

Summary of Evidence – Blair Jeffrey Devlin – on behalf of J & M Dobb (#OS37)

My name is Blair Devlin. I am a Senior Planner/Director at Vivian+Espie, a Queenstown based resource management and landscape planning consultancy. I have 22 years planning experience. I prepared the statement of planning evidence dated 19 October 2023 of behalf of Jo and Matt Dobb, including my statement with regard to the Environment Court Code of Conduct for expert witnesses.

Since I prepared my planning evidence, I attended the planning expert conferencing on the Friday (only) and signed the JWS dated Friday 3 November 2023. I have also reviewed the rebuttal evidence of Mr Brown and Mr Skelton dated 10 November 2023, and considered the QLDC opening legal submissions.

Overview

I support the overall Council-led master plan led approach to the wider Ladies Mile area rather than having multiple individual landowners undertaking their own consent or plan changes processes. I support the plan variation including land south of the State Highway, which includes a mixture of land that has some development already approved e.g. Koko Ridge, in progress e.g. Queenstown Country Club, or vacant such as the Dobb family upper terrace. A comprehensive approach that includes the Dobb family land will help achieve the plan variation objectives, specifically creating an integrated urban environment.

The Site

13 Ada Place has an upper and lower terrace, separated by an embankment. The upper terrace measures approximately 4200m² and is physically disconnected from the Dobb residence on the lower terrace, and is now effectively a 'hangover' from the former planning policy of QLDC, which was to deliberately keep urban development off the upper terrace of the Ladies Mile and try and hide away views of Lake Hayes Estate. A consent notice requires retention of the screen planting on site (refer attachment)

Planning matters

The submission and evidence supported the upper terrace of the site being rezoned to EITHER:

- Te Putahi Ladies Mile Zone (Medium Density Precinct), to align with the northern side of the Ladies Mile, OR
- Low Density Suburban Residential zone, to align with Lake Hayes Estate or the Queenstown Country Club.

The approximate yield (excluding a 25m BRA) under a TPLMZ MDR Precinct zoning is four residential units, like that shown on the northern side of the Ladies Mile in the Master Plan (**Figure 1** attached). Under the LDSR zoning, the likely yield is two residential units.

As recognised in the S42A report, the current PDP Rural zoning of the Dobb property is an anomaly¹. It is an isolated parcel of Rural zoned land that even includes the residential unit located in Lake Hayes Estate.

In my evidence I stated why the Dobb upper terrace was land suitable for urban development as part of TPLM. In particular it:

- Provides a small amount of flat land in close proximity to the future urban centre and directly adjacent to QLDC reserve land
- Provides for an extension of the active transport network to the east and the walkability of the site to assist the plan change objectives for modal shift.

¹ Para 12.9 S42A report

- Will create a more balanced streetscape with regard to building heights on either side of the Ladies Mile urban area and a clear urban frame at the entrance to the Ladies Mile urban area
- Can be readily serviced and physical and legal access is available to the State Highway (which is to have its speed limit reduced) or the new road shown in the structure plan.
- Is not subject to known hazards or geotechnical constraints.

In his rebuttal evidence, with regard to the eastern approach, Mr Brown notes that *“the eastern roundabout will shift eastwards, and this will affect the Dobb property to a greater degree than was shown in the notified TPLM Structure Plan. Until that design is undertaken, it is not possible to assess the residual land availability for residential activities within the upper terrace of the Dobb property, taking into account the topography and the limited extent of land on the upper terrace.”*²

Mr Brown’s revised structure plan (refer **Figure 2** attached) therefore now covers the Dobb land with an indicative road and roundabout annotation, but it remains strangely outside the red line showing the extent of the plan change area.

I support a comprehensive approach to the eastern approach, and that requires consideration and inclusion of the Dobb land, for transport and or residential purposes.

I have no expertise in landscape matters but from my planning perspective, note that the planting on the site was deliberately required to obscure views of Lake Hayes Estate. It also blocks views towards the ONL (refer **Figure 3** attached). The landscape JWS notes that as a result of the TPLMZ, the ‘gateway’ is now further east. Enabling a small amount of well-designed residential development on the site would in fact open up views towards the Remarkables ONL, contrary to Mr Skelton’s rebuttal statement.

Scope

I am not a lawyer but from my planning perspective, the submission is clearly ‘on’ the plan change. The plan change covers almost the entire upper terrace of the Ladies Mile, both north and south of the State Highway. The Dobb family site directly adjoins / touches the plan change area, and the upper terrace was even included in Figure 1 of the s32 report showing the plan change area. The indicative master plan even had the roundabout partly on the Dobb site (**Figure 1**). The submission raises relevant matters for how land within the identified area in the s32 report is zoned. It seems extremely harsh to state the submission is not ‘on’ the plan change, as per the Council’s legal submissions. In my opinion these submissions ignore the ‘real world’ nature of the site / its location and appears to be at odds with its own planning expert Mr Brown who has shown an indicative roundabout and road on the Dobb site.

In his s42A report, Mr Brown recommends changing how the eastern end of the plan change area is shown in the structure plan, based on Mr Lowe’s urban design evidence. His Figure 7 shows the roundabout moved further to the east, onto the Dobb land in response to the Finlin submission (OS101). The Finlin submission does not mention the Dobb land at all, yet that change has been considered to be within scope.

Conclusion

The upper terrace of the site is suitable for residential development and should be considered as part of a comprehensive and integrated approach to the TPLMZ. Including and rezoning the Dobb land better achieves the purpose of the RMA, the NPS-UD and the plan change objectives.

² Paragraphs 130-131 – Rebuttal evidence of Mr Brown – 10/11/23

Attachment to Summary Statement of Blair Devlin



Figure 1 – Indicative Master Plan showing MDR Precinct development opposite the site

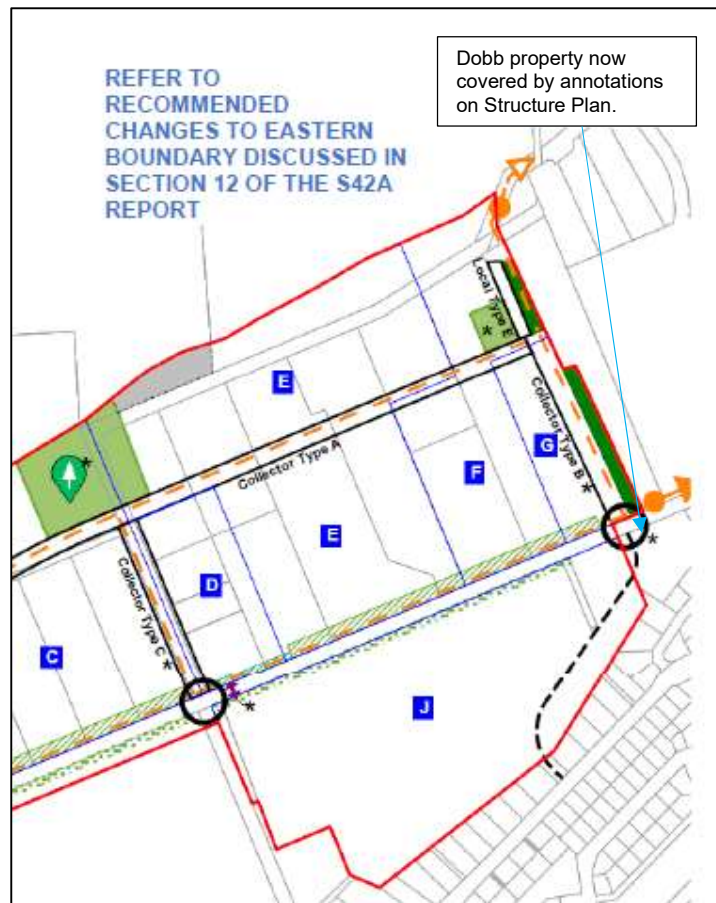


Figure 2: From Mr Brown's "Hearings Version" Structure Plan presented to IHP on 27/11/23



Figure 3: Google Streetview Image of Dobb planting required to screen Lake Hayes Estate but also blocking views of ONL