

21.22.4 Morven Hill ONF

General Description of the Area

Morven Hill PA ONF comprises the summits and slopes of the large roche moutonnée between Te Whaka-ata (Lake Hayes) and the Kawarau River in the Whakatipu Basin. The PA excludes the semi-circular area of the north-western slopes, which has been developed for rural living, and the ice-eroded plateau extending from the eastern slopes.

Physical Attributes and Values

Geology and Geomorphology • Topography and Landforms • Climate and Soils • Hydrology • Vegetation • Ecology • Settlement • Development and Land Use • Archaeology and Heritage • Mana whenua

Important landforms and land types:

1. Prominent large roche moutonnée landform that is the highest and most extensive of the roches moutonnées protruding from the Whakatipu Basin floor (Morven Hill, Slope Hill, Ferry Hill and Feehlys Hill). The landform extends south-west to north-east, with the lower western summit (559 m) separated from the main eastern summit (750 m) by a shallow saddle. This landform is recognised in the NZ Geopreservation Inventory having national importance. The underlying schist bedrock is exposed in places on the hill slopes, particularly on the north-eastern and eastern faces.

Important ecological features and vegetation types:

2. Predominantly rough pasture with scattered matagouri, sweet briar, hawthorn, elderberry and other exotic weeds in places. Dense cover of weeds (the previously mentioned species as well as buddleia, gorse and broom), with some matagouri and mānuka, on the shadier southern slopes leading down to the river. Conifer shelterbelts and woodlots in the saddle area and one larger radiata pine plantation adjacent to the river.
3. Natural spring on the southern side of the saddle, with associated farm ponds and an ephemeral watercourse running down to the Kawarau River.
4. The denser patches of matagouri towards the river provide suitable habitat for grey warbler, fantail and silvereve. The rocky terrain on the higher sunnier faces in combination with the rough pasture and pockets of matagouri provides suitable habitat for skinks and geckos.
5. Potential for enhancement of ecological values on the southern faces through weed control and indigenous regeneration. Some indigenous plantings have been established along the cycle trail.
6. Animal pest species include rabbits, possums, stoats, rats and mice.

Land use patterns and features:

7. Predominantly used for extensive pastoral farming (sheep or deer), baleage or hobby farming. Limited farming infrastructure, including farm tracks, fencing, stock yards, water tanks and four farm sheds.
8. A farm quarry on the upper southern slopes of the main hill.
9. Two dwellings on the toe slopes adjacent to the Alec Robins Road and SH6, respectively, with associated gardens and domestic curtilage.
10. Radio and telecommunications infrastructure on the summit and the Transpower high-voltage transmission corridor on the toe of the southern slopes.

11. Neighbouring land uses which have an influence on the landscape character of the area due to their scale, nature and proximity include: the wedge of rural residential development extending up the northern slopes of the hill; the working farmland on the ice-eroded plateau extending from the eastern slopes, which provides a relatively unmodified rural buffer and foreground to the ONF.

Important archaeological and heritage features and their locations:

12. Stone chimney breast and house site belonging to 19th century orchardist Henry Steele at the south-western side of the PA, close to Hayes Creek.
13. Mature trees (walnut, chestnut and other species) associated with early European settlement and farming.

Mana whenua features and their locations:

14. The entire area is ancestral land to Kāi Tahu whānui and, as such, all landscape is significant, given that whakapapa, whenua and wai are all intertwined in te ao Māori.
15. At its southern extent, the ONF overlaps the mapped wāhi tūpuna Kawarau River.

Associative Attributes and Values

Mana whenua creation and origin traditions • Mana whenua associations and experience • Mana whenua metaphysical aspects such as mauri and wairua • Historic values • Shared and recognised values • Recreation and scenic values

Mana whenua associations and experience:

16. Kāi Tahu whakapapa connections to whenua and wai generate a kaitiaki duty to uphold the mauri of all important landscape areas.
17. The Kawarau River was a traditional travel route that provided direct access between Whakatipu-wai-māori (Lake Whakatipu) and Mata-au (the Clutha River).
18. The Kawarau is a significant kāika mahika kai where weka, kākāpō, kea and tuna (eel) were gathered.
19. The mana whenua values associated with the ONF include, but may not be limited to, ara tawhito, mahika kai and nohoaka.

Important historic attributes and values:

20. Historical significance of early primary industry around Morven Hill (pastoral farming, fruit growing, fishing at Te Whaka-ata (Lake Hayes).
21. Contextual significance as a landscape feature that has defined communication routes in the Whakatipu Basin, with early tracks and roading around its base.

Important shared and recognised values:

22. Important values as a widely visible and relatively open landmark that contributes strongly to the identity and sense of place of the Whakatipu Basin.

Important recreation attributes and values:

23. No public access to the PA, but the popular Twin Rivers cycle and walking trail is adjacent to the southern toe of the hill and allows users to view and experience the ONF.

Perceptual (Sensory) Attributes and Values

Legibility and Expressiveness • Coherence • Views to the area • Views from the area • Naturalness • Memorability • Transient values • Remoteness / Wildness • Aesthetic qualities and values

Legibility and expressiveness attributes and values:

24. Very prominent distinctive landform. The pastoral openness means that undulating ice-eroded slopes and rocky outcrops are displayed and the formative glacial processes are clearly legible.

Particularly important views to and from the area include:

25. A prominent and distinctive component of views from surrounding areas of the Whakatipu Basin and in particular from SH6 to the east, from Lake Hayes and surrounds, from Lake Hayes Estate, from the Crown Escarpment zig-zag and lookout and from the Remarkables skifield road. The bulky muscular and barren form of the hill dominates views from SH6 as it skirts the hill and from the Twin Rivers Trail. From the basin to the north, the hill forms a significant foreground feature in views towards the Remarkables.
26. Expansive and spectacular views from the slopes and summit of the hill (no public access) across the Whakatipu Basin floor to the enclosing mountains and lakes, enhanced by transient changes in light conditions, vegetation colours and seasonal snow and ice patterns.

Naturalness attributes and values:

27. Moderate-high level of naturalness due to the distinctive largely unmodified landform and the low level of built modification and domestication. Rural living development outside the PA on the north-western hill slopes has degraded the naturalness and coherence of the landform to some extent but this area of modification is subservient to the overall scale, bulk and visual integrity of the hill.

Memorability attributes and values:

28. Highly memorable landform due to its height and bulk, isolation within the basin, open barrenness and elongated form.

Transient attributes and values:

29. Varying colours of pasture across the seasons and effects of light and shade on the open hummocky or craggy topography.

Aesthetic attributes and values:

30. High aesthetic attributes due to the visual prominence, openness and legibility of the landform, its memorability and visual coherence, and its role as the largest of the roches moutonnées within the Whakatipu Basin floor.

Summary of Landscape Values

Physical • Associative • Perceptual (Sensory)

Rating scale: seven-point scale ranging from **Very Low** to **Very High**.

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|----------|-----|---------|----------|----------|------|-----------|
| very low | low | low-mod | moderate | mod-high | high | very high |
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The physical, associative and perceptual attributes and values described above for the PA ONF Morven Hill can be summarised as follows:

- (a) **High** physical values relating to the prominent and largely unmodified roche moutonnée landform and the mana whenua features associated with the area.
- (b) **Moderate** associative values relating to the mana whenua associations of the area, the historical associations with early European settlement and strong shared and recognised values as part of the local sense of place and identity.
- (c) **High** perceptual values relating to the visual prominence, coherence and memorability of the hill, its openness, legibility and naturalness, and its role as the largest of the roches moutonnées within the Whakatipu Basin floor.

Landscape Capacity

The landscape capacity of the PA ONF Morven Hill for a range of activities is set out below.

- i. **commercial recreational activities – limited** landscape capacity to absorb small scale activities that are: located to optimise the screening and/or camouflaging benefit of natural landscape elements; designed to be of a sympathetic scale, appearance and character; integrate appreciable landscape restoration and enhancement; enhance public access (where appropriate); and protect the area's ONF values.
- ii. **visitor accommodation and tourism related activities - very limited** landscape capacity to absorb visitor accommodation within existing buildings or building platforms. **No** landscape capacity for tourism-related activities.
- iii. **urban expansions – no** landscape capacity.
- iv. **intensive agriculture – no** landscape capacity.
- v. **earthworks – very limited** landscape capacity for earthworks and additional trails or access tracks that protect naturalness and expressiveness attributes and values, and are sympathetically designed to integrate with existing natural landform patterns.
- vi. **farm buildings – very limited** landscape capacity for modestly scaled buildings that are integrated by landform and/or existing vegetation and are reasonably difficult to see from external viewpoints.
- vii. **mineral extraction – very limited** landscape capacity to absorb additional quarrying within the area of historic quarry activity, with remediation to enhance the naturalness of the landform.
- viii. **transport infrastructure – no** landscape capacity.
- ix. **utilities and regionally significant infrastructure – limited** landscape capacity for infrastructure that is co-located with existing utilities and is designed and located so that it is not visually prominent.
- x. **renewable energy generation – no** landscape capacity for commercial-scale renewable energy generation. **Very limited** landscape capacity for discreetly located and small scale renewable energy generation that is barely discernable from public places.
- xi. **production forestry – no** landscape capacity.
- xii. **rural living – no** landscape capacity, except within existing approved residential building platforms.