**Strategic Plan – March 2016**

Hello – I am Phillip Bunn and this is my Sister Debbie and my brother Steven, we also have 2 other siblings Susan and Carol who are unable to be here today.

Our family owns 150 ha on Morven Ferry road and we are the 3rd generation on the farm, 2 years ago during a family meeting of the future of our farm we all came to the conclusion that the time was approaching when we needed to change from totally livestock farming.

We would each like to keep a piece but maintaining the farm as a farm was simply impossible.

We wish to remain living in an area that is changing, but remain with changes that we could live with.

All our advice was that if we took the option to sell one or more parts of the farm, it was an almost 100% probability a developer would be the likely purchaser. In fact one neighbouring property had been sold to developers and another neighbouring property was on the market being marketed as potential development land. At the time it was on the market I had three different prospective purchasers come and ask my reaction if they bought to develop.

With this in mind we employed Southern Planning and Ben Espie to come up with a plan to show what potential the farm has to absorb other classifications of zoning already employed in the QLDC District Plan i.e. Rural Residential, Rural Lifestyle and Visitor accommodation .

The brief was that it must be a development we could live with, that it maintained the rural aspect of Morven Ferry Road, and that once developed did not give scope for further subdivision by the new owners so that we and our neighbours have certainty.

We wanted it to compliment and reflect the NZ Cycle Trail, which at the time it was put in we were told it was for the economic benefit of the nation.

We submitted our plan under this district plan review last year. Last week our Father died, both him and Mum were supporters of the plan but Dads death gives it much more relevance.

Given this background and the fact that we have one time slot today and 2 time slots tomorrow we have listed bullet points on what we see are the challenges facing both farming and the development of the Wakatipu basin. We would like to put these to you today, get any feedback and questions from you and discuss them in more depth with you tomorrow.

**Problems with farming in Wakatipu as we see it. Farming Constraints.**

\*QLDC and ORC Rates per stock unit – extremely high compared to other farming areas.

\*Transport – bringing goods to farm and transporting stock away – expensive as there are few farmers here, so there is no combining costs. These extra costs are born exclusively by us. Our closest transport operator 30 years ago was Shaws Motors in Arrowtown, then CromTrans in Cromwell now it is Upper Clutha Transport based in Luggate.

\*We have to be a finishing operation – cannot be breeding, because of the distance to market. When the Deer Sales at Cromwell sale yards ceased approximately 10 years ago our price per head return for our deer dropped significantly as our only market became finishing ie straight to slaughter.

\*No Stock & station agents here. 20 years ago we had 2 full time stock agents, Wrightson and Dalgety’s based in the Wakatipu Basin servicing the Wakatipu and Glenorchy areas. Now our Silver Fern Farm Stock agent is based in the Maniototo. If we processed stock through Alliance our closest agent would be Winton.

\*120+ day winter significantly longer than even Southland, we have to produce a lot more winter feed to carry stock through winter.

\*locally our farm Location in Morven Ferry is free draining being on old river beds – we dig down to gravel, it is also the driest part of the Wakatipu Basin, - this was recognised by the old timers when The Arrow Irrigation scheme was first set up. From MacDonnell Road down through Morven Ferry the farms were allocated 1.5 heads water per acre as opposed to 1 head per acre throughout the rest of the Basin.

\*Rabbits – where do I start – we have a massive problem with rabbits, traditional control methods have been poisoning – 1080 the most effective by far/ shooting the most popular - Neither compatible with tourists and Cycle Trails! Any development in the rural area should include some form of rabbit proof fencing to at least control their movement. Also the ORC is washing their hands of Rabbit control – has the council any inclination of the effect that this is going to have on this area?

**Tourist Constraints**

Tourism is being encouraged in the Wakatipu – this is not really compatible with traditional farming – particularly for us being deer farmers, however this is also relevant for both sheep and beef farming.

\*Cycle trail – runs through our farm, our fawning percentage was consistently for 20 years prior to the trail average between 92 and 94% we were very proud to be in the top 10% for deer farms in New Zealand, since the trail opened it has dropped significantly our highest % in the last 4 years being 87%. The incidence of finding dead abandoned fawns has increased noticeably. This is due to the daily disturbance of people on bikes, walking uncontrolled dogs and illegal shooting from the NZ Cycle Trail.

\*Flight paths – On Thursday for example helicopters were doing a circuit transporting people from Millbrook to Rafting at the Mouth of the Arrow River – stock do get used to it but if there are any stresses happening it can disturb them.

\*We border the Kawarau River – Rafters often exit at the old Morven Ferry Site and DOC area, Deer stalkers have decided that it is somewhere they can target shoot and site in there powerful rifles, this Easter weekend we have The Tour Wakatipu Race ending there….. In the Roar – a dangerous time to be around deer. We only got notice of this last night and we will have to move stock to accommodate this which affects our stock management programme.

\*In the last year 3 our neighbours have started bed and breakfast in their homes – bringing in people that have no idea how to act around deer.

This is a tourist area – the Wakatipu Basin is a rural lifestyle area – tourists want to come here and experience what they perceive to be a farming experience – in reality this is not a working farm experience, they need pet farm animals that they can touch and play with, this requires small numbers of animals who have a high interaction with people – this is not traditional farming.

Other Random Matters I would like to raise.

\*Does this Council have any inclination of the value of the Arrow Irrigation Scheme in this basin. If it stops or something happens to it, there will be a lot of water bores and ground water aquifers that would run much slower or even dry. Do you have any knowledge of what is happening in this basin at the moment with water? A good example of this is the very low levels that Mill Creek has been running at into Lake Hayes this summer?

\*Arrowtown is one of the more popular and expensive areas in the district – the older generation have steadfastly rejected any development yet the younger generation with families are desparate to get housing in Arrowtown –if the council continue down the route of limiting Arrowtown’s Urban Growth Boundary it is imperative to create viable housing community at that end of the district that is detached but close to Arrowtown. Morven Ferry is as out of sight as you can get on the floor of the Wakatipu basin, Warm sunny flat to undulating land, we have the legal easements in place to take water from the Kawarau River therefore not depleting further any stream or aquifer. In future the Kawarau River could also provide a potential future transport route to Frankton and Queenstown via ferries.

\*You are planning for the next 10 years at least and I think in that time you are going to have to develop a small satellite commercial/industrial hub as the Frankton flats is developing very quickly. Remember it is only 20 years since the Frankton Flats was farm land and project its growth a further 10 to 20 years – Arrow Junction is a logical place for this when you live at our end of the basin, it could service from Lake Hayes to Arrowtown to Gibbston.

\*Queenstown High density – great idea – but please do not assume this is a silver bullet – I own a business Central Dry Cleaning 51 Gorge Road in this zone. Last year we signed a pretty water tight 20 year lease on our building.