

## 21.22.3 Kimiākau (Shotover River) ONF

---

### General Description of the Area

Kimiākau (Shotover River) PA ONF is the river corridor winding broadly southwards from west of Mount Dewar, through Arthurs Point, around Tucker Beach to the confluence with the Kawarau River. The PA ONF includes the lower reaches of Moonlight Creek to the west of Mount Dewar.

The mapped PA ONF includes the upper edges of the landforms framing the river corridor. This takes in the gravel beds and river floodplains to the west of Arthurs Point and at Big Beach (south of Arthurs Point), Tucker Beach and the Kawarau confluence. It also includes the steep hill slopes bordering Piano Terrace and the western end of the Shotover Canyon Track to the west of Mount Dewar.

### 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. Steep escarpments, scarps, gorges/canyons, bluffs and river cliffs, where glacial and alluvial processes have eroded underlying schist.
2. Alluvial floodplains and terraces, dynamic river braids and gravel shoals at bends in the course of the river to the west of Arthurs Point and at Big Beach, Tucker Beach and the confluence with the Kawarau River.
3. The overall transition along the course of the river from a predominantly narrow and steeply incised corridor (interspersed with alluvial flats and gravel beds at river bends) upriver (north) of Tucker Beach to a more consistently broad and open riverbed and valley at the confluence with the Kawarau.
4. In places, the seamless merger of the riverbanks with the flanking large-scale mountain landforms of Ferry Hill, Sugar Loaf, Bowen Peak and Mount Dewar.

### Important hydrological features:

5. The Kimiākau (Shotover River), in particular the following features and attributes:
  - a. Waterbody with a gravel and schist bed.
  - b. The fast-flowing waters with numerous rapids.
  - c. Clarity of the waters.

### Important ecological features and vegetation types:

6. Particularly noteworthy indigenous vegetation features include:
  - a. Pockets of grey shrubland, especially within the gorged sections upstream of Tucker Beach and upstream of Arthurs Point and on adjacent hillslopes.
  - b. Remnant pockets of mountain beech in the gorge upstream of Arthurs Point.
  - c. Cushion vegetation associated with stable areas of riverbed at Tucker Beach and Big Beach.

- d. A large regionally significant wetland known as the Shotover River Confluence Swamp by the lower braided section near the Kawarau River confluence. The wetland features a mosaic of sedgeland, rushland and willow.
7. Other distinctive vegetation types include:
    - a. The almost continuous patterning of willows and poplars along the riverbanks.
  8. The rocky gorges and associated beech forest and grey shrubland provide habitat for New Zealand falcon and other native birds including bellbird, South Island tomtit, grey warbler, fantail and silvereeye.
  9. The river and adjoining stable areas of riverbed provide suitable feeding and nesting habitat for the nationally threatened black-fronted tern (*Chilidonias albotiatus*) (Nationally endangered), black billed gull (*Larus bulleri*) (Nationally critical) and the banded dotterel (*Charadrius bicinctus*) (Nationally vulnerable).
  10. Habitat for trout and salmon.
  11. Animal pest species include feral goats, feral cats, ferrets, stoats, weasels, hares, rabbits, possums, rats and mice.
  12. Plant pest species include wilding conifers, sycamore, elderberry, buddleia, hawthorn, sweet briar, broom and gorse. Large areas of stable riverbed being colonised by buddleia.

### **Important land-use patterns and features:**

13. A very limited number of rural living dwellings on the intermediate ledges framing the river corridor, with two located near the southern end of Domain Road, and one opposite Big Beach. The very limited number of dwellings and/or their discreet location (with the latter factor not applying to all of the existing dwellings) are important factors in the appropriateness of these elements within the river corridor.
14. The Lower Shotover / Kimiākau Trail along the true left bank of the river linking between Littles Road and Domain Road and parts of the Countryside Trail and Twin Rivers Trail and the southern end of the PA ONF. All of the trails are part of the Queenstown Trail network.
15. The network of relatively short tracks along the river, to the north and south of Arthurs Point.
16. The western end of the Shotover Canyon Track (north of Arthurs Point).
17. An almost continuous patterning of 'conservation' focused land along Kimiākau and the Moonlight Creek (comprising Stewardship Area, DoC marginal strip or Council Reserve). Noteworthy publicly accessible reserve areas are located at Tucker Beach and the river terraces north of Arthurs Point.
18. The Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) associated with Arthurs Point adjoins either side of the river PA ONF.
19. Infrastructure is evident within the corridor and includes: pipelines at the Old Shotover Bridge; a transmission corridor near the confluence with the Kawarau; informal gravel trails and vehicular tracks; fencing; and two Aurora distribution lines (one crossing the river at Tucker Beach, and the other running along the corridor roughly between Tucker Beach and Big Beach); commercial activity area beneath the Edith Cavell Bridge including Shotover Jet tourism operation, Canyon Brewing and carpark area as well as the Shotover Canyon Swing which has a steel cable line that crosses the river and is located north of the Edith Cavell bridge. A bridge is planned to be built in the future to cross the Shotover River at Tuckers Beach Reserve as part of the Queenstown Trail.
20. Other neighbouring land uses which have an influence on the landscape character of the river corridor due to their scale, character and/or proximity include: the urban area of Quail Rise on the eastern side of Ferry Hill; the scattering of rural living properties throughout Tucker Beach rural living area, along the top of the cliffs adjacent Domain Road, Littles Road and Fitzpatrick Road; and throughout the river terraces adjacent Littles Stream.

21. State Highway 6 which crosses the river at the southern end of the PA.
22. Gorge Road which crosses the river at Arthurs Point (via the Edith Cavell Bridge).
23. The very popular commercial jet boat operations at the southern end of the ONF and the area north and south of the Edith Cavell Bridge.

### **Important archaeological and heritage features and their locations:**

24. Edith Cavell Bridge at Arthurs Point (District Plan reference 35, archaeological site E41/300).
25. The Thomas Arthurs Monument, beside Edith Cavell Bridge, Arthurs Point (District Plan reference 29).
26. The steam tractor beside the Oxenbridge Tunnel near Arthurs Point (true right bank; District Plan reference 31).
27. The house and sleepout, Paddy Mathias Place Arthurs Point Road (true left bank, District Plan reference 62).
28. The Old Shotover River Bridge (District Plan reference 222).
29. The Oxenbridge Mining Tunnel near Arthurs Point (true right bank). The 170m tunnel was part of a failed mining scheme by the Oxenbridge brothers, attempting to divert water from the river to recover gold from the riverbed. Today it is used by rafters and kayakers (HNZPT List Number 5607; archaeological site E41/94).
30. Sew Hoy's Big Beach Claim Historic Area (at Big Beach; HNZPT List Number 7545).
31. A protected Poplar near Arthurs Point (true right bank; District Plan reference 163).
32. Old Shotover Bridge Stone Causeway (archaeological site F41/790).
33. Kawarau Diversion Syndicate Project features (dredge and diversion tunnel, archaeological site E41/255).
34. Stone abutment of 1862 bridge (archaeological site E41/301).
35. Prince Arthur Dredge (archaeological site E41/95).
36. Various inter-related complexes of gold sluicings, tailings, water races, and associated domestic sites along the riverbanks (for example, archaeological sites E41/247, E41/243, and F41/766).

### **Important mana whenua features and their locations:**

37. 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.
38. The ONF is mapped as wāhi tūpuna Kimiākau (Shotover River), part of the extensive networks of mahika kai (food & resource gathering) and traditional travel routes in this area.
39. A contemporary nohoaka (camping site to support traditional mahika kai activities provided as redress under the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlements Act 1998) is located at Tucker Beach.
40. The confluence of the Kimiākau and the Kawarau is known as Puahuru.

## 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:

41. Kāi Tahu whakapapa connections to whenua and wai generate a kaitiaki duty to uphold the mauri of all important landscape areas.
42. For generations, mana whenua traversed these catchments gathering kai and other resources.
43. The mana whenua values associated with this ONF include, but may not be limited to, ara tawhito, mahika kai and nohoaka.

### Important historic attributes and values:

44. Gold mining in and alongside the river, which is reputed to have been one of the richest gold bearing rivers in the world.
45. The naming of the river which was coined by William Gilbert Rees after his business partner, George Gammie's English estate, Shotover Park. The river had been previously called Tummel by two Scottish pioneers named Donald Angus Cameron and Angus Alphonse Macdonald who had passed through the area before Rees arrived. It was also referred to as the Overshot by the early goldminers, but it was the name Shotover that stuck.
46. The scattering of various historic features, especially bridges and bridge sites, along and adjacent the PA ONF, which collectively tell the story of the early European history of the area.

### Important shared and recognised attributes and values:

47. The descriptions and photographs of the area in tourism publications.
48. The popularity of Kimiākau (Shotover River) as an inspiration/subject for art, photography, postage stamps and books. Also as a wedding venue.
49. The identity of the river as an important natural and historic landscape context for Arthurs Point, Tucker Beach, Quail Rise, and the various rural living areas along its margins.
50. The popularity of the recreational 'features' listed below and their general ease of accessibility.
51. The importance of the natural heritage area to the local community as evidenced by the efforts of local community groups (eg APCA and KAPOW) to manage weeds and pests, clear debris in the river and revegetate sections of the river corridor.

### Important recreation attributes and values:

52. Gold panning on the river; walking (including dog walking), running and cycling the trail alongside the river (including footbridges); jetboating, rafting, paddleboarding and kayaking on the river, particularly through the Shotover gorge/canyon section; swimming in the river; picnicking by the river.
53. Some motorbiking activities at the southern end of the ONF.
54. Arthurs Point DOC Visitor Services office and tourism ticketing / access points.
55. Te Araroa Trail connection via the Wakatipu Track, passing over the Shotover River near Frankton.

56. Sport fishing for trout and salmon.

### **Perceptual (Sensory) Attributes and Values**

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

#### **Legibility and expressiveness attributes and values:**

57. Clearly legible glacial, fluvial / hydrological processes that have shaped the river corridor and which continue to add to its dynamic qualities. These are evident in scarps, floodplains and the changing patterns of channels and alluvial deposits and gravel banks along the river course.

#### **Particularly important views to and from the area:**

58. Highly attractive close, mid and long-range views from tracks, bridges (including Edith Cavell Bridge), local roads, reserve land, the water, the SH6 bridge and nearby dwellings (including at Arthurs Point) along the river corridor. Vegetation and landform patterns, together with the winding corridor, contain and frame views, contributing a highly variable character to the outlook.
59. Throughout the gorge/canyon sections near Arthurs Point, the fast-flowing narrow channel, framed by unmodified rock escarpments, bluffs and large-scale vegetation-clad river cliffs, is spectacular.
60. Throughout river bends and towards the lower reaches, the corridor is wider, affording longer-range views of the broader mountain setting. Here, the engaging patterning of the dynamic river waters and gravel beds framed by the undeveloped vegetation-clad river cliffs and terraces dominates the outlook. The filtering and framing effect of vegetation in places along with the alternating availability of such views serves to enhance their interest and appeal. In places, the steep and large-scale mountainous landforms of Ferry Hill, Sugar Loaf, Bowen Peak, Mount Dewar and the broader mountain setting add to the sense of drama and grandeur. Elsewhere, historic features within or adjacent the corridor, rapids and/or the dynamic gravel shoals add to the appeal of the outlook.
61. From low-lying vantage points within the corridor (on the water and on tracks) intervening landform and/or vegetation features largely obscure views to urban and rural living development adjacent the area adjacent.
62. Appealing mid and long-range views from SH6 Shotover Bridge in which the broad river corridor reads as a swathe of natural landscape bookmarking the interface between Queenstown and the Wakatipu Basin proper. In these views, the attractive vegetation dominated riverbanks, along with the dynamic gravel beds and water channels and Old Shotover bridge, create the impression of a relatively undeveloped river corridor. The visibility of the distant Northern Remarkables and Coronet Range in outlooks adds to the appeal.
63. In all of the views, the dominance of 'natural' landscape elements, patterns, and processes evident within the ONF, along with the generally subservient nature of built development within the ONF and the contrast with the surrounding 'developed' landscape character, underpins the high quality of the outlook. The limited visibility of urban development at Arthurs Point from much of the corridor also plays a role in this regard.

#### **Naturalness attributes and values:**

64. The seemingly undeveloped character of the river corridor due to the dominance of the escarpment, cliff and bluff landforms, the waterbody and its largely vegetated margins. While trails, tunnels, footbridges, road bridges, transmission corridors, power lines, the odd house and vehicular tracks are evident in the corridor, these features either indicate the high recreational values of the ONF (see shortly) or are of a

character, location and/or extent that means they are not dominant elements. The exception to this is the transmission corridor at the southern end of the area which contributes a localised utilitarian influence.

65. From the bridges and more elevated locations within the corridor, there is an awareness of the urban or rural living land use adjacent the corridor. Even so, there remains a perception of significant naturalness within the river landscape, largely due to the densely vegetated riverbanks, escarpment and bluff landforms and/or close proximity to the dramatic mountain context. Buildings tend to be glimpsed behind plantings making them recessive, with the historic character of some contributing to the charm of the area. Structures such as the historic bridges, signage, and seating associated with the trails also contribute positively to the appearance of the area. Overall, there is the impression of a landscape that is highly picturesque, variable and aesthetically appealing.
66. For the gorge stretches of river corridor, the dramatic escarpments, scarps, cliffs, and bluffs that frame the river create the impression of a strongly enclosed, intimate, and dramatic river character. The wild waters and exotic vegetation add to this impression and there is generally a very high perception of naturalness and 'getting away from it all' due to very limited exposure to development.

### **Memorability attributes and values:**

67. The dramatic gorges near Arthurs Point and stretches of rapids.
68. The appealing and engaging views of the sinuous braided river corridor flanked by vegetation.
69. The various footbridges and historic features along the river corridor.

### **Transient attributes and values:**

70. The fluctuations and changing patterns of the river waters and floodplain gravel banks.
71. The autumn leaf colour and seasonal loss of leaves associated with the exotic vegetation (river edge poplars and willows in particular).
72. Seasonal snowfall throughout the riverbanks which provides a noteworthy spectacle.

### **Remoteness and wildness attributes and values:**

73. The gorge sections of the corridor where there is a strong sense of wildness.
74. Large stretches of the balance of the area, where despite the greater corridor width, intervening vegetation and / or landforms, screens views of surrounding buildings and roads.
75. The dark night sky (i.e. lack of light pollution), contributes to the impression of wildness and remoteness in places.

### **Aesthetic qualities and values:**

76. The experience of the values identified above from a wide range of public viewpoints.
77. More specifically, this includes:
  - a. The highly attractive and intimate composition created by the fast-flowing watercourse framed by the dramatic scarps, escarpments, bluffs, and vegetation-clad cliffs throughout the gorge sections.
  - b. The dynamic and natural patterning of the braided channel and gravel shoals throughout wider sections, seen framed by vegetation.
  - c. The striking seasonal leaf colour display associated with the area.

- d. At a finer scale, the following aspects contribute to the aesthetic appeal:
  - i. the visually discrete character of the majority of built development bordering the area;
  - ii. the historic built development that is seen in places;
  - iii. the sympathetic design of the trail tracks and structures; and
  - iv. the exotic trees along the river course, which contribute to the scenic appeal despite not being native.

## Summary of Landscape Values

Physical • Perceptual (Sensory) • Associative

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

very low	low	low-mod	moderate	mod-high	high	very high
----------	-----	---------	----------	----------	------	-----------

These various combined physical, associative, and perceptual attributes and values described above for Kimiākau (Shotover River) PA ONF can be summarised as follows:

78. **Very High** physical values relating to the velocity and clarity of the waters, the dynamic attributes of the river corridor, the gorges and floodplains shaped by the river, the habitat values for native fauna, the areas of indigenous vegetation and the mana whenua features in the area.
79. **Very High** associative values relating to:
  - a. The mana whenua associations of the area.
  - b. The historic features in the area.
  - c. The strong shared and recognised values associated with the area.
  - d. The recreational attributes of the ONF.
80. **Very High** perceptual values relating to:
  - a. The strong legibility and expressiveness values of the area deriving from the visibility of physical attributes that enable a clear understanding of the landscape's formative processes.
  - b. The appealing aesthetic and distinctive memorability values of the area as a consequence of its distinctive and appealing composition of natural and cultural landscape elements. The area's transient values, the intimate, dramatic, and enclosed character of the gorge sections and the accessibility of the area generally play an important role.
  - c. A strong perception of naturalness arising from the dominance of more natural landscape elements and processes throughout the area.
  - d. A sense of remoteness and wildness in places, particularly throughout the gorge sections due to the sheer scale of natural landforms and wildness of the wild river waters and elsewhere, in places where landform and/or vegetation obscure views of built development.

## Landscape Capacity

The landscape capacity of the Kimitiākau (Shotover River) PA ONF for a range of activities is set out below.

- i. **Commercial recreational activities** – **some** landscape capacity for activities that integrate with and complement/enhance existing recreation features; 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; and protect the area's ONF values.
- ii. **Visitor accommodation and tourism related activities** – **no** landscape capacity.
- iii. **Urban expansions** – **no** landscape capacity.
- iv. **Intensive agriculture** – **no** landscape capacity.
- v. **Earthworks** – **very limited** landscape capacity for earthworks associated with public access tracks, trails, tunnels, and bridge structures, that protect naturalness and expressiveness attributes and values, and are sympathetically designed to integrate with existing natural landform patterns.
- vi. **Farm buildings** – **no** landscape capacity.
- vii. **Mineral extraction** – **no** landscape capacity.
- viii. **Transport infrastructure** – **very limited** landscape capacity for trails that are: located to integrate with existing networks; designed to be of a sympathetic appearance and character; integrate landscape restoration and enhancement; and protect the area's ONF values. **No** landscape capacity for other transport infrastructure.
- ix. **Utilities and regionally significant infrastructure** – **limited** landscape capacity for infrastructure that is buried or located such that they are screened from external view. In the case of utilities such as overhead lines or cell phone towers which cannot be screened, these should be co-located with existing infrastructure or designed and located so that they are not visually prominent.
- x. **Renewable energy generation** – **no** landscape capacity.
- xi. **Production forestry** – **no** landscape capacity.
- xii. **Rural living** – **no** landscape capacity.