

**BEFORE THE QUEENSTOWN-LAKES DISTRICT COUCL**

**IN THE MATTER** of a hearing on submissions to the Proposed  
Queenstown Lakes District Plan pursuant to clause 8B  
of the first schedule to the Resource Management Act  
1991

**ON BEHALF OF** LOCH LINNHE STATION (#447)  
Submitter

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**EVIDENCE SUMMARY STATEMENT OF BENJAMIN ESPIE  
(LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT)  
29<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2017**

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- 1 My name is Benjamin Espie.
- 2 My evidence in chief dated 9<sup>th</sup> June 2017 outlines my experience and qualifications relevant to this evidence in respect of the Queenstown Mapping hearings. It also sets out my opinions regarding the relief sought by the Submitter.
- 3 The amended relief seeks two areas of Farm Base Area (**FBA**) or, alternatively, Rural Visitor Zone (**RVZ**) that would enable two nodes of development that would consist of farm activities, farm-associated residential activity and farm-associated tourism activity. The station is held by pastoral lease and no tenure review process is in motion, nor is one intended.
- 4 Since the circulation of the QLDC's rebuttal evidence (on the 7<sup>th</sup> of July 2017), the Submitter has amended the relief sought, as is detailed in the evidence summary of Mr Vivian. The amendments have largely been made in response to concerns raised by Dr Marion Read. In short:
  - The requested controlled activity provisions in relation to buildings have been amended so that control is now reserved in relation to the external appearance of buildings and the location of buildings in order to bring about clustering of built form. Additionally, the requested control in relation to planting has been amended in order to encourage the use of native species.
  - A standard has been added to the effect that any individual building with a footprint of more than 500m<sup>2</sup> will be a non-complying activity.
  - The northern requested area of FBA/RVZ has been amended in shape so that it excludes an identified area of valuable native vegetation, an area of rocky outcrops and the area closest to the lake. The amended area is shown on Appendix 1 to this summary.
- 5 The clusters of activity enabled by the requested relief would be discrete and would be located on small watercourse fans that accommodate improved pasture. Such fans are traditional locations for homestead farm base activities for stations that abut Lake Wakatipu's edge (indeed the southern of the two locations already accommodates a farm base). As such, I consider that there is considerable logic in relation to the requested situation in terms of landscape character.
- 6 In relation to visual effects, the northern requested FBA/RVZ area will only have any significant effects on users of a certain part of the lake surface. These lake users will visually experience more human modification of the landscape than currently but this modification will appear in a logical location adjacent to other development on the same small fan (the Drift Bay rural living area) and will be dwarfed by the surrounding mountain slopes and lake surface.
- 7 Between the time of the original submission and the preparation of my evidence in chief the shape and extent of the southern requested FBA/RVZ was amended, therefore my evidence in chief comments on the amended area. I have also considered the landscape and visual effects of the southern FBA/RVZ area sought by the original submission. I confirm that no observers affected by the amended area would be unaffected by the original area. The same observers would be affected in both cases. Additionally, the amended area does not allow any increased amount of development, it simply allows more options for its

location. Also, numerous further restrictions are placed on development under the amended situation compared to that sought by the original submission. Therefore, I consider that potential landscape and visual effects have been reduced since the time of the original submission.

- 8 The southern requested FBA/RVZ area will be visible from the lake and also some terrestrial view-points. In visual terms, enabled development will take the form of the expansion of an existing farm base area. A lake viewer must be reasonably distant in order to get a view of the relevant area. Again, the expanded cluster will have visual logic in that it will be on a modified and improved fan landform which is distinct from the rugged mountain slopes. Again, I do not consider that visual amenity will be significantly reduced. A State Highway 6 (SH6) user can gain some views to the southern requested FBA/RVZ area as they travel between the Devil's Staircase and Kingston. Views from this stretch of highway are overwhelmingly dominated by the lake surface and the surrounding mountains and development that would result from the requested FBA/RVZ would be inconspicuous and would only slightly detract from the quality of current views.
- 9 In relation to landscape and visual issues raised by Dr Read, the amended relief addresses the concerns she raises in relation to:
- the external appearance of buildings not being controlled,
  - the northern FBA/RVZ area encroaching on the area of indigenous vegetation and rocky outcrops and abutting the lake edge,
  - individual buildings having the potential to be unusually large,
  - development in the southern FBA/RVZ area potentially being scattered rather than clustered, and
  - the provisions potentially encouraging exotic planting.
- 10 The other concern that Dr Read raises is that, while a provision is proposed to the effect that development within the northern FBA/RVZ area shall not be visible from SH6, this FBA/RVZ area is exposed to view from the south. The intention of the proposed provisions is that built form will be screened from the south using landscaping; perhaps some mounding but most usefully with evergreen vegetation. This is desirable in this location in any event in order to gain shelter from the southerly wind that comes up the lake and to frame views to the north and west. There is no desire to maintain views to the south.
- 11 Dr Read considers that the FBA concept has merit<sup>1</sup> and that the identified locations have the capacity to absorb development<sup>2</sup>. I agree and consider that that the degree of development that would be enabled by the provisions that are now sought would be appropriately absorbed in terms of both landscape character and visual amenity.

**Ben Espie - Dated this 29<sup>th</sup> day of August 2017**

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<sup>1</sup> Statement of evidence of Dr Marion Read on behalf of QLDC, dated 24 May 2017, paragraph 12.48.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, paragraphs 12.49, 12.54 and Rebuttal evidence of Dr Marion Read on behalf of QLDC, dated 7 July, paragraph 8.36.



ESPIE SUMMARY APPENDIX 1 – EXTENT OF AMENDED NORTHERN REQUESTED FARM BASE AREA / RURAL VISITOR ZONE AREA