be integrated into landform and planting. The surrounding sense of openness and spaciousness will be maintained and views from Speargrass Flat Road to the largely undeveloped south facing hillslopes will be maintained.

r) ***Capability to absorb additional development*** – The retirement village is located in the least sensitive part of the landscape where there is capability to absorb additional development.

b. *The extent to which the location and design of buildings and ancillary elements and the landscape treatment complement the existing landscape character and visual amenity values, including consideration of:*

- i. *building height;*
- ii. *building colours and materials;*
- iii. *building coverage;*
- iv. *design, size and location of accessory buildings;*
- v. *the design and location of landform modification, retaining, fencing, gates, accessways (including paving materials), external lighting, domestic infrastructure (including water tanks), vegetation removal, and proposed planting;*
- vi. *the retention of existing vegetation and landform patterns;*
- vii. *earth mounding and framework planting to integrate buildings and accessways;*
- viii. *planting of appropriate species that are suited to the general area having regard to the matters set out in Schedule 24.8 - Landscape Character Units;*
- ix. *riparian restoration planting;*
- x. *the retirement and restoration planting of steep slopes over 15° to promote slope stabilisation and indigenous vegetation enhancement; and the integration of existing and provision for new public walkways and cycleways/bridlepaths.*

6.46. Many of the matters above have been considered and described above in this report under the ODP Assessment Matters, Description of the Proposal and Description of the Landscape. In summary, the proposed buildings will not exceed an 8m from existing ground height limit, and most of the development will be single storey. They will be clad and coloured in materials which are indicative of the landscape's cultural values. The building coverage will be 6% of the site. All landscaping will be complementary to the existing landscape patterns and will be rural or natural in character. The proposal will retain most of the site's existing vegetation and will provide for significant revegetation and riparian enhancement. A public easement along Mill Creek is also proposed and there is provision for a new public walkway and cycleway which will integrate with the existing and future trail networks.

c. The extent to which existing covenants or consent notice conditions need to be retained or are otherwise integrated into the proposed development in a manner that maintains or enhances landscape character and visual amenity values.

d. The extent to which the development maintains visual amenity in the landscape, particularly from public places.

6.47. An existing consent condition protecting the southern VPA (VPA 4) is being retained and integrated into the proposed development.

6.48. The proposal seeks to retain parts of the site which are more sensitive to development in their existing open pastoral or vegetated character. The proposal seeks protection of vegetated areas with particular regard to the large block of evergreens in VPA 4 and existing trees in VPAs 7 and 10. These well considered open and vegetated areas will avoid and mitigate potential visual effects of the proposal and will maintain the visual amenity of the landscape, particularly from public places.

e. Whether clustering of buildings or varied densities of the development areas would better maintain a sense of openness and spaciousness, or better integrate development with existing landform and vegetation or settlement patterns.

6.49. All development will be clustered in the Western and Central Paddocks where development can be discreetly integrated with landform, vegetation and settlement patterns. The balance of the site will maintain a sense of openness and spaciousness.

f. Where a residential flat is not located adjacent to the residential unit, the extent to which this could give rise to sprawl of buildings and cumulative effects.

6.50. This assessment matter is not applicable to the proposal.

g. The extent to which the development avoids, remedies or mitigates adverse effects on the features, elements and patterns that contribute to the value of adjacent or nearby ONLs and ONFs. This includes consideration of the appropriate setback from such features as well as the maintenance of views from public roads and other public places to the surrounding ONL and ONF context.

6.51. To the extent that this assessment matter is relevant (as there are no adjacent ONLs or ONFs) this matter is addressed under the ODP assessment matters above.

h. Whether mitigation elements such as a landscape management plan or proposed plantings should be subject to bonds or covenants.

6.52. All VPAs will form part of an approved landscape package (the Landscape Strategy) and will form part of the consent conditions. It is considered this is satisfactory in ensuring the mitigation elements are maintained in perpetuity.

i. The merit of the removal of wilding exotic trees at the time of development.

6.53. There are some larch and firs along the Homestead driveway, however these trees are protected for their heritage value. Similarly, there is a block of wilding species in the VPA 4 which are already protected under RM171280. It is considered that, as much of the surrounding land is settled and maintained, there is very little risk of wilding spread.

- a. Whether the proposed development provides an opportunity to maintain landscape character and visual amenity through the registration of covenants requiring open space to be maintained in perpetuity.

6.54. The Eastern Paddocks and south facing slopes of Christine's Hill will be maintained in open space, resulting in significant retention of the landscape's open character. If considered necessary, there is an opportunity to secure that outcome in perpetuity through a registered covenant.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1. The proposal seeks to establish a pocket of urban character within a discrete landscape unit featuring a diverse set of landscape characters. The urban effects of the proposal will be well contained within a foil of vegetation and landform such that the visual and character effects of the urban area will not spread beyond the boundaries of the site. It is considered the proposal will result in no more than **low** adverse effect the landscape character values of the Speargrass Flat LCU8 and will result in **very low** adverse effects on visual amenity.

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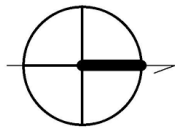
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Panorama - 28 April 2020 at 2:33 pm



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