

Preliminary Landscape Assessment Report

Waitiri Development

Oaks Living Limited

Referral under the Fast-Track Approvals Act 2024

21 May 2026

An aerial photograph of a river valley. A river with turquoise water flows through a valley, surrounded by green fields, trees, and some buildings. In the background, there are large, rugged mountains under a clear blue sky. In the foreground, there is a large white logo consisting of a stylized 'P' and the word 'patch' in a bold, lowercase sans-serif font.

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patch

landscape ■ architecture ■ urban

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This assessment has been prepared by Patch Ltd on behalf of Oaks Living Limited to accompany the referral of the Waitiri Development under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024. The proposal comprises a large-scale masterplanned development across multiple sites within the Gibbston Valley and wider Queenstown Lakes District.
- 1.2. The purpose of this assessment is to provide a high level expert opinion on the likely nature and scale of landscape character and visual amenity effects associated with the proposal, having particular regard to the sensitivity of the receiving environment, including areas identified as the Gibbston Character Zone, Rural Character Landscape and Outstanding Natural Landscape and to identify where potential effects may be avoided, remedied, or mitigated through design refinement, landscape treatment, and management measures.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1. This report provides an assessment of the potential landscape character and visual amenity effects associated with the proposed Waitiri Development located within the Gibbston Valley and Crown Terrace. The proposal comprises a large-scale masterplanned development across a number of separate but related sites including Waitiri, Riverside, Drystone, Glenlee and Glenroy and Eastburn. The development includes a range of land uses including residential neighbourhoods, rural residential allotments, visitor accommodation, commercial activity, open space networks, landscape buffers, restoration planting, and associated infrastructure.
- 2.2. The receiving environment is characterised by a distinctive Central Otago landscape comprising glacial terraces, alluvial fans, river corridors, and open pastoral land set within a broader mountain basin context. The landscape exhibits a combination of pastoral farming, viticulture, rural residential development, and infrastructure corridors that collectively contribute to an evolving cultural landscape. While parts of the receiving landscape is identified as having high value, the landscape also demonstrates an established pattern of human modification that influences its character and visual qualities.
- 2.3. The proposal will introduce additional built form across a series of sites that vary in their degree of landscape containment, elevation, and visibility. Effects are not uniform across the development areas and reflect the differing landscape contexts of valley floor terraces, elevated terraces, and plateau environments. In general terms, development located on valley floor

landforms will be more visually associated with existing patterns of rural land use and built development, while development on or near the edge of elevated terrace landforms may be generally more perceptible.

- 2.4. In physical terms, the proposal will modify existing pastoral, viticultural and rural land cover through earthworks, buildings, access formation, and infrastructure. While this represents a permanent change to existing land use patterns, the underlying terrace landforms, drainage patterns, and broader landscape framework will remain legible. The incorporation of open space structure, riparian setbacks, landscape buffers, and restoration planting will assist in maintaining landscape coherence and reinforcing underlying landscape patterns over time.
- 2.5. In perceptual terms, the proposal will increase the apparent intensity of development across parts of the valley that currently exhibit a relatively open character. The most noticeable changes will occur in closer proximity to the development areas and from elevated viewpoints where the relationship between development and the wider mountain basin landscape is more apparent. At greater distances, development will generally be perceived within the context of an existing pattern of rural and rural residential land use that has progressively influenced landscape character across the Gibbston Valley.
- 2.6. In associative terms, the proposal introduces an additional layer of human occupation within a landscape that reflects both cultural and productive values. The provision of open space networks, walking and cycling connections, and landscape restoration areas has the potential to contribute positively to the way people access and experience the landscape. However, the scale of development will alter the balance between open pastoral land and built form across parts of the valley, particularly in locations that currently exhibit relatively limited built development.
- 2.7. Overall, the proposal will result in moderate landscape character effects and low to moderate visual effects across most of the development areas, with some localised moderate effects associated with development on elevated terrace landforms. While the proposal introduces a noticeable change to parts of the landscape, the Gibbston Valley has capacity to accommodate development where it responds to underlying landform patterns and incorporates an integrated landscape framework. Over time, the establishment of landscape planting and open space structure will assist in integrating built form within the wider landscape context, enabling the

development to be understood as part of the ongoing evolution of the Gibbston Valley and Crown Terrace landscape.

3. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- 3.1. My name is Stephen Russell Skelton, Director of Patch Limited (Patch), a landscape architecture and planning consultancy based in Queenstown. I hold a Bachelor of Arts in Communication from Northern Arizona University and a Master of Landscape Architecture (First Class Hons) from Lincoln University. I have been a Registered Member of the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects (NZILA) since 2015.
- 3.2. I have over 15 years of combined experience in landscape and planning work within the Queenstown Lakes and Central Otago districts in both public and private sector roles. Before founding Patch in 2016, I held positions of senior landscape architect with Baxter Design Group, and prior to that I worked at Lakes Environmental working extensively with the Queenstown Lakes District Council.
- 3.3. Through Patch, I have lead projects ranging from urban and rural master planning, ecological restoration, and residential and commercial landscape design to the preparation of Landscape and Visual Assessments and Landscape Management Plans for resource consent and plan change processes. My work frequently involves sites within or adjoining ONLs, including large-scale tourism, residential, and infrastructure proposals.
- 3.4. Of particular relevance to this project, I have prepared LVAs and design frameworks for developments within the Gibbston and the Crown Terrace well as ONL embedded projects at Moke Lake, Mt Dewar, Cardrona, and West Wanaka. This experience has required detailed assessment of landscape character, naturalness, and perceptual values under the Queenstown Lakes District Plan.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1. This assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the principles and methodology set out in Te Tangi a te Manu – Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines (NZILA, 2022), which establish a values-based framework for understanding and evaluating landscapes. The assessment considers effects on the biophysical, associative, and perceptual dimensions of the landscape, including visual effects as part of perceptual values. It draws on field observation, site analysis, review of proposal documentation and plans. The site and surrounding landscape

have been visited and experienced by the author, and the extent of potential visibility has been informed through the use of digital viewshed analysis tools, 3D modelling and photographic field surveys. The conclusions presented in this report are based on professional judgement informed by direct field study, desktop studies, and experience gained through the assessment of other projects within the same landscape context. The findings are expressed in qualitative terms using the effects scale endorsed in Te Tangi a te Manu (NZILA, 2022, p.140). Effects are described using the following categories:

- Very Low – a barely perceptible change within a localised area, with no material influence on landscape values.
- Low – a small-scale change affecting limited aspects of the landscape, with key characteristics remaining intact.
- Low–Moderate – a discernible change within a defined area, with some influence on character or amenity while the overall landscape remains generally intact.
- Moderate – a clearly noticeable change influencing several aspects of landscape character or amenity, while the broader landscape pattern and values remain recognisable.
- Moderate–High – a pronounced change over a wider area, reducing the coherence or integrity of landscape values.
- High – a substantial and evident change that alters key landscape characteristics or experiential qualities.
- Very High – a major or transformative change that fundamentally alters the landscape and its values.

5. DESCRIPTION OF THE LANDSCAPE

5.1. The proposal is located across a series of distinct sites within the Gibbston Valley and Crown Terrace, forming part of a broader mountain basin landscape characterised by schist landforms, river terraces, glacially derived slopes, and the Kawarau River corridor. The receiving environment extends from the Crown Range foothills and Crown Terrace landscapes through the Gibbston Valley floor, its associated alluvial terraces including the Waitiri Peninsula and the Kawarau River margins. These landscapes collectively contribute to the wider character of the District and include areas identified as Outstanding Natural Landscapes, Rural Character

Landscapes and the Gibbston Character Zone within the Queenstown Lakes District Plan framework.

- 5.2. Each of the development areas occupies a distinct part of this landscape mosaic, with differences in landform expression, land cover, land use patterns, and degree of modification. The sites include elevated glacial terraces associated with the Crown Range, valley floor terraces and fans associated with the Kawarau River, and gently undulating pastoral land that has been progressively modified through farming, viticulture, rural residential development, and infrastructure. While the sites share a broad Central Otago landscape character defined by semi-arid climatic conditions, open pastoral patterns, schist outcrops, and expansive mountain backdrops, each site has a specific landscape context and relationship to surrounding landforms, transport corridors, and existing development patterns.
- 5.3. The physical landscape values across the sites are generally associated with the legibility of underlying glacial and fluvial landforms, including terraces, fans, incised gullies, and the Kawarau River corridor. The broader Gibbston Valley is defined by a narrow valley floor contained by steep schist slopes and mountain ranges, with a strong visual relationship between the valley floor and surrounding upland landforms. The Kawarau River forms a defining geomorphic feature, with entrenched meanders, river terraces, and rock outcrops contributing to the recognisable structure of the landscape. Vegetation patterns reflect a combination of modified pastoral grassland, viticulture, remnant shrubland, and pockets of indigenous vegetation, with varying degrees of modification evident across the sites. Although parts of the landscape have been modified through farming, rural subdivision, transport infrastructure, and utility corridors, the underlying landform structure remains clearly legible and continues to underpin landscape character.
- 5.4. Associative landscape values are also present across the sites, reflecting the long-standing relationship of Kāi Tahu with the Whakatipu Basin and Kawarau River corridor, as well as the more recent layers of pastoral farming, viticulture, and recreation that contribute to the cultural landscape. The Kawarau River corridor and wider Gibbston Valley form part of a broader cultural landscape that includes historic travel routes, mahika kai associations, and later patterns of European pastoral settlement and viticultural development. Contemporary associations include the recognition of Gibbston as a distinctive wine-producing landscape and as part of the wider recreational and tourism setting of the Queenstown Lakes District. These overlapping layers of

cultural association contribute to the identity and meaning of the landscape beyond its physical attributes.

- 5.5. Perceptual values of the landscape are generally high, reflecting the openness of the valley floor, the coherence of landform patterns, and the strong visual relationship between the valley and surrounding mountain ranges. The landscape is experienced as expansive and legible, with broad views available from State Highway 6, Crown Range Road, and a number of elevated viewpoints. The contrast between the open valley floor, the Kawarau River corridor, and the enclosing mountain ranges contributes to a strong sense of scale and spatial definition. While the presence of existing rural land use, infrastructure, and scattered rural residential development moderates perceptions of naturalness in some locations, the landscape retains a recognisable Central Otago character with a strong sense of openness, exposure, and connection to surrounding mountain landforms.
- 5.6. For the purposes of this assessment, the landscape is considered as a series of related but distinct receiving environments corresponding with each of the identified development sites. While sharing an underlying landscape framework, each site exhibits different degrees of enclosure, visibility, modification, and relationship to identified landscape values. This distinction is important in understanding how landscape and visual effects will arise differently across the various parts of the proposal, reflecting the specific physical, associative, and perceptual characteristics of each location.

6. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

- 6.1. The proposal comprises a large-scale masterplanned residential, rural residential, commercial, and open space development across five geographically separate but related sites within the Gibbston Valley and wider Crown Terrace. The project forms part of the Waitiri Development promoted by Oaks Living Limited and includes a range of land uses including residential neighbourhoods, rural living areas, visitor accommodation, commercial activity, community facilities, open space networks, ecological restoration areas, and supporting infrastructure.
- 6.2. The development is distributed across five distinct sites, being Eastburn, Glenlee and Glenroy, Riverside, Drystone, and Waitiri. Each site occupies a different part of the landscape and exhibits differing landform characteristics, landscape context, and relationships to surrounding transport corridors, river margins, and elevated landforms. While the proposal is unified through

a common development framework and landscape approach, the individual components respond to the specific physical and landscape attributes of each site.

6.3. The proposal includes the following key components:

- Eastburn development area – a rural residential subdivision located on elevated terrace land near the Crown Range Road. The proposal comprises rural residential lots with identified building platforms set within a landscape characterised by open pastoral land, rolling terrace landform patterns, and a strong visual relationship with the Crown Range foothills.
- Glenlee and Glenroy development area – a predominantly rural residential and rural living environment located on an elevated terrace and plateau landscape south of State Highway 6. The proposal includes large lot residential and rural residential sites, a resort precinct, community facilities, golf course elements, and extensive areas of open space and restoration planting reflecting the lower density landscape context of this part of the valley.
- Riverside development area – a mixed density residential environment located on valley floor terraces between State Highway 6 and the Kowarau River. The proposal includes a range of residential lot sizes, visitor accommodation in the form of lodge or serviced apartment buildings, open space corridors structured around existing drainage features, and walking connections to the Kowarau River corridor and wider trail network.
- Riverside development area – a mixed density residential environment located on valley floor terraces between State Highway 6 and the Kowarau River. The proposal includes a range of residential lot sizes, visitor accommodation in the form of lodge or serviced apartment buildings, open space corridors structured around existing drainage features, and walking connections to the Kowarau River corridor and wider trail network.
- Drystone development area – a mixed density residential neighbourhood incorporating a village precinct, school site, open space areas, and a range of residential densities. The site is located on gently sloping valley floor land and includes areas identified for community facilities and potential cultural partnership opportunities. Landscape structure is provided through open space corridors, restoration planting, and integration of existing infrastructure corridors.

- Waitiri development area – a mixed density residential environment located on and around the Waitiri Peninsula plateau above the Kawarau River corridor. The development includes a range of residential densities, areas of open space, ecological restoration planting, a golf course, community facilities, and a network of pedestrian connections linking to the wider valley floor. The site also includes areas identified for cultural landscape integration and partnership opportunities with Kāi Tahu.

6.4. Across the proposal, the development framework incorporates open space networks, landscape buffers and mitigation planting, restoration planting, and pedestrian connections intended to integrate built form with the underlying landform structure and wider landscape patterns. The proposal also includes areas identified for native revegetation and ecological enhancement, particularly in proximity to drainage corridors, river margins, and areas of open space, contributing to the long-term establishment of a coherent landscape framework across the development sites.

6.5. Across the proposal, the development framework incorporates open space networks, landscape buffers, restoration planting, and pedestrian and cycle connections intended to integrate built form with the underlying landform structure and wider landscape patterns. The proposed green network will provide connected walking and cycling routes between neighbourhoods, open space areas, riparian corridors, and community facilities, contributing to recreational accessibility and encouraging non-vehicular movement throughout the development areas. The proposal also includes areas identified for native revegetation and ecological enhancement, particularly in proximity to drainage corridors, river margins, and areas of open space, contributing to the long-term establishment of a coherent landscape framework across the development sites. A dark sky approach to lighting is also anticipated across the development, with lighting intended to be low intensity, downward directed, and carefully controlled to minimise glare, light spill, and sky glow effects, recognising the importance of the Gibbston Valley nightscape and the visibility of the night sky as part of the wider landscape experience.

6.6. The application material identifies a range of anticipated positive outcomes associated with the proposal including provision for residential development, establishment of supporting community infrastructure, creation of connected open space networks, walking and cycling connectivity, and landscape restoration planting. The proposal is also described as contributing to the longer-term structure of the Gibbston Valley through a coordinated development

framework across multiple land holdings, with landscape treatment, ecological enhancement, public accessibility, and open space forming an integral component of the overall design approach.

7. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS ASSESSMENT

- 7.1. This report provides an assessment of the potential landscape character and visual effects anticipated to arise from the proposed Waitiri Development. The assessment considers the nature and scale of change to the receiving environment having regard to the physical attributes of the landscape, the way the landscape is experienced, and the meanings and associations attributed to it. Consistent with Te Tangi a te Manu, landscape is understood as comprising interrelated physical, associative, and perceptual dimensions, each contributing to overall landscape character and value.
- 7.2. For clarity, the assessment is structured in two parts. The first addresses visual effects, being the consequences of change as experienced in views, including the nature of viewing audiences, the extent of visibility, and the degree to which the proposal alters the visual composition and visual amenity of the landscape. The second addresses landscape character effects, being the consequences of the proposal on the underlying landform patterns, land cover, landscape structure, and the relationships that contribute to the identified physical and associative values of each site and the wider Gibbston Valley landscape
- 7.3. Given the proposal comprises a number of separate but related development areas, landscape and visual effects will arise differently across each site in response to variations in landform containment, elevation, degree of modification, and relationship to transport corridors, river margins, and publicly accessible viewpoints. The assessment therefore considers each site as a distinct receiving environment, while also recognising the cumulative influence of the overall development pattern across the wider Gibbston Valley landscape.
- 7.4. The proposal is anticipated to be implemented progressively across multiple stages, reflecting infrastructure provision, landform constraints, and the structure of the masterplanned framework. As a result, landscape character and visual effects will change over time as built elements are established and landscape planting matures. In particular, the establishment of open space structure, restoration planting, and landscape buffers will influence the degree to which built form is integrated with the underlying landscape patterns. The assessment therefore

considers both the likely short-term effects associated with establishment of development and the longer-term landscape outcomes anticipated once mitigation planting and landscape structure are established.

- 7.5. This assessment provides an overview of the anticipated nature and scale of landscape and visual effects based on the proposal as currently defined. Further refinement of landscape mitigation, built form controls, and landscape management measures will occur through subsequent detailed design stages, enabling ongoing integration of development with the landscape character and values of the receiving environment.

Visual Effects

- 7.6. Visual effects have been assessed having regard to the extent of visibility of each development area across the Gibbston Valley and wider landscape, including views available from State Highway 6, Crown Range Road, publicly accessible elevated viewpoints, rural residential areas, and recreational routes including walking and cycling trails. The assessment identifies a series of representative viewpoints across the valley floor, valley sides, elevated ridgelines, and key approach routes that collectively describe the visual catchment of the proposal.

- 7.7. The degree of visual change varies between each development area reflecting differences in landform containment, elevation, scale of development, and proximity to publicly accessible viewing audiences. In general terms, the valley floor sites are more visually contained by surrounding landform and existing vegetation patterns, while the edges of the elevated terrace and plateau environments have a broader visual catchment. Visibility is typically greatest from sections of State Highway 6, Crown Range Road, elevated viewpoints along the Crown Range, and recreational trails.

- 7.8. Across the proposal, the most consistent viewing audiences include travellers along State Highway 6, which forms the primary transport corridor through the Gibbston Valley, users of Crown Range Road where elevated views are available across parts of the valley, rural residents located within the Gibbston Valley, and recreational users of walking and cycling trails within the wider Kawarau River corridor landscape. Additional elevated viewing opportunities are available from the Crown Range summit area and associated lookout locations where panoramic views across the Gibbston Valley are available.

Kūrae - Waitiri

7.9. The Waitiri development area occupies an elevated peninsula landform above the Kawarau River corridor and is visible from limited sections of State Highway 6 to the east and elevated private viewpoints. The plateau landform creates a degree of separation between the development platform and the river corridor below, while the introduction of built form and associated landscape modification will introduce additional human influence into a landscape currently characterised by pastoral land use and open space. The proposed open space framework, and restoration planting will influence the way development is perceived in views, assisting integration of built form within the wider landscape pattern over time. Large areas of mitigation planting are proposed along the eastern edge of the development, which will assist in screening and integrating the development into distant views from State Highway 6 within the Kawarau Gorge corridor to the east. Visual effects are anticipated to be generally **moderate** in proximity to the site, reducing with distance as development is read within the broader valley context.

Taiheke - Riverside

7.10. The Riverside development area is located on valley floor terraces adjacent to the Kawarau River corridor and is visible from State Highway 6 and from parts of the valley floor where existing rural development is already present. The introduction of residential development, visitor accommodation buildings, and associated open space areas will increase the apparent density of built form within this part of the valley. However, the site is generally contained by surrounding landform and will be viewed in the context of existing viticulture, rural residential development, and transport infrastructure. Mitigation planting is proposed along the site's eastern and southern edges where the development may be more visible from the State Highways, and a substantial viticultural buffer is proposed adjacent to the highway to maintain the established viticultural character. Also, the presence of open space corridors and riparian planting will assist in integrating development with the existing landscape pattern. Visual effects are assessed as **low to moderate** reflecting the existing modified character of the valley floor environment.

Karapuke - Drystone

7.11. The Drystone development area introduces a village precinct, school site, and mixed density residential development on gently sloping valley floor land visible from State Highway 6 and

from local elevated viewpoints. The village centre introduces a concentration of built form that will be perceptible in views, particularly from nearby sections of the transport corridor. However, the site remains visually associated with the existing pattern of rural development within the valley floor and will be read in association with other built elements including vineyards, rural residential dwellings, and infrastructure corridors. Landscape structure through open space corridors and restoration planting will assist in reducing visual contrast over time. Much of the Drystone site adjacent to the highway will be retained as open space, and mitigation planting is proposed along the edges of the upper terraces where development may be visible above the terrace edges. Visual effects are assessed as **moderate** in close proximity, reducing to **low to moderate** at wider viewing distances.

Mānia - Glenlee/Glenroy

7.12. The Glenlee and Glenroy development area occupies an elevated terrace and plateau landscape south of State Highway 6 and is visible from parts of the valley floor and from elevated viewpoints along Crown Range Road. Due to its elevation, development within this area has a limited potential to be perceived across a wider visual catchment than the valley floor sites. The proposed rural residential pattern, golf course elements, and open space framework reflect a lower density development approach that responds to the broader scale of the receiving environment. Built form will generally be dispersed across a large land area, reducing the perception of concentrated urban form. Visual effects are assessed as **low to moderate** from elevated viewpoints along Crown Range Road due to the introduction of built form within an landscape that currently exhibits a predominantly pastoral character.

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Ara Tihi - Eastburn

7.13. The Eastburn development area is located on elevated terrace land adjacent to Crown Range Road and is visible from localised sections of the road corridor and from nearby rural residential properties. The development pattern comprises rural residential allotments with building platforms generally dispersed across the terrace landform. The open character of the terrace landscape results in a degree of visibility from elevated viewpoints, although the scale of development is consistent with the wider pattern of rural residential development present within parts of the Crown Terrace environment. Visual effects are assessed as **low to moderate** reflecting the relatively limited scale of development and its association with an existing pattern of rural residential land use.

7.14. Across the proposal, visual effects range from low to moderate depending on the location of each development area, the degree of landform containment, use of mitigation vegetation and buffers and the relationship of development to existing landscape patterns and land use. The most noticeable visual changes will generally occur in closer proximity to the sites and from elevated viewpoints where a broader visual catchment is available. Where visual effects have been identified, landscape buffers seek to screen and integrate development. At wider viewing distances, development will typically be perceived as part of the evolving pattern of land use within the Gibbston Valley, where pastoral land use, viticulture, rural residential development, and infrastructure have progressively influenced landscape character over time. The incorporation of open space structure, restoration planting, and landscape buffers will assist in integrating development with the wider landscape framework as planting matures and built form becomes increasingly associated with the established pattern of development within the valley.

Landscape Effects

7.15. The proposed Waitiri Development will introduce a substantial change in land use across a series of sites within the Gibbston Valley and wider Whakatipu Basin, resulting in a range of effects on the physical, associative, and perceptual dimensions of the landscape. The proposal represents a large-scale and long-term modification of existing pastoral, viticultural, and rural land use patterns through the introduction of residential neighbourhoods, visitor accommodation, rural residential development, commercial activity, open space networks, and associated infrastructure. While the proposal introduces a notable increase in built form across parts of the valley, it also incorporates a landscape framework including open space structure, restoration planting, riparian setbacks, and landscape buffers that are intended to assist integration of development within the underlying landform patterns and contribute to longer term landscape coherence.

7.16. In physical terms, the proposal will modify existing land cover and land use patterns across each of the development areas through earthworks, building platforms, access formation, and infrastructure provision. Across the valley floor sites, development will occur on land that is already modified through pastoral farming, viticulture, infrastructure corridors, and rural residential activity. The introduction of built form within these areas will alter the scale and density of development evident within parts of the valley, although the underlying terrace

landforms and drainage patterns will remain legible. The Glenlee and Glenroy and Eastburn sites introduce built form into elevated terrace environments where the existing landscape is characterised by open pastoral land cover and relatively limited built development. Development within these elevated locations will result in a more noticeable modification of land cover patterns due to the currently open and expansive character of these landforms. Overall, physical landscape effects will vary between sites, with low to moderate effects anticipated within the valley floor environments and moderate effects anticipated in elevated terrace environments where development will be more perceptible in relation to the existing pattern of land use.

7.17. Parts of the development are located within, or immediately adjacent to, areas identified as Outstanding Natural Landscape and the Kawarau River Outstanding Natural Feature. The Gibbston Character Zone is, however, understood to be an 'exclusion zone' situated within the wider and ONL context. The proposal has been developed having regard to the landscape values and attributes that contribute to the wider ONL, including the enclosing rugged mountain ranges, expansive basin landforms, craggy skylines and ridgelines, and the strong visual relationship between the valley floor and surrounding mountain environment. These larger scale landscape attributes and values will remain legible and intact notwithstanding the changes proposed within localised parts of the valley floor and terrace environments.

7.18. While parts of the Glenlee and Glenroy area within land identified as ONL, development is generally located on lower pastoral terraces that are not highly visible from the wider valley floor and are visually associated with an existing pattern of modified pastoral land use. Similarly, the Eastburn area adjoins the Crown Terrace escarpment ONL, however proposed building platforms are located outside the identified ONL landform. Parts of the Waitiri site extend into the ONL environment, although these areas are visually contained by local landform and will not result in effects appreciably greater than those arising across the balance of that development. Overall, while the proposal will result in noticeable and, in some locations, significant change within localised development pockets, the broader ONL values and attributes that define the district's distinctive mountain basin landscape and natural setting will remain legible and intact.

7.19. The proposal incorporates open space corridors, riparian setbacks, and areas of restoration planting associated with drainage features and river margins. These elements will contribute to the establishment of a landscape structure that reflects underlying landform and hydrological

patterns, assisting in maintaining legibility of landscape patterns across the development sites. Over time, establishment of planting within open space areas is anticipated to soften the visual transition between built form and surrounding pastoral land cover and contribute to a more integrated landscape pattern. While these measures will not avoid the introduction of built development into currently open pastoral environments, they will assist in reinforcing landscape structure and coherence as development matures.

7.20. In associative terms, the Gibbston Valley landscape reflects a layered cultural landscape shaped by Kāi Tahu associations with the Kawarau River corridor and wider Whakatipu Basin, together with more recent pastoral farming, viticulture, and rural settlement patterns. The proposal will introduce new residential communities, visitor accommodation, and commercial activity that will contribute an additional layer of human occupation within the valley. The introduction of publicly accessible open space areas, walking and cycling connections, and landscape restoration areas may contribute positively to the way people experience and access the valley landscape. At the same time, the scale of change associated with the establishment of multiple development areas will alter the way the landscape is experienced, particularly in locations that currently exhibit a relatively open pastoral character. The resulting associative effects will vary across the sites, reflecting the differing existing levels of modification and the degree to which development changes the relationship between people and landscape within each location.

7.21. In perceptual terms, the proposal will introduce additional built form into a landscape valued for its openness, legibility of landform, and strong visual relationship between valley floor and surrounding mountain ranges. The valley currently exhibits a recognisable pattern of pastoral land use, viticulture, scattered rural residential development, and infrastructure corridors. The introduction of new residential neighbourhoods, rural residential development, and commercial activity will increase the apparent intensity of human occupation within parts of the valley. The most noticeable perceptual changes will occur where development extends across larger areas of presently open land, particularly on elevated terraces where built form may be perceived in relation to the broader mountain basin setting. While the incorporation of open space structure and landscape buffers will assist in integrating development with the wider landscape framework over time, the proposal will result in a discernible shift in the balance between open pastoral land cover and built development across parts of the Gibbston Valley.

7.22. Collectively, the proposal represents a notable change to landscape character across a number of sites within a landscape that exhibits varying levels of sensitivity to built development. The proposal introduces a more consolidated pattern of residential and associated development across parts of the valley, altering existing patterns of land use and landscape experience. While the landscape framework embedded within the proposal will assist in integrating built form with underlying landform patterns over time, the scale and extent of development will result in moderate landscape character effects overall, with variation in the degree of effect between valley floor and elevated terrace environments. The overall level of effect is consistent with the findings of the WSP assessment, which identifies that the proposal will introduce a discernible but contextually related change within a landscape that has capacity to accommodate additional development where it responds to underlying landscape structure and established land use patterns.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1. The proposed Waitiri Development will result in a discernible change to the character and visual qualities of parts of the Gibbston Valley and wider Whakatipu Basin through the introduction of residential, rural residential, commercial, and associated infrastructure across a series of distinct but related sites. The assessment identifies that landscape and visual effects will vary across the development areas in response to differences in landform containment, elevation, existing levels of modification, and visibility from publicly accessible locations.
- 8.2. In physical terms, the proposal will modify existing pastoral and rural land cover through the introduction of built form, access, and supporting infrastructure. While this represents a permanent change to existing land use patterns, the underlying terrace landforms, drainage patterns, and broader landscape structure will remain legible. The incorporation of open space corridors, riparian setbacks, landscape buffers, mitigation and restoration planting will assist in visually integrating and screening development, reinforcing landscape structure and maintaining coherence between built elements and the wider landscape framework over time.
- 8.3. In perceptual terms, the proposal will increase the apparent intensity of development across parts of the valley that currently exhibit a relatively open pastoral character. The most noticeable changes will occur in closer proximity to the sites and from elevated viewpoints where the spatial relationship between development areas and surrounding mountain landforms can be appreciated. At wider viewing distances, development will typically be

perceived as part of the evolving pattern of land use that already characterises the Gibbston Valley, where pastoral land use, viticulture, rural residential development, and infrastructure have progressively influenced landscape character.

- 8.4. In associative terms, the proposal introduces an additional layer of human occupation within a landscape that already reflects a combination of cultural, productive, and recreational values. The provision of open space networks, walking and cycling connections, and landscape restoration areas has the potential to contribute positively to the way people access and experience the valley landscape. At the same time, the scale of development will alter the relationship between built form and open landscape across parts of the valley, particularly in locations that currently exhibit relatively limited built development.
- 8.5. Overall, the proposal will result in moderate landscape character effects and low to moderate visual effects across the majority of the development areas, with some localised moderate effects associated with development on elevated terrace landforms where visibility is more extensive. These effects reflect the introduction of additional built form within a landscape that exhibits varying levels of sensitivity but which also demonstrates an existing pattern of modification associated with rural land use, viticulture, rural residential development, and infrastructure corridors.
- 8.6. The assessment concludes that while the proposal will introduce a noticeable change to parts of the Gibbston Valley landscape, the development generally responds to underlying landform patterns and incorporates an integrated landscape framework including open space structure, restoration planting, riparian setbacks, and landscape buffers. Over time, establishment of landscape planting and open space structure will assist in integrating built form within the wider landscape context, enabling the development to be understood as part of the ongoing evolution of the Gibbston Valley cultural landscape.

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