

Your Comment on the Ayrburn Screen Hub

Further Comment

If you wish to make comments on the application, please include all the contact details listed below with your comments and indicate whether you can receive further communications from us by email to substantive@fastrack.govt.nz.

1. Contact Details			
Please ensure that you have authority to comment on the application on behalf of those named on this form.			
Organisation name (if relevant)			
First name	Rebecca		
Last name	Hadley		
Postal address	[REDACTED]		
Home phone / Mobile phone	[REDACTED]	Work phone	
Email (<i>a valid email address enables us to communicate efficiently with you</i>)	[REDACTED]		

2. We will email you draft conditions of consent for your comment			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	I can receive emails and my email address is correct	<input type="checkbox"/>	I cannot receive emails and my postal address is correct

FURTHER COMMENT ON THE AYRBURN SCREEN HUB

BY REBECCA HADLEY

Thank you for the opportunity to provide further comment on the additional information received by the applicant as invited under Minute 14 of the Expert Panel. I have reviewed the following documents.

- Attachment A Ayrburn Screen Hub Design Report 10 February 2026
- Attachment B Ayrburn Visualisations 10 February 2026
- Bridget Gilbert Landscape Peer Review Ayrburn Screen Hub 10 February 2026
- RMM Supplementary Landscape Assessment Memo 10 February 2026

Context to My Further Comments

As requested by the Panel I comment on the applicants proposed western spur planting revision and the proposed southern boundary native planting that is now proposed to replace the existing conifers. The context to my comments is as follows.

The focus of the mitigation measures and the assessment provided by the applicant and Mr Milne is on visual effects and the revisions received continue with this sole focus. Other adverse landscape effects including rural amenity, sense of place, breathing space, landscape pattern and cumulative effects are not afforded appropriate, if any, weight in the overall landscape assessment conclusion. These further landscape effects have therefore not been successfully mitigated.

The very large false spur earthworks proposed by the Applicant continues to block the Speargrass Flat valley form and therefore stops the breathing space as well as changing the landform legibility and landscape pattern. It is the earthworks that obscure much of the openness and therefore the breathing space.

Planting on top of the proposed spur is not a natural landscape pattern.

It is notable that other planting such as at the neighbouring Drury property to the west is all located in gullies. Planting examples provided by the landscape experts such as Treescape and Coronet Forest are located on mountain slopes, but not ridgelines, and are of a much greater scale. They are purposeful revegetation programmes, not native screen planting located on land that is left over such as in the Ayrburn Screen Hub proposal.

The Slope Hill Road example consists of planting on a slope that forms one side of an elevated flat bottomed valley. All of these examples are of a much larger scale than the proposed planting and are on slopes, but not ridgelines or spurs. There are no examples of planting on ridgelines anywhere in Speargrass Flat Valley. All revegetation planting is in gullies which is consistent with a natural vegetation pattern. Forest planting does not grow on top of ridges or spurs (usually due to environmental factors such as wind, moisture and soil depth). Accordingly, I consider that the shrub and tree planting on an artificial spur as proposed will appear incongruous, unnatural and unauthentic to even lay observers.

Rural amenity is more than just views. It is environmental, encompassing noise, activities and landscape views. Rural amenity does not include activities which are commercial, industrial, large scale and with long operating hours.

The mitigation measures proposed to lower noise effects such as acoustic fences have an urban character and there has been no evidence provided that these fences will be effective. It is often the noise of people leaving restaurants at night that can be heard clearly from the surrounding residential properties, and this noise will substantially increase with the accommodation proposed in addition to the noise of the film production and associated traffic people and construction. The character of the proposal including the acoustic fences is urban and not rural. This is not an appropriate location for the proposed activity.

Cumulative effects are valid. This proposal will result in cumulative effect. It is yet more non rural activity with adverse effects located in the rural area of the Wakatipu Basin. There is very little continuous open undeveloped land remaining in the Wakatipu Basin. Speargrass Flat Valley and Malaghans Valley are the remaining areas of any scale that are still intact and which provide breathing space. This open rural character land is important as breathing space and as a foreground to the surrounding Outstanding Natural Landscape. Development pressure is intense and I would like to remind the Panel that once the rural land is developed, it is gone forever.

The Proposed Revisions to the “Spur” Planting

The proposed reduced height of planting at the higher elevation of the spur will enable slightly more of the mountain view to be visible, but the Crown Range terrace will still be obscured as will the continuous pattern of open landscape on the valley floor as it proceeds into Hogan Gully. The openness that LCU 8 is designed to protect will not be maintained and therefore the breathing space will also be lost.

The vegetation pattern will remain unnatural and “odd looking”, and the lower spur will still have a forest located on the top of it. The proposed extension and joining of planting to the riparian planting below will not assist as the planting is not of a big enough scale. Planting across the paddock that contains the grapevines will not assist either as it will be defined at the edges by cadastral boundaries or worse, a set back from the boundary containing rank grass as the grapevines do now. The planting will always appear out of context and odd. It will look like it is planting to hide something with planting on left over land. It will not contribute to a natural vegetation pattern and diminishes the breathing space and overall landscape values of the Speargrass Valley.

Analysis of the before and after photo simulations shows that the views from the Countryside trail will be diminished. That is, views of the Crown Terrace will still be obscured by the spur and the higher tree planting on top of it and these Crown Terrace views will be lost. Openness and breathing space will not be maintained.

The mitigation measures continue to focus on visibility of the proposal only. Essentially, the applicant and landscape experts are saying that only visibility is important and if you can't see it and we plant natives on the left over land that we cannot develop anyway, then we are providing a positive effect. I strongly disagree. The net effect is clearly negative.

Southern Boundary Planting

The removal of pine trees and replanting of natives along the southern boundary of the site again addresses visibility effects, but not rural amenity and wider landscape effects. The noise of construction over many years and the noise of the accommodation and film production will have a high adverse effect on rural amenity of the neighbouring residents. The change in plant species on the applicant's southern boundary does not assist this in any way.

The proposed acoustic fence has an urban character and there is no evidence to support its effectiveness. Noise conditions do not assist neighbours as they are not monitored by the Council. It is left to neighbours to contact Council and make noise complaints which are not

acted on at the time. This will also apply to construction noise. As a neighbour I am very aware and familiar with the ineffectual nature of this process. Being woken continually by backing beeps from earthmoving equipment early in the morning is tiresome and noise throughout the day also impacts on the peace and tranquillity enjoyed by residents currently. Drunken shouting at night is unpleasant and also disturbs sleep. The long duration and continuous nature of construction noise that will occur cannot be compared to building a house. Effects of noise on rural character will be significant.

There have not been any cross sections provided to show visibility of the proposal from Speargrass Flat Road if the conifer trees are removed. If planting is reduced in height, then the visibility of the large scale buildings will increase from this public road and the planting to the north of the buildings within the Open Space area of the Ayrburn Structure Plan will also very likely be visible. Once again, this reduces the openness that LCU 8 is designed to protect, preventing breathing space, changing the vegetation pattern and causing cumulative effects.

Conclusion

The proposed planting revisions continue to address only visual effects. The adverse effects of the proposed Screen Hub consist of far more than visual effects. These revisions do not address negative effects on rural amenity including noise, breathing space, landscape pattern, vegetation pattern, landform legibility, sense of place and cumulative effect.

I remain strongly opposed to the Ayrburn Screen Hub proposal as I consider that the spur and any associated planting proposed is an adverse landscape effect in itself and will reduce landscape values. Adverse effects to neighbours cannot be successfully mitigated, cumulative effects will occur and the proposal is not in accordance with LCU 8 or the strategic direction of the PDP.

I thank you for considering this further comment.

Rebecca Hadley



17 February 2026