

**IN THE ENVIRONMENT COURT
AT CHRISTCHURCH
I TE KŌTI TAIAO O AOTEAROA
KI ŌTAUTAHI**

Decision No. [2026] NZEnvC 43

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991

AND an appeal under clause 14 of the First Schedule of the Act RMA in relation to the Priority Area Landscape Schedules Variation to the Queenstown Lakes District Council Proposed District Plan

BETWEEN CARDRONA CATTLE COMPANY LIMITED

(ENV-2024-CHC-55)

AND ROCK SUPPLIES NZ LIMITED

(ENV-2024-CHC-65)

Appellants

AND QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT COUNCIL

Respondent

Environment Judge J J M Hassan – sitting alone under s279 of the Act

In Chambers at Christchurch

Date of Consent Order: 10 March 2026



CONSENT ORDER

A: Under s279(1)(b) RMA,¹ the Environment Court, by consent, orders that:

- (1) the appeal is allowed, and Queenstown Lakes District Council is directed to amend the proposed Queenstown Lakes District Plan as set out in Annexures 1 and 2, attached to and forming part of this consent order;
- (2) the appeal is otherwise dismissed.

B: Under s285 RMA, there is no order as to costs.

REASONS

Introduction

[1] This proceeding concerns appeals by Cardrona Cattle Company Limited (CCCL) and Rock Supplies NZ Limited (RSNZL) against the decision of the Queenstown Lakes District Council on the Priority Area Landscape Schedules Variation to the proposed Queenstown Lakes District Plan.

[2] As detailed in *Burdon v Queenstown Lakes District Council*² the appeal points lodged against various aspects of the variation were allocated to two appeal topics. The “general relief” noted in those appeals focused on the preamble of Schedules 21.22 and 21.23. It was allocated to Topic 1 to which that decision relates. The site-specific relief pertaining to the specific Priority Area Landscape Schedules was allocated to Topic 2. That is what this consent order and a number of other consent orders issued with it are concerned with.

[3] CCCL has an interest in the property legally described as Lot 8 DP 402448 and Section 32 Block II Kawarau Survey District. The majority of the property is located within the Gibbston Character Zone (GCZ), with a small portion in the

¹ Resource Management Act 1991.

² *Burdon v Queenstown Lakes District Council* [2026] NZEnvC 40.

Rural Zone. RSNZL has an interest in land at 2677 Gibbston Highway, Gibbston, Queenstown³ where it operates a quarry. The site is zoned GCZ under the PDP.

[4] Both sites are located within the area to which Sch 21.22.17 Victoria Flats PA: Schedule of Landscape Values applies. The Rock Supplies site is also located within the area subject to Sch 21.22.9 Kawarau River PA: Schedule of Landscape Values.

[5] Rock Supplies sought to exclude the Victoria Flats area from the Priority Area maps and to remove the ONL and ONF classifications from the GCZ. Further, it sought amendments to the provisions of Schs 21.22.9 and 21.22.17.

[6] Cardrona Cattle's appeal specifically sought amendment to the boundaries of the Victoria Flats ONL so that only landscapes which are demonstrably "outstanding" and "natural" are located within. This has the effect of removing the site from the ONL.

[7] Prior to court-facilitated mediation, the court issued a preliminary determination relating to the scope of the Variation.⁴ The court determined that there was no scope to amend the ONF, ONL or RCL landscape boundaries as sought by various appeals. However, the court confirmed that there was jurisdiction to alter the Priority Area mapping.

[8] I have read and considered the consent memorandum of the parties dated 3 October 2025 which sets out the agreement reached between the parties to resolve the appeal. The agreement reached includes:

- (a) amendments to both Schs 21.22.9 and 21.22.17 by inserting new text or amending existing text to further describe the Priority Area; and
- (b) amendments to the landscape capacity rating descriptive text for

³ Legally described as Part Lot 3 DP 27395 and held in Record of Title OT19A/733.

⁴ *Burdon v Queenstown Lakes District Council* [2025] NZEnvC 122.

Visitor accommodation and tourism related activities in Sch 21.22.9 to further explain the application of the capacity rating to the land extending to the edge of the western-most part of the GCZ.

Other relevant matters

[9] Dr John Cossens, NZSki Limited, The Milstead Trust and Upper Clutha Environmental Society Incorporated (UCES) each joined the appeal as an interested party under s274 of the RMA. Except for UCES, these s274 parties have all signed the memorandum setting out the relief sought. UCES however confirmed it had no interest in Topic 2 matters and accordingly is not a signatory.⁵

[10] The consent memorandum records the parties' assurances that there are no issues of scope and that all matters proposed for the court's endorsement fall within the court's jurisdiction and conform to the relevant requirements and objectives of the RMA, including, in particular Pt 2.

[11] No party seeks costs, all parties agreeing that costs should lie where they fall.

Orders

[12] The court makes this order under s279(1) RMA, by consent, rather than as a decision or determination on the merits under s297.

[13] This order is made on the basis of the joint memorandum recording the parties' full agreement. The court understands, for present purposes, that all relevant parties to the proceeding have executed the memorandum requesting the orders.

[14] Based on the information provided and the assurances received, the court

⁵ Julian Haworth to the registry, letter regarding late s274 application (2 April 2025).

is satisfied that the orders will promote the purpose of the RMA. Accordingly, the appeal is allowed, and QLDC is directed to amend the District Plan by making the changes set out in Annexures 1 and 2, attached to, and forming part of this consent order.



J J M Hassan
Environment Judge



ANNEXURE 1

Agreed amendments to Sch 21.22.17 Victoria Flats PA: Schedule of Landscape
Values

Appendix 2

21.22.17 Victoria Flats PA: Schedule of Landscape Values

Key:

Blue underline = Topic 1 insertion sought by consent documents filed 1 August 2025.

Green underline and strikethrough = Topic 2 insertion or deletion

21.22.17 Victoria Flats PA: Schedule of Landscape Values

Application

Preamble 21.22, particularly clauses 3.1 – 3.3, explains that the application of the Priority Area Schedules is to the Rural Zone Priority Area only. The Priority Area Assessment Extent for this Schedule includes areas of land that are zoned Rural and Gibbston Character Zone.

General Description of the Area

The Victoria Flats PA comprises the fluvio-glacial outwash terrace on the true right bank of the Kawarau River between Nevis Bluff and the Waitiri peninsula, and the immediate mountainous landforms enclosing the flats (including the eastern faces of Mt Mason). It is a small landscape unit within the wider ONL of the Mt Mason/Mt Rosa/Mt Edward range, the southern Pisa Range and the Carrick and Horne ranges and the Doolans (outside the district boundary). ~~The PA overlays two areas of Gibbston Character zoning – between SH6 and the Kawarau River and on the flats south of the Queenstown Lakes District (QLD) landfill, as well as Rural zoned land.~~

The Kawarau River PA passes from west to east through the Victoria Flats PA. The PA boundaries include those that follow the topographical edges of the Kawarau Riverine system (refer Kawarau River PA Schedule) which separates the upper extent of the river gorge with adjacent land of a flatter and distinctly different character.

There are three sub-areas within the PA, PA being: the flat fluvio-glacial outwash terrace (the 'Flats'); the steep surrounding mountain slopes and knolls, and the river corridor / gorge – which passes through the PA and is addressed in the 21.22.9 Kawarau River PA Schedule.

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

Landforms and land types:

1. A small fluvio-glacial terrace on the true right bank of the Kawarau River comprising slightly weathered outwash gravels and measuring approximately 2.2 km long in an east-west direction and 1.6 km wide in a north-south direction. It is bisected by the Gibbston — Cromwell Highway (SH6). Large boulders scattered across the flats, with a greater density close to Nevis Bluff, are thought to have been deposited by a debris flow from a landslide that dammed the river and formed a lake at the bluff.
2. The Kawarau River corridor / gorge.
3. Enclosing schist mountain slopes: including the eastern face of Mt Mason, the lower slopes of Mt Malcolm and the western escarpment of Waitiri Peninsula. Steep strongly eroded slopes with thin leached soils.
4. The upstream boundary of the PA is Nevis Bluff, formed from grey and greenschist. One of the best exposures of greenschist in New Zealand and a limburgite dike cutting the Haast schist. This landform is recognised in the NZ Geopreservation Inventory as having national significance.

Hydrological features:

5. Kawarau River, which passes through the Victoria Flats PA (refer Kawarau River PA Schedule for landscape attributes and values).

Appendix 2

6. Water storage ponds for previous mining or farm irrigation and ponds constructed as part of the active landfill and quarry activities.
7. Irrigation water race from a spur of Mt Mason across the flats.

Ecological features and vegetation types:

8. Mainly unimproved pasture on the flats, (with a high density of invasive species such as sweet briar, elderberry and broom). Screen planting of predominantly eucalypts around the QLDC landfill and an avenue of poplars on the access road.
9. Recent indigenous revegetation plantings at the Oxbow commercial recreation facility, the Wakatipu Gun Club and on the screening mounds for the quarry and processing yard north of SH6.
10. Rough pasture on the mountain slopes, (with a high density of sweet briar) and occasional matagouri on the shadier slopes and wetter toe slopes. Transition within the PA to very dry barren hillslopes in the eastern sector that support little vegetation (other than thyme and sweet briar).
11. Flocks of black backed gulls are frequent, attracted by the QLDC landfill.

Land use patterns and features:

12. Mountain and hill slopes within the PA are undeveloped and have largely been retired from pastoral farming. The flats themselves, which include the Gibbston Character Zone, that support several rural industrial, residential and commercial/community recreation activities, which have reduced levels of naturalness to varying degrees including:
 - a. The QLD solid waste facility (which is surrounded by the designated open space buffer), which dominates the flats, with the designated landfill buffer extending across the terrace from SH6 to the enclosing hillslopes and knolls. The presence of the landfill including its odour has influenced the nature of subsequent development, with no established rural living or viticulture, despite Gibbston Character zoning and some approved residential building platforms;
 - b. Quarry, gravel processing and cleanfill/earthworks operation within the Gibbston Character Zone between SH6 and the river, screened from the road by planted mounds;
 - c. Commercial/community recreation facilities, including but not limited to the Wakatipu Clay Target Club shooting range, the Oxbow Adventures Facility (jetboat sprinting, clay target shooting, off- road vehicles), and access to the Nevis bungy facility. Remnant tracks from previous off-road 4- wheel drive commercial recreation. Facilities include small buildings, parking areas and planted mounds that screen activities from SH6.
 - d. Consented residential / rural lifestyle building platforms and other commercial operations exist on the terrace flats. This includes activities that were consented as urban development and a winery facility within the Gibbston Character Zone.
13. The remaining 'flats' that are not developed (as per 12a — 12d above) are relatively small in area and are used for low intensity grazing/baleage, with a few scattered sheds, or have been retired from productive use.
14. The Kawarau River PA passes through the Victoria Flats PA. Other than a very small area of tracking associated with quarrying activity on the outwash flats above, the narrow river corridor is unmodified and highly natural other than the presence of some exotic species including weeds.
15. The Cromwell-Frankton A 110kV overhead transmission line that forms part of the National Grid along the southern periphery of the flats and over Mt Mason to the Gibbston Valley.

Appendix 2

21.22.17 Victoria Flats PA: Schedule of Landscape Values

Archaeological and heritage features and their locations:

16. History of 19th century and early 20th century gold mining along the Kowarau River, with numerous archaeological sites along the river's edge and frequent evidence of sluicing and tailings. Within the PA, sites include ferry crossings, the historic road formation across the flats, stone ruins, the sites of the Victoria Bridge Hotel (archaeological site F41/195) and Edward's Ferry Hotel (archaeological site F41/202), areas of sluicing and tailings and significant gold mining sites such as Doolan's Creek Tunnel (archaeological site F41/2080).
17. The supports of the Victoria Bridge over the Kowarau (constructed in 1874) are a QLDC Category 3 listed heritage feature (QLDC Ref. 223).

Mana whenua features and their locations:

18. 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.
19. The PA overlaps [part of](#) the mapped wāhi tūpuna Kowarau River (refer Kowarau River PA Schedule for landscape attributes and values).

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:

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

Historic attributes and values:

24. The strong associations of the Kowarau River valley with 19th and early 20th century gold mining and early European settlement, with physical evidence of ferry sites, mining activities and associated settlement.
25. Historic route between the Clutha River Mata-au and Whakatipu-Waimāori (Lake Whakatipu).

Shared and recognised attributes and values:

26. Shared and recognised values as part of the dry, barren and wild rural hinterland of the Kowarau valley downstream of Nevis Bluff, experienced by people travelling between Cromwell and the Whakatipu Basin on SH6.

Recreation attributes and values:

27. Destination for commercial and [recreational activity \(including trails\)](#)~~community recreation activities~~.
28. The Queenstown Trail and the walking trail connecting Victoria Flats and Gibbston Valley over Mount Mason and Mount Rosa.

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:

29. Moderately legible glaciofluvial outwash terrace, partially modified by alluvial gold mining, landfill activities and screening mounds.
30. Legible evidence of an historic landslide near Nevis Bluff in the large boulders scattered across the flats.
31. Highly legible and expressive river gorge and highly legible processes of uplift and erosion in the open and craggy mountain slopes.

Particularly important views to and from the area:

32. Views from SH6 across the flats to the enclosing mountain ranges and hills. Some built development is evident in views, as the landfill and other activities on the flats are (or will be) largely screened by mounding and planting. Visibility of built development within the Gibbston Character Zone may increase over time, including through the implementation of existing resource consents. From SH6, the flats appear relatively unkempt, with rough pasture and predominantly natural patterns of vegetation cover (mainly exotic sweet briar and elderberry). Parts of the flats have a more modified landscape character than the surrounding higher ground within the PA and are dominated and strongly enclosed by the dry rugged slopes of the mountains. There is a strong contrast between the remote rough rural character of the flats and the viticultural landscape of the main Gibbston Valley west of Nevis Bluffs
- 32A. The open character of the flats, encompassing the landfill buffer between SH6 and the landfill is important to retain as part of maintaining rural character.
33. Views from the Mt Rosa walking track as it ascends the hillslopes of Mt Mason take in the entire northern area of the flats, including the quarry and gravel processing facility within the Gibbston Character Zone, clay shooting range and Oxbow Adventures facility. The landfill is largely screened by planting or topography. The aesthetic coherence and perceived naturalness of the flats is undermined by the spread of rural industrial and recreational activities, but the surrounding mountains remain dominant in the views.

Naturalness attributes and values:

34. Despite modified vegetation cover, weed infestation and farm tracks, the mountain slopes and knolls around the flats retain a high level of naturalness.
35. Within the Victoria Flats PA, the 'terrace flats' area has been partially modified to a degree where it and now retains only a low-moderate level of naturalness (with part of the Gibbston Character Zone having low level of naturalness). The SH6 corridor contributes to this. However, the level of naturalness perceived from SH6 remains relatively high, as most existing and consented, but as yet unbuilt activities are/will be largely screened from road view leaving the surrounding, higher mountain slopes and knolls as the prominent landscape features.

Memorability attributes and values:

36. Forms part of a highly memorable journey through the barren, seredry, and strongly enclosed landscape of the Kawarau Gorge, downstream of Nevis Bluff. The wildness and inhospitable nature of the gorge add to its memorability.

Transient attributes and values:

37. Changing colours of pasture across the seasons, spring flowering of sweet briar and elderberry, and the play of light and shadow on the craggy mountain slopes.

Remoteness and wildness attributes and values:

- 38. A sense of relative remoteness and wildness, particularly when away from SH6 [and the more modified flat parts of the PA.](#)

Aesthetic attributes and values:

- 39. The experience of the attributes identified above by a significant number of residents and visitors travelling on SH6.
- 40. More specifically, this includes:
 - a. The [more unkempt flats with their](#) strong sense of enclosure by steep dry eroding mountain slopes [contrast with the more open and tamed main Gibbston Valley.](#)
 - ~~b. The sense of relative remoteness and wildness, and the contrast with the more tamed and inhabited Gibbston Valley.~~
 - c. The relatively moderate-high level of naturalness perceived from SH6, with most development effectively screened by mounding and/or planting including natural and introduced vegetation cover (albeit largely exotic weeds) apparent.

Summary of Landscape Values
Physical • Associative • Perceptual (Sensory)

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

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 Victoria Flats PA:

- 41. **Moderate-high physical values** relating to the river and its escarpments, the unmodified uplifted mountain ranges, and the mana whenua features associated with the area.
- 42. **Moderate associative values** relating to the mana whenua associations of the area, the historic attributes of the river and flats and the shared and recognised values as part of dry rural hinterland of the Kawarau valley downstream of Nevis Bluff.
- 43. **Moderate-high perceptual values** relating to:
 - a. The legibility and expressiveness attributes of the river gorge and mountain slopes.
 - b. The aesthetic and memorability values of the area due to its strong enclosure by dramatic eroded mountain ranges, its dryness, barrenness and relative wildness and remoteness.
 - c. A relatively high impression of naturalness arising from the dominance of the more natural landscape over visible built development.
- 44. **Low-moderate** physical, associative and perceptual values associated with the more modified parts of the terrace flats, typically where roading, buildings, quarrying activities and the landfill are located.

Landscape Capacity

The landscape capacity [rating](#) of the [Rural Zone](#) Victoria Flats PA for a range of activities is set out below. [This](#)

Appendix 2

21.22.17 Victoria Flats PA: Schedule of Landscape Values

[provides high level guidance as to potential characteristics or locational matters that may assist with identifying appropriate development within the PA.](#)

- i. **Commercial recreational activities** — **some** landscape capacity for small scale and low-key activities that are set back from SH6; 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 (where appropriate).
- ii. **Visitor accommodation and tourism related activities** — **extremely limited or no** landscape capacity for visitor accommodation on the terrace flats south of SH6 where such development can be screened when viewed from SH6, is of an appropriate scale and character, will integrate with and complement/enhance existing development and will not compromise the identified landscape values in the broader context. **Extremely limited** landscape capacity for **tourism related activities** on the terrace flats south of SH6 and where not visible from SH6.
- iii. **Urban expansions** — **extremely limited or no** landscape capacity.
- iv. **Intensive agriculture** — **some** landscape capacity on the terrace flats for intensive agriculture that maintains views to the surrounding mountains from SH6.
- v. **Earthworks** — **limited** landscape capacity for earthworks and tracks and trails for recreational use that protect historic, naturalness and expressiveness attributes and values, and are sympathetically designed to integrate with existing natural landform patterns.
- vi. **Farm buildings** — **limited** landscape capacity for modestly scaled buildings that reinforce existing rural character.
- vii. **Mineral extraction** — **some** landscape capacity for extraction that is screened from SH6 by landform and/or vegetation and is remediated to enhance the naturalness and aesthetic values of the ONL.
- viii. **Transport infrastructure** — **limited** landscape capacity for modestly scaled and low key 'rural' roading on the flats.
- ix. **Utilities and regionally significant infrastructure** — **some** landscape capacity for infrastructure that is co-located with existing facilities and is designed to minimise visual prominence from SH6. In the case of the National Grid **limited** landscape capacity for the upgrade of existing infrastructure within the same corridor and in circumstances where there is a functional or operational need for the particular location and structures are designed and located to limit their visual prominence from SH6, including associated earthworks.
- x. **Renewable energy generation** — **limited** landscape capacity for discreetly located and small-scale renewable energy generation. **Very limited** landscape capacity for commercial-scale renewable energy generation that is screened from SH6.
- xi. **Forestry** — **very limited** landscape capacity for small scale production forestry on the flats that maintains views to the surrounding mountains from SH6.
- xii. **Rural living** — **extremely limited or no** landscape capacity alongside SH6. **Some** landscape capacity for rural living development south of the landfill.

PLANT AND ANIMAL PESTS

- A. Plant pest species include sweet briar, thyme, elderberry and broom.
- B. Animal pest species include rabbits, stoats, ferrets, rats and mice.

ANNEXURE 2

Agreed amendments to Sch 21.22.9 Kawarau River PA: Schedule of Landscape Values.

Key:

Blue underline = Topic 1 insertion sought by consent documents filed 1 August 2025.

Green underline and strikethrough = Topic 2 insertion or deletion

21.22.9 Kawarau River PA: Schedule of Landscape Values

Application

Preamble 21.22, particularly clauses 3.1 – 3.3, explains that the application of the Priority Area Schedules is to the Rural Zone Priority Area only. The Priority Area Assessment Extent for this Schedule includes areas of land that are zoned Rural, Gibbston Character, Gibbston Resort, and Informal Recreation.

General Description of the Area

The Kawarau River PA is the Kawarau River corridor stretching from the Frankton Arm of Whakatipu-wai-Māori (Lake Whakatipu) eastwards to Roaring Meg. The mapped PA includes the upper edges of the landforms framing the river corridor. This takes in the river floodplains between Whakatipu-wai-Māori and the Kawarau Bridge.

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

Landforms and land types:

1. Spectacular steep scarps, gorges and cliffs where the river has cut through the underlying schist. The gorge from Gibbston to Ripponvale (outside the QLDC boundary) is identified as a Geopreservation Site of national importance and a landslide on the north bank of the river opposite Gibbston is identified as being of regional importance. The gorge is being continuously modified by landslides, some of extremely large scale.
2. Flat alluvial floodplains between the confluence with Kimiākau (Shotover River) and Chard Farm.
3. Confluence of the Kawarau and Kimiākau (Shotover) rivers and the dynamic changes in river braids and shoals in this area.
4. A number of large-scale landslides (e.g., the Gibbston landslide that is the most studied in the area and the K9 landslide that extends 4km between the Roaring Meg and Scrubby Stream) related to the interaction of the downcutting of the Kawarau River with the regolith overlying bedrock. Downstream of the Arrow River confluence is a suite of river terraces faulted and offset by the NW Cardrona Fault. These landforms are recognised in the NZ Geopreservation Inventory as nationally important.

Hydrological features:

5. The Kawarau River, in particular the following features and attributes:
 - a. Waterbody notable for its volume and fast flow, with a gravel and schist bed.

- b. Clarity and distinctive turquoise colour of the waters.
- c. Presence of white-water rapids.
- d. Scientific rarity of the potential reverse flow of the river towards Whakatipu-Waimāori (Lake Whakatipu) when the Kawarau and Kimiākau (Shotover) rivers are in flood. River training earthworks at the confluence of the rivers may prevent this occurring in the future.
- e. The Water Conservation (Kawarau) Order 1997 requires the outstanding amenity and intrinsic values afforded by the river waters to be sustained and the water body preserved as far as possible in its natural state.

Ecological features and vegetation types:

- 6. Particularly noteworthy indigenous vegetation features include:
 - a. Pockets of indigenous grey shrubland (often mixed with sweet briar) border the river along its entire length, particularly on scarps.
 - b. Valued habitat for eel, kōaro and rare native fish, trout and salmon.
 - c. Numerous rocky outcrops and bluffs that characterise the river corridor are refugia for specialist indigenous plants.
- 7. Other distinctive vegetation types include:
 - a. Crack willow lining the banks of the river along much of its length.
 - b. Stands of Lombardy poplar and Black poplar in places.
 - c. Rural shelter belts and woodlots on the alluvial floodplains.
- 8. The river corridor with its bordering rocky terrain and areas of shrubland provide favourable nesting habitat and hunting opportunities for New Zealand falcon. The grey shrubland is likely to support populations of grey warbler, fantail, silvereye and possibly geckos.

Land use patterns and features:

- 9. Pastoral land use dominates the floodplain areas between Whakatipu-Waimāori (Lake Whakatipu) and the Kawarau Bridge Bungy. Nearly all the vegetation immediately flanking this section of the river is exotic, including, extensive willows, stands of poplars, pine woodlots and shelterbelts, and pockets of broom and gorse. The Cromwell-Frankton A 110kV overhead transmission line that forms part of the National Grid are transmission lines, located generally parallel to the river between the Kawarau Bridge and Lake Hayes Estate and are in or over the ONF at some points.
- 10. The Gibbston Character zone (GCZ) is located near the eastern section of the ONF incorporating the terraced Victoria Flats area above the Kawarau River, lying between and including Chard Farm and Waitiri. Part of the ONF overlays the GCZ where the GCZ encroaches the river escarpment. The GCZ has a distinctive character and sense of place, reflected in a statutory environment which has enabled development activity different to what is expected within an ONF. [The Kawarau PA overlaps the GCZ in one area where there is limited quarrying, tracks and buildings, forming part of the broader land use patterns in the GCZ part of the adjacent Victoria Flats PA.](#)
- 11. Between the Kawarau Bridge Bungy and Roaring Meg, the river scarps and slopes are largely covered in

rosehip, matagouri, weed species and coarse grasses, with land uses limited to low intensity grazing, public access on Gibbston walking/cycling trail, the Kawarau Bungy commercial recreation facility, parts of the Gibbston Cromwell Highway (SH6), [limited tracking associated with quarrying activity where the Kawarau River PA overlaps the GCZ](#), and the Roaring Meg hydro station.

Archaeological and heritage features and their locations:

12. There are a number of scheduled historic heritage features along the river, including the Kawarau Falls Bridge (QLDC Ref. 40), the late 1880s Brunswick Flour Mill (QLDC ref. 49), the 1881 Kawarau Suspension Bridge (QLDC Ref. 41), the supports of the Victoria Bridge (QLDC Ref. 223), the 1936 Roaring Meg Power Station (QLDC Ref. 94), Chard Road (QLDC Ref. 216) and Rum Curries Hut at Rafters Road (QLDC Ref. 236).
13. Various ferry sites along the river and associated hotel remains, including Victoria Flat, Owens Ferry and Morven Ferry.
14. Various inter-related complexes of gold sluicings, tailings, water races, dams and associated domestic sites along the riverbanks.
15. Numerous pre-European archaeological sites along the river, including the Owens Ferry moa hunter site (archaeological sites F41/1 and F41/66) and the former natural bridge access across the river (now widened by floods) near Roaring Meg.

Mana whenua features and their locations:

16. 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.
17. The Kawarau River is mapped as a wāhi tūpuna. The ONF also overlaps with the mapped wāhi tūpuna Tititea. Tititea was a pā located on the south side of the Kawarau River near Whakatipu-Waimāori.
18. Ōterotu is the traditional Māori name for the Kawarau Falls.
19. Potiki-whata-rumaki-nao is the name for the former natural bridge over the Kawarau, which was a major crossing point for Kāi Tahu whānui.

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:

20. Kāi Tahu whakapapa connections to whenua and wai generate a kaitiaki duty to uphold the mauri of all important landscape areas.
 21. The Kawarau River was a traditional travel route that provided direct access between Whakatipu-Waimāori (Lake Whakatipu) and Mata-au (the Clutha River).
 22. The Kawarau is a significant kāika mahika kai where weka, kākāpō, kea and tuna (eel) were gathered.
 23. Kāi Tahu tradition tells of an incident where a 280 strong war party was repelled from the Tititea area and chased to the top of the Crown Range, which is now named Tititea in memory of this incident.
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24. The mana whenua values associated with the Kawarau ONF include, but may not be limited to, ara tawhito, mahika kai, nohoaka, kāika and tauraka waka.

Historic attributes and values:

25. The historic and contextual values of gold mining in and alongside the river and associated physical remnants.
26. The historic and contextual values of the feature as a factor shaping early European transport in the District, including historic roads, bridges, ferry sites, and associated infrastructure.
27. The historic significance of the river and its tributaries as a source of water and power.

Shared and recognised values:

28. Nationally recognised values set out in the Water Conservation Order that applies to the river (with its wild and scenic characteristics; natural characteristics; scientific values and recreational purposes specifically identified).
29. Very strong shared and recognised values as a popular recreational destination.

Recreation attributes and values:

30. Kayaking, jetboating (both commercial and private), rafting, swimming, and fishing on the river.
31. Walking and cycling on the popular Twin Rivers and Gibbston trails alongside the river, and occasional recreational events on the southern side of the river between Whakatipu-Waimāori (Lake Whakatipu) and Chard Farm.
32. Bungy jumping and zip lining at the Kawarau Bridge Bungy.

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:

33. Clearly legible, glacial and alluvial / hydrological processes that have shaped the river valley landscape and which continue to add to its dynamic qualities. These are evident in the scarps, floodplains and the changing patterns of channels and gravel banks at the confluence with the Kimiākau (Shotover) and along the river course.

Particularly important views to and from the area:

34. Highly attractive close, mid and long-range views along the predominantly vegetation clad river corridor. Vegetation and landform patterns together with the winding corridor contain and frame views, contributing a highly variable albeit generally relatively enclosed character to the outlook. In places, the roche moutonnée of Morven Hill and/or the mountain slopes of the Remarkables add a sense of drama and grandeur. The dynamic river waters are a dominant visual element. The mixing of different water colours at the Kimiākau (Shotover) confluence, particularly when the Kimiākau is in flood, adds to the appeal and interest of the views in this section of the Kawarau.

35. Appealing mid and long-range views from Remarkables Park, Shotover Country, Lake Hayes Estate, Bridesdale, SH6 and the Queenstown Trail to discreet sections of the Kawarau River and its predominantly vegetation clad banks and floodplains. In such views, the rugged mountain backdrop of the Remarkables and other enclosing mountains adds to the appeal of the outlook.
36. From some proximate vantage points, the vegetation fringed, dynamic waters of the Kawarau River are seen alongside the more domesticated pastoral flood plains and terraces.

Naturalness attributes and values:

37. Generally, there is a high perception of naturalness throughout the river corridor due to the dominance of the waterbody and its vegetated margins. Whilst boating activity and trails are evident in the corridor, these activities indicate the high recreational values of the ONF. Where evident, structures are modest in scale and/or sympathetic character and remain subservient to the natural landscape.
38. Between Whakatipu-Waimāori (Lake Whakatipu) and the Kawarau Bridge Bungy, pastoral land use dominates the floodplain areas and nearly all the vegetation flanking the river is exotic. Even so, there remains a perception of significant naturalness within the river landscape. The very limited visibility of built development on the Remarkables side of the river contributes to this, even if pasture, farm, [recreational and quarry](#) tracks, fencing, power lines and the margins of the Kawarau Heights, Lake Hayes Estate and Bridesdale settlements are evident. However, the confined, often intimate nature of the river corridor provides terrain shielding and limits exposure to such elements.
39. For the stretch of river corridor between the Kawarau Bridge Bungy and Roaring Meg, dramatic gorges with exposed schist outcrops frame the river to form a contained and intimate river character. Whilst exotic vegetation is apparent, grey shrubland is dominant and there is generally an increased perception of naturalness due to very limited exposure to development. The exception to this is visibility of SH6 within the corridor between Victoria Flats and Roaring Meg.

Memorability attributes and values:

40. Views of the dramatic river scarps and gorges east of Morven Ferry Road are highly memorable, as is the distinctive turquoise colour of the water and notable volume and flow of the river through the gorges and rapids.

Transient attributes and values:

41. Transient attributes include the fluctuations and changing patterns of the river waters and flood plain gravel banks, flood-related changes in the confluence with the Kimiākau (Shotover), and the seasonal changes evident in the vegetation – most notably in the stands of willows and poplars.

Remoteness and wildness attributes and values:

42. Visitors on the surface of the river east of the Kawarau Bridge Bungy are enclosed within the gorge and experience a strong sense of remoteness. In addition, the river corridor east of the Gibbston Valley and Victoria Flats has a high level of wildness and remoteness, although SH6 and the historic Roaring Meg Power Station also influence the perception of this riverscape. Much of this river corridor comprises a steep V-shaped valley that is both deep and sinuous – winding its way eastward past Mt Allen and Mt Difficulty.

Aesthetic attributes and values:

43. The experience of the values identified above from a wide range of public viewpoints.
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44. More specifically, this includes:

- a. Strong sense of enclosure within the river corridor, defined by escarpments or gorges and the surrounding mountain ranges and roches moutonnées.
- b. Coherence and distinctiveness of the waterway as a feature.
- c. Highly picturesque and aesthetically appealing views.
- d. Ability to travel along the river on trails, roads, or the water itself and to be immersed in the scenic and remoteness attributes of the river corridor.

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
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The physical, associative and perceptual attributes and values described above for the Kawarau River PA can be summarised as follows:

- 45. **Very high physical values** relating to the volume, flow and clarity of the waters, the dynamic attributes of the confluence with the Kimitiākau (Shotover), the scarps, gorges and floodplains shaped by the river, the habitat values for native and introduced fauna, the areas of indigenous vegetation, and the mana whenua features associated with the area, acknowledging that these attributes are counterbalanced by the presence of pastoral land use, fencing, tracks, powerlines.
- 46. **Very high associative values** relating to the Kāi Tahu associations with the river, the rich history of gold mining and early European settlement, the significant recreational attributes, and the strong shared and recognised values, as evidenced by the 2013 Water Conservation Order.
- 47. **Very high perceptual values** relating to the expressiveness of the river landforms, the memorability of the spectacular gorges and fast flowing turquoise waters, the high level of naturalness, the scenic views available to and within the corridor, and the sense of remoteness and wildness experienced east of the Kawarau Bungy.

Landscape Capacity

The landscape capacity [rating](#) of the [Rural Zone](#) Kawarau River PA for a range of activities is set out below. [This provides high level guidance as to potential characteristics or locational matters that may assist with identifying appropriate development within the PA.](#)

- i. **Commercial recreational activities** — **some** landscape capacity for small scale and low-key activities that integrate with and complement/enhance existing recreation features; are located to optimise the screening and/or camouflaging benefit of existing natural landscape elements; designed to be of a sympathetic scale, appearance, and character; integrate appreciable landscape restoration and enhancement and enhance public access.
- ii. **Visitor accommodation and tourism related activities** — **very limited** landscape capacity east of

Bridesdale, extending to the ~~edge of the western-most part of the GCZ / unnamed stream that bisects the~~ Chard Farm vineyard for activities limited to the flat and low-lying terraces and floodplains that are: designed to be reasonably difficult to see in views from the Kawarau River, Twin River Trail, Bridesdale, Shotover Country and Lake Hayes Estate; are of a modest or sympathetic scale; have a low-key 'rural' or 'non-urban' character; integrate landscape restoration and enhancement; and enhance public access. **Extremely limited or no** landscape capacity elsewhere except for sensitively located and designed glamping activities.

- iii. **Urban expansions** — **extremely limited or no** landscape capacity.
- iv. **Intensive agriculture** — **very limited** landscape capacity on floodplains or terraces that are not subject to flood hazard.
- v. **Earthworks** — **limited** landscape capacity for earthworks and tracks and trails for recreational use or works that are necessary to mitigate natural hazard risks that protect naturalness and expressiveness attributes and values and are sympathetically designed to integrate with existing natural landform patterns.
- vi. **Farm buildings** — in those areas of the ONF with pastoral land uses, **limited** landscape capacity for modestly scaled buildings that reinforce existing rural character.
- vii. **Mineral extraction** — **very limited** landscape capacity for small scale gravel extraction.
- viii. **Transport infrastructure** — **very limited** landscape capacity for low key 'rural' roading infrastructure outside of the State Highway corridor. **Very limited** landscape capacity for wharfs or jetties that are located in more modified parts of the ONF between Whakatipu-Waimāori (Lake Whakatipu) and Morven Ferry and are designed to be of a sympathetic appearance and character; integrate landscape restoration and enhancement and enhance public access. **Limited** capacity for pedestrian and cycle bridges that are visually lightweight, include recessive colours and are designed and located so that they are not visually prominent.
- ix. **Utilities and regionally significant infrastructure** — **limited** landscape capacity for infrastructure that is co-located with existing facilities. In the case of utilities such as overhead lines or cell phone towers which cannot be screened, these should be designed and located so that they are not visually prominent. In the case of the National Grid there is **limited** landscape capacity for the upgrade of existing infrastructure within the same corridor and limited landscape capacity in circumstances where there is a functional or operational need for the particular location and structures are designed and located to limit their visual prominence, including associated earthworks.
- x. **Renewable energy generation** — **extremely limited or no** landscape capacity. **Very Limited** landscape capacity for discreetly located and small-scale renewable energy generation.
- xi. **Forestry**— **extremely limited or no** landscape capacity.
- xii. **Rural living** — **extremely limited or no** landscape capacity.
- xiii. **Passenger Lift Systems** — **limited** landscape capacity to improve public access including to focal recreational areas higher in the mountains (including between lower lying areas and the Remarkables Ski Area Sub Zone) via non-vehicular transportation modes such as gondolas, (including base and terminal buildings and stations) provided they are positioned in a way that is sympathetic to the landform, are located and designed to be recessive in the landscape.

PLANT AND ANIMAL PESTS

- A. Plant pest species include wilding conifers, crack willow, sweet briar, buddleia, hawthorn, sycamore,
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broom and gorse.

B. Animal pest species include rabbits, possums, stoats, rats and mice.

