

**BEFORE THE HEARINGS PANEL  
FOR THE PROPOSED QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT PLAN**

**IN THE MATTER**

of the Resource  
Management Act 1991

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER**

of Resort Zone Hearing  
Stream 9 – Millbrook  
Zone

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**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF ANDREW WILLIAM CRAIG ON BEHALF OF  
MILLBROOK COUNTRY CLUB LIMITED**

**LANDSCAPE**

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**3 February 2017**

## INTRODUCTION

- 1 My full name is Andrew William Craig.
- 2 I hold the position of Director of *Andrew Craig Landscape Architecture Limited*. I have been in this position since 2009.
- 3 I have been practising landscape architecture since 1987. For 5 years until mid-2009 I was employed by Peter Rough Landscape Architects Ltd. Before that I was employed by the Christchurch City Council for 13 years, working in the area of environmental policy and planning. Prior to that I worked for a short time with the Department of Conservation. Most of my work since graduation and to date has involved landscape assessment and the development of landscape policy.
- 4 I hold a Bachelors of Arts degree (Canterbury University) and a post graduate diploma in landscape architecture (Lincoln University).
- 5 I have been engaged by Millbrook Resort Limited to provide landscape evidence regarding a proposal to rezone land currently zoned 'Rural General - Visual Amenity Landscape' to 'Millbrook Resort Zone'.
- 6 I have read the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses contained in the Environment Court Practice Note 2014. I have complied with it in preparing this evidence and I agree to comply with it in presenting evidence at the hearing. The evidence that I give is within my area of expertise except where I state that my evidence is given in reliance on another person's evidence. I have considered all material facts know to me that might alter or detract from the opinions I express in this evidence.

## SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

- 7 My evidence addresses the following landscape matters arising from the proposed re-zoning.

- a. A brief background outlining the evolution of landscape matters leading up to and following notification.
- b. A review of landscape assessments prepared by Baxter Design Group<sup>1</sup> on behalf of Millbrook Country Club Limited – hereafter referred to as ‘Millbrook’.
- c. My assessment of landscape and visual effects arising from the proposed re-zoning.
- d. Consideration of submissions.
- e. Consideration of the Council’s<sup>2</sup> landscape report<sup>3</sup> and other relevant material presented by the Council.

8 In preparing my evidence I have read:

- a. *Landscape Assessment Report – Dalgleish Farm – Millbrook.* Prepared by Baxter Design Group; April 2015.
- b. *Wharehuanui Landscape Study.* Prepared by Baxter Design Group; January 2015.
- c. *Report to Queenstown Lakes District Council on appropriate landscape classification boundaries within the District, with particular reference to Outstanding Natural Landscapes and Features.* Prepared by Marion Read; 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014.
- d. *Landscape Categorisation Boundaries – Wakatipu Basin.* Prepared by Vivian / Espie; 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014.
- e. *Section 32 Evaluation Report: Landscape, Rural Zone and Gibbston Character Zone.* Prepared by John Edmonds and Associates.
- f. *Proposed Queenstown Lakes District Plan.*

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<sup>1</sup> As assessed by Mr Stephen Skelton

<sup>2</sup> Queenstown Lakes District Council

<sup>3</sup> Prepared by Ms Hannah Ayres (Rough and Milne Landscape Architects Ltd)

- g. *The Operative Queenstown Lakes District Plan.*
- h. *The Council's s42A report and landscape evidence*

9 On three occasions I have visited the land subject to the proposed re-zoning. I have also viewed the site from various publically accessible vantage points beyond it.

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 10 There are no significant landscape features on the site that would prevent re-zoning. Where such features do exist they are sensitively incorporated into the proposed Structure Plan and District Plan provisions.
- 11 The proposed re-zoning is not contrary to the proposed District Plan objectives and policies. Nor will the proposal fail to achieve RMA s6 and s7 matters where they concern landscape and amenity.
- 12 The proposed re-zoning and subsequent development will readily achieve the landscape character and amenity outcomes anticipated by all of the relevant proposed District Plan objectives and policies.
- 13 In its location, extent and design the proposed re-zoning is readily capable of being appropriately integrated and absorbed into the landscape of its setting.
- 14 The proposed re-zoning and subsequent development will not be contrary to what people expect to occur in such a setting. The same applies to what the District Plan anticipates with regard to recreation and tourism activity within the district.
- 15 No submissions<sup>4</sup> raise any significant landscape character and amenity issues that are not otherwise, in my opinion, adequately addressed in the proposed District Plan provisions, including the Structure Plan and Millbrook Design Guidelines.

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<sup>4</sup> Apart from submission 356 – X-Ray Trust which has since been settled.

- 16 I note that the Council's landscape evidence and s42A report is generally supportive of the proposed re-zoning subject to some amendments to the District Plan provisions.
- 17 That overall, the proposal will result in positive effects.

## **BACKGROUND**

- 18 My involvement with the proposal began when I was asked to peer review the landscape assessment<sup>5</sup> prepared by Baxter Design Group. I understand the amended assessment was submitted as part of the notification package submitted by Millbrook.
- 19 Since then I have been asked to familiarise myself with the site, the proposal and visual effects from vantage points beyond the site.
- 20 The latter resulted in the identification of potential photo-points for photo-simulations. Three have been prepared which are attached to my evidence. These I will discuss in more detail later.
- 21 I rely on the assessment where it incorporates, among other matters, the following:
- a. A description of the proposal
  - b. Landscape character analysis (focussing on the 'Pigeon Bay Criteria')
  - c. Landscape assessment that largely focusses on visual effects from key publically accessible vantage points, but also takes into account landscape effects<sup>6</sup>.
  - d. Consideration of District Plan statutory matters of relevance to landscape outcomes.

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<sup>5</sup> *Landscape Assessment Report – Dalgleish Farm – Millbrook*. February 2015

<sup>6</sup> Landscape effects being those arising from changes to the landscape irrespective of whether they are visible.

- 22 It is not my intention to repeat in any great detail the matters addressed in the landscape assessment, as these I consider sufficient to understand the proposal and its visual and landscape effects. I note too that the Council's landscape architect<sup>7</sup> has considered in some detail the landscape material including the structure plan prepared by Baxter Group. She also appends to her landscape evidence the various landscape studies that I identify in my paragraph 8. I further note that she is in general agreement with the observations and conclusions reached in the Baxter Group material. Where appropriate I will however summarise or refer to this.
- 23 Baxter Group also prepared proposed structure plans<sup>8</sup> for the whole of Millbrook, including the land subject to re-zoning. Within the re-zone site these show residential clusters, golf courses and landscape protection areas.
- 24 Arising from a submission<sup>9</sup> some of the residential clusters have been re-located. In his supplementary report Mr Stephen Skelton (Baxter Design Group) describes these amendments and the reason for them. I understand that as a result of these amendments the submitter's concerns have been satisfactorily addressed.
- 25 Allied to this matter I am also aware that the submitter engaged Ms Anne Stevens to prepare a landscape assessment<sup>10</sup> in support of the landscape matters raised in the submission. As these matters have now been settled, it is my opinion that Ms Steven's assessment is no longer relevant as it was only concerned with the effects of the original proposal and not that as amended in consultation with her client.

## LANDSCAPE ISSUES

- 26 As with any re-zoning the issue is essentially going to focus on the question of whether there is any landscape impediment. Arising from this are the following considerations.

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<sup>7</sup> Ms Hannah Ayres

<sup>8</sup> Dated 23 February 2015 *Proposed Structure Plan and Combined Structure Plans*

<sup>9</sup> Submitter # 356 X-Ray Trust Limited

<sup>10</sup> Submission #356 Attachment 1 *Expert Opinion on Potential Impact on Private Amenity and on Appropriateness of Extension in Landscape Context – Landscape Analysis – Proposed Millbrook Resort Expansion (Special Zone) - October 2015*

- a. The presence or otherwise of significant natural attributes such as water bodies, native bush or geological features.
  - b. Whether the site includes or is a part of a significant heritage landscape.
  - c. The extent to which the site landscape contributes amenity derived from both the existing environment and that proposed.
  - d. The degree of deviation from existing landscape patterns.
  - e. Whether the proposed re-zoning is in keeping with the existing environment and peoples' expectations of it (associative landscape effects).
- 27 Each of the considerations listed above are addressed in the discussion to follow.

#### **SITE DESCRIPTION - SUMMARY**

- 28 As mentioned, this is described in more detail in the Baxter landscape assessment. To follow is a summary of that description in addition to my observations and conclusions.

#### **Rural or urban?**

- 29 A high proportion of open space is a necessary prerequisite of ruralness, where buildings are surrounded by space compared to urban areas where the opposite is true. In keeping with existing zoning, the landscape character of the site is generically rural due to the very high proportion of open space to buildings. Of the latter there are just two – see **Graphic Attachment Figure 1** aerial photograph. One of these is listed in the QLD<sup>11</sup> as a protected feature, being McAuley Stone Cottage.
- 30 The abundance of vegetation is also a significant contributor to rural character. Land cover of the site is entirely vegetative comprising mostly

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<sup>11</sup> Appendix 3: Item 71

pasture grass with exotic trees – see **Graphic Attachment Figure 2** photograph.

31 I conclude therefore that the site is definitely rural in character.

#### **What degree of amenity exists?**

32 In rural landscapes amenity is generally derived from open space, vegetation and evident naturalness. Naturally occurring salient landscape elements or features such as water bodies and courses, rock outcrops or native bush also contribute amenity. While the presence of physical features such as buildings and infrastructure diminish naturalness, they can, if well designed, maintain or contribute amenity in rural settings.

33 Coherence or consistency, where the landscape is free from anomalous features, also contributes amenity. In this regard the site exhibits a high level of coherence where the landscape elements are consistent throughout.

34 As open space and vegetation predominates within the site, amenity as derived from rural character is high. There also exist within the site some salient natural features. One is Mill Creek that more or less runs parallel to Malaghans Road toward Millbrook Resort – see **Graphic Attachment Figure 3** photograph. Another is the prominent hillock located at the western end of the site - see **Graphic Attachment Figure 4** photograph. Other lesser features include a deeply incised gully draining a minor tributary north to Mill Creek and the steep rocky faces fronting Malaghans Road. The location and extent of these features is shown on the **Graphic Attachment Figure 5** map.

35 The combination of rural openness, predominant greenery, salient natural features and general coherence result in a site landscape that exhibits overall high amenity.

#### **How natural is the site?**



- 36 The degree of naturalness correlates to modification resulting from human activity<sup>12</sup>. The more modified a landscape is the less natural it is.
- 37 The site has been modified to a moderate degree. Modifications include:
- a. Exotic vegetation fully occupying the site
  - b. The presence of a vehicle access track or farm road
  - c. The presence of fencing
  - d. The aforementioned buildings
  - e. A water race and pipeline
- 38 Most of the physical features listed above are located on the lower slopes of the site. Consequently the upper slopes exhibit less modification and therefore appear, relative to the lower, more natural.
- 39 Even though vegetation is exotic it can be considered to have natural character. Nonetheless, the public (particularly New Zealanders) will understand that it supplants original native vegetation and therefore represents modification.
- 40 The water race and pipeline - see **Graphic Attachment Figure 6** photograph - involve some alteration of landform, although this is reasonably limited. Otherwise the variable landform is evidently intact. Further it is legible due to its extensive pastoral cover which reveals underlying features.
- 41 For the above reasons naturalness is assessed as being moderate, particularly on the lower slopes, and moderately high on the upper slopes.

**Does the site involve heritage landscape?**

- 42 The District Plan does not indicate that the site has heritage significance<sup>13</sup> as a landscape. As mentioned however, it does contain a heritage listed feature,

<sup>12</sup>The range is: very high / high / moderately high / moderate / moderately low / low / very low

namely the aforementioned McAuley Stone Cottage. Approximately 3,700m<sup>2</sup> will be set aside<sup>14</sup> so as to maintain a high amenity setting for the cottage.

#### **What is the character and amenity of the receiving environment?**

- 43 For the purposes of this discussion the receiving environment is that which is potentially adversely affected by the proposal. Effects can extend beyond the receiving environment, but from a landscape point of view these are judged to be less than minor and therefore acceptable. The extent of the receiving environment in these terms is shown on the **Graphic Attachment Figure 7** aerial photograph.
- 44 As the receiving environment is much greater in area than the site, its character is more diverse. This applies to land use, land form, vegetation cover, naturalness, natural and physical features that in combination constitute the receiving environment landscape.
- 45 Immediately to the east of the site is the existing Millbrook Resort. This area comprises a mix of distinctly discrete building clusters surrounded by extensive open space, mainly in the form of golf courses. Buildings are generally well designed and maintained. Each of the clusters is linked by a network of serpentine roads. Water bodies and water ways are also present which contribute significant amenity. Vegetation is mostly grass punctuated with groupings of large exotic trees. There are no overhead services that would otherwise diminish amenity. Overall, the Millbrook Resort environment exhibits a very high degree of amenity.
- 46 Immediately west of the site is a prominent ridge that extends to Hunter Road. Dwellings are present throughout much of the landform, but are mostly concentrated toward the western end. Vegetation cover comprises a mix of pasture, mature exotic trees and shrubs reflecting rural residential and lifestyle activity. Due to the latter, the landscape toward the western end of the ridge is relatively fragmented, diverse and fine grained. Some reasonably substantial water bodies are present which contribute to natural character and amenity. Otherwise amenity is moderately high.

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<sup>13</sup> Subject to RMA s6(f)

<sup>14</sup> See Structure Plan - overlay R18

- 47 Bounding the ridge to the north and south are narrow alluvial flats which extend either side of the site. Land use is rural which evidently includes lifestyle blocks, particularly on the north side. Within these flats and aligned with them are Malaghans Road to the north and Speargrass Flat Road to the south.
- 48 Further afield to the east is the Michael Hill golf course and then Arrowtown. Southwards is Lake Hayes and attendant settlement. Rural activity and in particular rural lifestyle blocks are common in this direction and points further west. Northwards the land rises steeply culminating in Coronet and Brow Peaks. Most of this land is forested and is generally free of buildings.
- 49 In summary, it is evident that the receiving environment exhibits considerable variation largely due to the wide range of land use occurring within. As a result amenity is also varied on account of the land use it is derived from. Generally it is high, even where the land is highly modified, including within nearby Arrowtown. This is because the quality and maintenance of buildings and infrastructure is for the most part high throughout the urban, rural, rural residential, open space and recreational environments. Further, there is no activity that significantly diminishes amenity such as quarries, heavy industry and such like. Overall the receiving environment and subject site are very pleasant.

### **VISUAL AND LANDSCAPE EFFECTS**

- 50 Landscape effects are those arising from appreciably enduring changes to the environment irrespective of whether they are visible. Visual effects are those that can be seen by potentially affected parties<sup>15</sup>. The issue is whether such effects are acceptable within the context of a plan change. In this regard it is understood that, unlike a land use consent, the aim is not to create the impression that environmental outcomes expected for the current zoning are to be maintained. That is, even though the current zoning is rural, there is no expectation that it appears rural following re-zoning – in this case to Millbrook Resort Zone. The only landscape issue in this regard is whether the quality and usefulness of the affected rural environment is such that it precludes re-

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<sup>15</sup> Consideration of these regarding proposals is a requirement of RMA Fourth Schedule 7(1)(b) *any physical effect on the locality, including any landscape and visual effects*

zoning. For the reasons I am about to consider, it is my opinion that re-zoning is not precluded.

### **Landscape effects**

- 51 Re-zoning will inevitably result in enduring changes to the landscape of the subject site. The present rural pastoral landscape will be supplanted by that of a golf resort incorporating residential activity in the form of discrete clusters. The location and extent of these is shown on the structure plan.
- 52 As mentioned this has been amended<sup>16</sup> since lodgement arising from both an agreement reached with a neighbour<sup>17</sup> and as a direct response to another neighbour's submission. The amendment involved relocating some of the residential clusters in such a way so as to avoid impinging on views from the neighbouring properties.
- 53 Land not occupied by buildings and roading will be devoted to a mix of uses which comprise the following three main types:
- a. The golf greens and open space environment in which they are located (denoted 'G' on the structure plan).
  - b. The landscape protection area (denoted 'LP' on the structure plan), which I understand will continue to be grazed resulting in the maintenance of rural traits.
  - c. Amenity landscaping (see structure plan overlays key) comprising mounding, amenity and ecological planting.
- 54 Approximately 8.47ha of the 67.6ha site is devoted to proposed residential activity comprising road circulation, buildings and curtilage. I also understand that limitations on density in the R14 – R16 areas have been volunteered in zone rules and further density controls have been suggested to R13, 17 and 18 in the s42A report which understand Millbrook accepts. That and the s 30% site coverage rule included within Millbrook's existing design guidelines

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<sup>16</sup> Reference 2423-SK66 Dated 02 Dec 2016

<sup>17</sup> Submitter # 356 X-Ray Trust Limited

will result in a high proportion of open space to built form. A further 0.37ha is devoted to the historic McAuley Stone Cottage. Overall the total area subject to existing and proposed residential activity is 8.84ha or a little over 13% of the subject site. For the entire Millbrook Resort Zone it is understood that the proposed rule requires a maximum 5% site coverage<sup>18</sup>. Overall site coverage is therefore quite low, particularly when considered within the context of the entire zone, and as a consequence vegetated open space is going to predominate. A sense of what this may look like in terms of the proportion of open space to built form may be gained from the current Millbrook Resort development.

- 55 As the site is for all intents and purposes currently devoid of buildings, the greatest degree of apparent change will result from the presence of those proposed. Other changes will arise from the presence of roading and various landscaping regimes. There will be no unsightly overhead services or infrastructure.
- 56 The current rural environment does not appear to be improved to any great extent – there is little sign of cultivation and such like. Proposed open space treatment will result in the appearance of a highly managed but varied landscape. It will range from the formal manicured appearance of golf greens to the rougher more naturalistic and grazed landscape protection areas and ecologically enhanced stream riparian margins. Amenity planting will include tree and shrub planting implemented by Millbrook Resort Limited. Preferred plant species are listed in the Millbrook Design Guidelines which presently stand outside the District Plan. As a result planting will appear visually coherent and consistent throughout the site.
- 57 Each vegetation regime will reflect landform. The areas subject to landscape protection (denoted 'LP' on the structure plan) generally occur on steeper terrain while golf greens ('G') are located on gentler gradients. The exception is the LP area or setback alongside Malaghans Road whose purpose is to provide a high amenity vegetated open space foreground to the golf course and residences beyond. It will also have the effect of maintaining rural

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<sup>18</sup> Proposed District Plan Chapter 43 Rule 43.5.9

'flavour' on both sides of Malaghans Road thereby retaining the appreciation of the open landscape experienced by travellers presently.

- 58 Areas denoted 'gully planting' on the structure plan will reflect those particular features. So overall, planting will help highlight the nature of terrain and prevailing site conditions such as those arising from soils and moisture. In my opinion this is a positive effect which underscores a fundamental principle of landscape design and land management.
- 59 Other landscape treatment result in change involves the proposed earth mounding. Its purpose (as shown on the structure plan) is to enhance the outlook of neighbours and to better integrate buildings into the landform. This will assist in achieving proposed QLDP Objective 43.2.1<sup>19</sup> and its subservient policies. Usefully it enables the efficient redistribution of cut material from the formation of roading and building platforms thereby retaining locally sourced material. This helps to maintain consistency of soil conditions across the site.
- 60 In summary, the landscape effects arising from the changes following re-zoning will be substantial, but in my opinion not adverse when considered in the context of a plan change. Amenity will remain high, albeit sourced differently.
- 61 Following rezoning amenity will be derived high quality building and landscape design that in turn will be maintained as a very high level. I am confident this will happen based on what exists at Millbrook and make the assumption that this will extend into the new zone.
- 62 The attributes that contribute rural amenity will diminish - namely extensive open space and abundant greenery in addition to salient natural features. Although lessened by the presence of buildings, these attributes will nonetheless maintain a presence given low site coverage and enhancement of natural features such as the gullies, rock outcrops and stream corridor. Indeed the latter will be improved compared to the current rural zone situation. This will also constitute a positive landscape effect.

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<sup>19</sup> 43.2.1 Objective - Visitor, residential and recreation activities developed in an integrated manner with particular regard for landscape, heritage, ecological, water and air quality values.

### Is a golf resort urban or rural?

- 63 Allied to the foregoing discussion is the question of whether golf courses and resorts are typically rural or urban. The reason I address this issue is it rests on the matter of where people would ordinarily expect such activity to occur. Or to put it another way; would people be surprised to see a golf resort in a wider rural setting such as that at Millbrook? The answer to this helps address the issue of whether the anticipated change to the landscape is acceptable. In landscape terms, this is what is referred to as 'associative effects'.
- 64 Golf resorts occur in both urban and rural settings. Often they occur on the periphery of urban settings and Millbrook is an example of this arising from its relationship to Arrowtown. So too is the Hills Golf Club and Arrowtown golf course – see **Graphic Attachment Figure 8**. Similar to Millbrook as a resort in relationship to an urban centre is Clearwater near Christchurch. Terrace Downs in Canterbury is an example of a rural golf resort of a similar type to Millbrook.
- 65 In landscape terms what this means is that people will harbour the expectation that golf resorts and courses are urban, peri-urban<sup>20</sup> and rural activities. Consequently people would not be surprised to find a golf resort in such a setting as that of Millbrook. This view is further informed by the character of the existing environment<sup>21</sup>. In this regard the existing golf resort contributes significantly to peoples' understanding and appreciation of the existing environment's landscape character and amenity. We can also add in the knowledge that people – local residents and visitors alike - harbour the expectation that the environment in the vicinity of Queenstown and Arrowtown accommodates a wide range of recreational activity occurring alongside or in combination with rural and conservation activity. The proposed re-zoning represents an extension of the existing golf resort which is not out of keeping with what people expect to occur within the wider Queenstown landscape.
- 66 Regarding Millbrook, it is my opinion that the character of the resort is very much bias toward the rural end of the spectrum rather than the urban. The

<sup>20</sup> Peri-urban – where urban and rural environmental traits infiltrate each other at their interface

<sup>21</sup> The existing environment is understood to comprise what exists at the moment, what is consented and what is non-fancifully permitted.

reasons are that firstly, overall site coverage is very low which the Plan rules set at 5%. Secondly the resort is almost entirely surrounded by rural activity, even though it is proximate to Arrowtown.

- 67 A presiding characteristic of rural landscapes is that space surrounds buildings whereas in urban areas buildings surround space. In Millbrook's case, it is very much the former for each of the building clusters and for the resort as a whole.

### **Visual Effects**

- 68 As described, the change occurring within the subject site will result in discernible visual effects. To reiterate these will include:
- a. The appearance of buildings where virtually none exist presently. Buildings will likely be the most visible feature on account of their verticality – that is, they will protrude above the landform. Additionally their geometric form will contrast with the more natural and organic character of their setting.
  - b. Changes arising from the various vegetation patterns proposed for the site. Overall there will be a greater variety of plant types and layout. Further, contrast will exist between differing management regimes of vegetation – manicured greens juxtaposed against more natural plant groupings.
  - c. Roads, will be visible from certain vantage points, but are unlikely to be seen in their entirety from any one. This is because they are essentially two dimensional features that hug the ground surface. Secondly they will be positioned in hollows and such like thereby minimising visibility. The effect of these is currently appreciable as I understand the proposed road alignments will more or less follow that of the existing formed farm track where it climbs from the lower to upper parts of the site.
- 69 Visual effects involve two considerations. One is view quality and the other is view intrusion. The extent to which this occurs depends on the following factors:



- a. The proximity of vantage points, both public and private
- b. The elevation of vantage points relative to the site – generally higher vantage points correspond with more expansive views
- c. Site terrain where elevation increases visibility
- d. The presence of features such as vegetation, landform and buildings that may obscure views
- e. Whether viewers are moving or static

70 View quality corresponds with the quality of features within the landscape and how they are combined. As mentioned, it is my opinion that the visual quality of what is proposed will be very high. As for Millbrook currently, this will result from the following methods whose purpose is to deliver and guarantee a very high level of design and maintenance:

- a. The proposed District Plan provisions, namely the Chapter 43 rules. Proposed Residential areas 14, 15, and 16 within the subject site are subject to restricted discretionary activity status where, among other things, the Council seeks to consider at its discretion the external appearance of buildings and landscaping controls. Consideration on visual values of the area including coherence with surrounding buildings and heritage values is also to be taken account of.
- b. The Structure Plan which more or less identifies how buildings and landscaping will be arranged within the site.
- c. The Millbrook Design Guidelines which set out to control in a very specific and detailed way the design and appearance of buildings. The controls also extend to landscaping and maintenance.

71 Implementation of the above will result in a high level of integration not only within the site but also with the existing Millbrook environment and its wider setting. For the most part existing landscape patterns at Millbrook will extend into the site thereby providing and maintaining visual coherence. The

difference however, is that considerable larger areas of the subject site will continue to be grazed. The result will be a softer or less contrasting transition between the subject site and surrounding rural land. Further, grazing will enable infiltration of the site by apparent rural activity, thereby accentuating its bias toward the rural end of the landscape character spectrum.

- 72 There will however be some minor differences. Rule 43.4.5 assessment matters as notified flag the expectation that indigenous vegetation will predominate and that buildings will appear dark and recessive. I agree with the intention of the rule, in accordance with whatever is the best method of achieving this. A further rule [43.4.6] requires buildings to have coherence with the surrounding buildings and heritage values within the R17 cluster to recognise the historic McAuley Stone Cottage and the heritage character of its immediate setting.
- 73 What these assessment matters are doing is recognising distinctive characteristics of the site which do not occur elsewhere in Millbrook. The darker recessive buildings acknowledge the site's elevation and therefore potentially greater visibility. To counter this buildings are required to better blend in with their landscape setting.
- 74 The use of indigenous vegetation recognises the ecological diversity of the site and its potential for enhancement in this regard. It also reinforces localised micro-conditions arising from the diverse features occurring within the site – namely the waterways, steep faces, rocky outcrops, deeply incised gullies, hillocks and elevated downs. The visual effect of indigenous planting will be to recognise and underscore the presence of these features.
- 75 In implementing these I am confident that Objective 43.2.1 and its attendant policies<sup>22</sup> concerning landscape outcomes will be achieved. In so doing the visual effects will clearly reflect what is anticipated by the District and

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<sup>22</sup> 43.2.1.1 *Require development and activities to be located in accordance with a Structure Plan so as to promote orderly and integrated development and prevent the inappropriate development of sensitive parts of the site.*

43.2.1.2 *Require the external appearance of buildings to have appropriate regard to landscape and heritage values.*

43.2.1.3 *Protect valuable ecological remnants and promote the enhancement of ecological values where reasonably practical.*

Structure Plans that in turn will be reinforced by the Millbrook Design Guidelines.

**How will development affect views?**

- 76 Arising from the foregoing discussion I conclude that the quality of views within the site will be very high. What then of views from beyond the site?
- 77 To help answer this I have had prepared three photo-simulations<sup>23</sup> (see **Graphic Attachment – Photo-simulations**) that give a good representative indication of view quality from key publically accessible vantage points. These simulations also give some indication of potential view intrusion.
- 78 Two of the simulations are from main roads that afford views of the site – these being Malaghans and Lake Hayes Roads. I determined that the views from these roads are the most sensitive due to the high traffic volumes and scenic importance.
- 79 From Lake Hayes Road it is clearly evident that there is no discernible difference between the current view and that following development. It is therefore concluded that there is very little or no visual effect arising from the proposed as viewed from this vantage point.
- 80 From Malaghans Road it is evident that the upper gable ends of two dwellings will be visible from that particular vantage point<sup>24</sup>. I acknowledge that existing vegetation which appears in the simulation may obscure other dwellings or parts thereof. Nonetheless, the simulation demonstrates that while part of the dwellings are visible, they do not intrude into the overall view in a manner that I consider adverse to even a minor degree. Further I am confident that as planting matures in combination with the requirement to utilise dark recessive colours visibility of buildings will diminish over time.
- 81 The other simulation is from the summit of Feeley Hill located immediately west of Arrowtown. From this photo-point there is a very good overview of the

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<sup>23</sup> Photo-simulations have been prepared by specialist professionals – Virtual View Ltd.

<sup>24</sup> Note that the photo-simulations do not show the lower slope development

site. The simulation therefore gives a good impression of what the post development site would look like within the context of its overall setting.

- 82 As is apparent from the Feeley Hill vantage point, the buildings are well integrated into the landscape. In accordance with the aforementioned assessment matters, the buildings are recessive in colour. They have a landform backdrop and do not intrude the ridgeline on which they are located. Nor do they impinge on wider view quality incorporating Wakatipu Basin and surrounding mountains. Open space remains dominant. Finally the building clusters represent continuation of existing land use patterns emanating from Millbrook.
- 83 In summary it is my opinion that the proposed re-zoning and subsequent development will result in significantly less than minor adverse visual effects. Indeed it is my opinion that such effects will be trivial.
- 84 A number of submissions have been received in respect of the proposed re-zoning.

## **PROPOSED DISTRICT PLAN LANDSCAPE MATTERS**

- 85 There are two chapters in the Proposed District Plan that incorporate generic landscape matters relevant to the proposed re-zoning. They are Chapter 3 *Strategic Direction* and Chapter 6 *Landscapes*. Specific landscape matters are addressed in Chapter 43 *Millbrook* which has been traversed in the foregoing discussion.

### **Chapter 3 - Strategic Direction**

- 86 It appears that the Strategic Direction focusses mainly on managing the effects of urban growth. While the proposed re-zoning will result in the introduction of residential activity within what is currently a rural environment, it remains ambiguous as to whether it can be considered urban or rural. This is a matter I addressed earlier regarding associative landscape effects where I concluded that golf resorts of the type proposed occur in both rural and urban settings. In my opinion the subject site and subsequent development is located within a rural environment as is the greater Millbrook Resort. Where

the Strategic Direction chapter refers to 'urban development' I think it useful for the purposes of this discussion simply to consider the proposal as 'development' and / or 'use'.

- 87 In order of how they appear, the following matters are what I consider are relevant to landscape outcomes.
- 88 With regard to these, Objective 3.2.2.1 states *'Ensure urban development occurs in a logical manner: to protect the District's landscapes from sporadic and sprawling development.'* While the proposal will result in expansion of the existing Millbrook Resort its effects on the landscape are, in my opinion, appropriate for the following reasons:
- a. The site is contiguous with the existing Millbrook Resort and will therefore maintain continuity and coherence of character, and managed as such (comprehensively).
  - b. The site is geographically constrained by terrain, particularly the steeper slopes of the ridge on which it is located.
  - c. The site is further constrained by surrounding land tenure.
  - d. The site is well integrated with the existing resort and landscape of its setting.
- 89 Objective 3.2.3.2 states: *Protect the District's cultural heritage values and ensure development is sympathetic to them.* And then attending Policy 3.2.3.2.1 states: *Identify heritage items and ensure they are protected from inappropriate development.*
- 90 As discussed, the Structure Plan and District Plan rules require that appropriate measures are taken to manage the effects of development on the one heritage item within the site - the historic McAuley Stone Cottage (denoted R18 on the Structure Plan). Consequently this particular objective and policy will be achieved.

- 91 Objective 3.2.4.5 states: *Preserve or enhance the natural character of the beds and margins of the District's lands, rivers and wetlands.* Supporting Policy 3.2.4.5.1 then states: *That subdivision and / or development which may have adverse effects on the natural character and nature conservation values of the District's lands rivers wetlands and their beds and margins be carefully managed so that life supporting capacity and natural character is maintained or enhanced.*
- 92 As mentioned, the riparian margin of Mill Stream is to be enhanced, as has been the case elsewhere along this watercourse within Millbrook. This will involve the planting of indigenous vegetation. As a result it is anticipated that the enhanced margins will facilitate the establishment of riparian fauna. Further, such planting will assist in improvement of water quality as it filters sediments and such like from naturally occurring overland drainage. This will be reinforced by the provision of gully planting as an additional means of filtering runoff.
- 93 For these reasons I conclude that the above objective and policy will be achieved.
- 94 3.2.5 Goal is that *'Our distinctive landscapes are protected from inappropriate development.'* Under this heading are three relevant objectives.
- 95 Objective 3.2.5.2 states: *Minimise the adverse landscape effects of subdivision, use or development in specified Rural Landscapes.* Attendant Policy 3.2.5.2.1 sets out to achieve this where it states: *Identify the district's Rural Landscape Classification on the district plan maps, and minimise the effects of subdivision, use and development on these landscapes.*
- 96 In the Proposed District Plan the subject land is identified as a 'Special Zone – Millbrook'. The surrounding land is zoned *RLC* or *Rural Landscape Classification*. Under the Operative Plan the subject land is zoned '*Rural General – Visual Amenity Landscape*' Regarding the Proposed Plan it appears that the site is not subject to any particular landscape classification or overlay with reference to Policy 3.2.5.2.1. Consequently regarding that particular policy, there is no requirement to *'...minimise the effects of subdivision, use and development on these landscapes.'*

- 97 Second Objective 3.2.5.3 states: *Direct new subdivision, use or development to occur in those areas which have the potential to absorb change without detracting from landscape and visual amenity values.* In serving this objective attendant Policy 3.2.5.3.1 focusses on urban development where it encourages growth within Urban Growth Boundaries (UGB) and existing rural townships. It is unclear what a rural township is, as they are not defined in the Plan. Nonetheless, the objective flags a key consideration; namely the ability of the landscape to absorb change and maintain visual amenity.
- 98 This matter has been addressed in the earlier discussion concerning landscape and visual effects. From that I conclude that the site setting in combination with the anticipated development subject to the various controls will be appropriately absorbed into the affected landscape. I note that according to the *Wharehuanui Landscape Study*<sup>25</sup> the subject site is rated 'moderate' in its ability to absorb change<sup>26</sup>.
- 99 Objective 3.2.5.4 is the third and final subject to the aforementioned goal. It states: *Recognise there is a finite capacity for residential activity in rural areas if the qualities of our landscape are to be maintained.* Policies 3.2.5.4.1 and 3.2.5.4.2 serve this objective where they respectively state: *Give careful consideration to cumulative effects in terms of character and environmental impact when considering residential activity in rural areas;* and, *Provide for rural living opportunities in appropriate locations.*
- 100 As discussed, the whole of Millbrook is located within a rural setting and in terms of its character arising from the proportion of built form to open space it is biased toward the rural end of the spectrum. In the discussion of Objective 3.2.2.1 [my paragraph 88] it is concluded that while the proposal contributes a cumulative effect, it is appropriate given the landscape and other conditions that constrain further growth. This effect is counterbalanced by Policy 3.2.5.4.2 which seeks to provide for rural living opportunities in appropriate locations. Regarding landscape and visual effects, what is proposed is acceptable and therefore appropriate, for the reasons I have given so far.

## Chapter 6 - Landscapes

<sup>25</sup> Prepared by Baxter Design Group January 2015 -

<sup>26</sup> Op cit: Appendix J

101 Under the heading '6.4.1 Application of the landscape provisions' it is stated:

*6.4.1.2 The landscape categories apply only to the Rural Zone. The Landscape Chapter and Strategic Direction Chapter's objectives and policies are relevant and applicable in all zones<sup>27</sup> where landscape values are at issue.*

102 Currently the site is subject to the proposed Rural Landscape Category (RLC), but as the proposed new Millbrook Resort Zone it would no longer be subject to any landscape category<sup>28</sup>. Nonetheless, the above cited rule does point out that Chapter 6 provisions apply to all zones '...where landscape values are at issue.' Those that I consider relevant are considered as follows in order of how they appear in the Chapter where they are relevant to the proposed re-zoning.

103 *6.3.1 Objective - The District contains and values Outstanding Natural Features, Outstanding Natural Landscapes, and Rural Landscapes that require protection from inappropriate subdivision and development. Supporting Policy 6.3.1.11 is relevant where it states: Recognise the importance of protecting the landscape character and visual amenity values, particularly as viewed from public places.*

104 As discussed, visual and landscape effects as appreciated from publically accessible vantage points have been considered in my evidence so far based on the photo-simulations and the assessment prepared by Baxter Group Landscape Architects. From this it is concluded that while there will be appreciably visible effects arising from the change in land use, these will not overwhelm the landscape character and visual amenity values of the site and its wider setting.

105 *6.3.2 Objective - Avoid adverse cumulative effects on landscape character and amenity values caused by incremental subdivision and development.*

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<sup>27</sup> My underline

<sup>28</sup> The other categories being ONL and ONF



- 106 *Policy 6.3.2.2 Allow residential subdivision and development only in locations where the District's landscape character and visual amenity would not be degraded.*

As discussed, while the landscape character and visual amenity of the site will change, it will exhibit high quality. In one sense this will be commensurate with that of the existing Millbrook environment. In another, the amenity derived from vegetated open space will continue, albeit in a different form to what exists presently. So effectively, the measure or degree of amenity will remain much the same even though it results from a different landscape – essentially amenity has been transferred from one source to another on equal terms. And as mentioned, much of the site's natural character will be enhanced as a consequence of development.

- 107 It should also be noted with regard to this particular policy that the Wharehauenui<sup>2930</sup> landscape report indicates that the subject site has the capacity to absorb change.

- 108 *Policy 6.3.2.3 Recognise that proposals for residential subdivision or development in the Rural Zone that seek support from existing and consented subdivision or development have potential for adverse cumulative effects. Particularly where the subdivision and development would constitute sprawl along roads.*

This matter has also been discussed where I conclude that the cumulative effects threshold of adverse effects will not be reached following re-zoning.

- 109 Concerning sprawl along roads, it is acknowledged that the new zone will advance westward alongside Malaghans Road. To counter any sprawl type effects that might arise from this, the built development is set well back from the road – some 200 metres in fact. Additionally, the buildings are to be arranged in 'organic' clusters infiltrated by swathes of vegetated open space.

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<sup>29</sup> Landscape Unit U6 - moderate ability to absorb change on plateau and low slopes. Low ability on uppermost hills and ridges.

<sup>30</sup>

Extensive landscaping in and around these will further counteract any sprawl effects. In combination all of these measures will result in the avoidance of potential adverse cumulative effects arising from westward growth of the resort.

110 *Policy 6.3.2.5 Ensure incremental changes from subdivision and development do not degrade landscape quality, character or openness as a result of activities associated with mitigation of the visual effects of proposed development such as screening planting, mounding and earthworks.*

111 As the quality of the proposed resort extension is expected to be high, no adverse amenity effects are anticipated requiring mitigation. Nonetheless, landscaping will involve mounding and planting, but only with a view to enhancing amenity and integration rather than providing mitigation. Otherwise any potential adverse character and amenity effects are avoided arising from very good overall design that in turn is supplemented via the proposed District Plan provisions for Millbrook.

112 *6.3.5 Objective - Ensure subdivision and development does not degrade landscape character and diminish visual amenity values of the Rural Landscapes (RLC).*

113 *Policy 6.3.5.1 Allow subdivision and development only where it will not degrade landscape quality or character, or diminish the visual amenity values identified for any Rural Landscape.*

Clause 6.2 *Values* briefly describes these for the Rural Landscape Classification (RLC) zone which mostly surrounds Millbrook. Of relevance it states: *The predominance of open space over housing and related domestic elements is a strong determinant of the character of the District's rural landscapes.* It then goes on to make the following observation: *The Rural Landscapes Classification (RLC) makes up the remaining Rural Zoned land and has varying types of landscape character and amenity values.*

114 As discussed, the proposed re-zoning and subsequent development will maintain a high degree of open space sympathetic with the kind existing in the surrounding RLC zone. As mentioned, the proposed District Plan sets a

maximum 5% site coverage for the whole of Millbrook<sup>31</sup> thereby resulting in a high proportion of open space to built form.

115 Further the proposal will be consistent with second observation made in the above cited clause – namely a varied rural landscape. In this regard the proposal does not introduce a new or alien use where for all intents and purposes it extends activity that otherwise informs the existing environment.

116 *Policy 6.3.5.2 Avoid adverse effects from subdivision and development that are:*

- *Highly visible from public places and other places which are frequented by members of the public generally (except any trail as defined in this Plan); and*
- *Visible from public roads.*

This matter has been addressed in some detail throughout the preceding evidence. Regarding objectives and policies which also address this matter, see also my paragraphs 95-96.

117 *Policy 6.3.5.3 Avoid planting and screening, particularly along roads and boundaries, which would degrade openness where such openness is an important part of the landscape quality or character.*

As shown on the Structure Plan planting of a scale that could result in screening is not indicated. This is especially so for any planting that might in its layout appear linear and therefore unnatural.

118 I note however that the Council's landscape architect is seeking what she refers to as a 'Roadside Planting Overlay' to be located alongside Malaghans Road. This overlay is to be shown on the Structure Plan and as Ms Ayres has indicated this is to be linear in its layout. Its purpose is to retain existing trees and if necessary replace them so as to screen buildings from those travelling Malaghans Road. The overlay shown by Ms Ayres could encourage a linear shelterbelt type layout. While I support the presence of trees along the

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<sup>31</sup> Chapter 43 Rule 43.5.9 Note: Non-complying activity status for anything exceeding that

frontage and indeed within the setback, my preference is for them to be arranged in an informal naturalistic manner – groupings or copses rather than what might appear to be a shelter belt running alongside the road. This would be better achieved if a requirement, perhaps in the form of a rule or notation on the Structure Plan that all trees within the landscape protection area (LP) shown alongside Malaghans Road be maintained and if necessary replaced.

119 In my opinion such an informal layout will better achieve Policies 6.3.5.3 and 6.3.2.5 (the latter concerning the cumulative effects of mitigation). Also, what will be visible from the road will not of itself introduce effects that warrant screening over and above that which is already in place. Fleeting glimpses are unlikely to be adverse but in any event, are able to be softened by the maintenance of existing informal planting, as discussed.

120 *Policy 6.3.5.4 Encourage any landscaping to be sustainable and consistent with the established character of the area.*

As noted, the character of the area is informed by the existing environment that Millbrook Resort, along with the surrounding rural land, contributes to. While the landscaping for the subject site will largely comprise indigenous plant species, its informal layout will for the most part be consistent with that of the surrounding environment. The use of locally sourced plants will also contribute to sustainability as they have evolved in the same or similar environment of the site.

121 *Policy 6.3.5.5 Encourage development to utilise shared accesses and infrastructure, to locate within the parts of the site where they will be least visible, and have the least disruption to the landform and rural character.*

122 As described the shared road access will be located in low terrain points so as to minimise their visibility. They will also align with natural gradients thereby responding to landform. Consequently the roads and other access ways such as those provided for golfers will appear naturalistic and integrated with their setting. Planting alongside and near these will also reinforce integration and visual screening.

- 123 *Policy 6.3.5.6 Have regard to the adverse effects from subdivision and development on the open landscape character where it is open at present.*

This matter has been traversed in the preceding commentary.

- 124 *6.3.8 Objective - Recognise the dependence of tourism on the District's landscapes.*

*Policy 6.3.8.1 Acknowledge the contribution tourism infrastructure makes to the economic and recreational values of the District.*

*Policy 6.3.8.2 Recognise that commercial recreation and tourism related activities locating within the rural zones may be appropriate where these activities enhance the appreciation of landscapes, and on the basis they would protect, maintain or enhance landscape quality, character and visual amenity values.*

- 125 The important matter arising from this suite of policies is that they recognise the contribution tourism activities make to the landscape character and amenity of the District. As discussed earlier, I made the observation in relation to golf courses and resorts that such activity is an expected component of the landscape. Consequently their presence in and as part of the landscape will not appear incongruous or surprising, particularly in areas of relatively low elevation.
- 126 Policy 6.3.8.1 also seeks enhanced appreciation of the landscape arising from recreational and tourism activity. Golf courses and their supporting activity are very much bound to the landscape; particularly where they capitalise on natural land form to provide the necessary challenges and variation expected of them. The setting, especially in the Wakatipu Basin, also contributes significantly to the overall amenity experience for participants. Unlike ski-ing such appreciation of the landscape occurs year round.

### **Summary of objectives and policies**

- 127 Overall it would appear that the proposed re-zoning is not contrary or inconsistent with the objectives and policies where they concern landscape

outcomes. From them it is clear that they seek to minimise change to the landscape, particularly that which would appear to deviate significantly from existing character and amenity – perhaps best summed up in 3.2.5 Goal ‘*Our distinctive landscapes are protected from inappropriate development.*’ The minimisation of adverse effects which may result in inappropriate development is further summed up in Objective 3.2.5.2 and Policy 3.2.5.2.1 that I cited earlier.

- 128 In essence, development can be accommodated provided it ‘fits in’ with the landscape of its setting. To this end the objectives and policies appear to be saying that the landscape’s capacity to absorb development is critical and this in turn is dependent on context. In this case the policy context recognises that the RLC zone is characteristically varied compared to other rural zones and so harbours the ability to accommodate a wider range of activity. The policies also recognise that tourism activity contributes to peoples’ expectations of what will occur in the landscape. Despite this, the policies also expect development to be integrated with its setting and not dominate it.
- 129 Based on the overall direction of the relevant objectives and policies, I conclude that the proposed re-zoning is entirely appropriate given the context of its setting.

## SUBMISSIONS

- 130 Of the submissions made in respect of Millbrook (Chapter 43) only those concerning landscape matters are addressed. In the discussion to follow I do not address activity status which I understand is a matter raised in a number of submissions including those made by Millbrook (MCCL #696). I am aware that the s42A report addresses those particular matters.
- 131 I understand that the landscape and amenity concerns raised by X-Ray Trust (# 356) have been resolved. I note too that the Council’s landscape architect supports the outcome arrived at in settling this submitter’s concerns.
- 132 I am also aware that according to the s42A report a number of submissions are beyond the scope of this hearing. I understand this is largely on the

grounds that the submitter seeks to include their adjoining land within the Millbrook Resort Zone.

- 133 Essentially that leaves two submission that raises landscape matters; being #14 Siddall / Tweedie and the other being #446 Donaldson.
- 134 Submission #14 is opposed to the proposed re-zoning or expansion of Millbrook in its entirety. Among the reasons cited is that it will adversely affect '*...the amenities of persons living within and in the vicinity of Millbrook.*' How it will do this is not elaborated upon. In any event, for the reasons I have traversed in my evidence so far and to follow, I am of the opinion that while change will occur this will not have a minor or more than minor adverse effect on existing residents within Millbrook. Fundamentally the very high amenity that characterises Millbrook will be maintained. Further, it is my observation that within Millbrook, and depending on the vantage point, there are sufficient large trees to obscure or ameliorate views toward the subject site. Importantly views and appreciation of the surrounding mountains will remain unhindered, especially from Streamside Lane where I understand these submitters have dwellings.
- 135 Submission #446 (Donaldson) owns land adjoining Millbrook – see **Graphic Attachment Figure 10**. From the submission I understand the relief sought is to rezone the submitter's land to that of either Millbrook Resort or Rural Lifestyle. Otherwise the submitter is concerned the proposed re-zoning will result in '*...adverse effects to us as neighbours directly on the boundaries with Millbrook.*' Regarding neighbours it is worth noting that these include X-Ray Trust (# 356) whose location in relation to the subject site is similar to that of Donaldson – see again **Graphic Attachment Figure 10**.
- 136 While the effects referred to in the submission are very general, I will nonetheless address these where they are visual in relation to the Donaldson site and in particular the approved dwelling location. Based on site circumstances – terrain, vegetation and the distances involved, it is my opinion that visual effects on them will be significantly less than minor for the following reasons.

- 137 I note that there is a low ridge just above the water race on Donaldson's land which will contribute to the screening of views toward the site. Further screening will be provided by the presence of existing and proposed planting.
- 138 The distance between the Donaldson's approved building platform and the nearest buildings on the subject site is 530 metres (245m approximately to X-Ray Trust dwelling). Consequently there is no chance that building domination could occur in respect of a dwelling on that platform or in its general vicinity, especially given that residences (R14, 15) cannot exceed 6.5m.<sup>32</sup> Assisting in providing for further visual integration of proposed residences is the intention to provide earth mounding and planting between these residences and the Donaldson property which will be in addition to the existing screening landforms – see Structure Plan and Photo Simulation from viewpoint 02.
- 139 Finally with respect to this submission, to reiterate the design guidelines in combination with the Structure Plan and proposed District Plan provisions set out to guarantee a very high level of amenity.
- 140 Turning to the submissions by Millbrook (MCCL #696) it is apparent from Ms Ayres landscape evidence and the s42A report<sup>33</sup> that there are matters yet to be resolved regarding how desired landscape outcomes might be delivered. It is evident to me that the Council's views are in general accord with mine where the overall intention is to achieve a very high level of amenity commensurate with the existing Millbrook environment. This takes into account the distinctive qualities of the site reflected in the proposed Plan provisions, Structure Plan and Design Guidelines.

#### **COUNCIL'S LANDSCAPE EVIDENCE<sup>34</sup>**

- 141 Generally it appears that the Council's landscape architect (Ms Hannah Ayres) is in principle, comfortable with the proposed re-zoning subject to

<sup>32</sup> Proposed Chapter 43 Rule 43.5.5.

<sup>33</sup> Prepared by Ms Ruth Evans

<sup>34</sup> Prepared by Ms Hannah Ayres ( Rough and Milne Landscape Architects Ltd)



some minor amendments to the Structure Plan and Millbrook Design Guidelines.

- 142 It is evident from Ms Ayres evidence that her chief concern centres on the visibility and apparent integration of buildings on the upper slopes of the site, particularly as viewed from Malaghans Road. To address this Ms Ayres has recommended two controls.

### **Road side trees**

- 143 The first involves providing a tree planting overlay alongside Malaghans Road<sup>35</sup> to be shown on the structure plan. The location and extent of this is shown on Ms Ayres Attachments B and C. This overlay is to show existing trees to be retained and replaced. She also recommends a rule (43.5.11) be amended ensuring these trees are maintained and if necessary replaced. This matter I have addressed in my paragraph 118 where I agree that it would be desirable to maintain trees within the LP area alongside Malaghans Road.
- 144 The continued presence and dominance of these trees would counterbalance that of any visible buildings, particularly on the upper slopes.
- 145 Regarding this matter, it is also worth bearing in mind that the posted speed limit on Malaghans Road opposite the subject site is 100kph. The visibility of buildings, or more accurately parts thereof, on the upper slopes will appear as fleeting glimpses from the point of view of travellers.

### **Building design**

- 146 Ms Ayres also seeks to amend the design guidelines so as to alter the appearance of dwellings. She explains why in her paragraph 6.14 which states:

*I am generally comfortable with the general direction of the amended Millbrook Design Guidelines, although for those R Activity Areas on the upper slopes I do believe there should be some deviation from the typical Millbrook steeply pitched roof lines with gable ends and chimneys, to more*

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<sup>35</sup> See her paragraph 11.6

*innovative forms that better suit the surrounding topography. The upper slopes of the Dalglish Farm are unique in Millbrook, and therefore I consider they are far more sensitive to landscape, visual and ridgeline effects. I feel that in this unique context it would not disrupt the Millbrook vernacular to enable (through the guidelines) roof lines that blend themselves more effectively in the landscape.*

- 147 In response to this it is my opinion that there is no need to alter the roof lines as suggest by Ms Ayres. The reasons are:
- a. It is more important to maintain stylistic consistency across Millbrook as this better maintains landscape coherence.
  - b. As Photo-simulation shows in addition to the poles erected on site, only the gable ends of two dwellings are visible from Malaghans Road at that particular vantage point.
  - c. The trees required to be maintained within the LP area will contribute screening of the gable ends. As they grow screening will be enhanced, which may be bolstered by the planting of additional vegetation as part and parcel of landscaping undertaken in development of the site.

- 148 As a result it is my opinion that the roof lines as proposed by Millbrook will not result in any minor or more than minor visual effects.

**149 Plant species list**

- 150 Finally Ms Ayres has recommended that the plant species list that Millbrook seeks via their response to the X-Ray Trust submission to be included in Chapter 43 of the District Plan be located in the Millbrook Design Guidelines. I agree that this could be a better method of managing planting rather than relying on the Council to administer this. Regarding this however, I am aware

that further consideration is being given by others as to how the guidelines are to be implemented in concert with the District Plan. I believe the options are either that they appended to the Plan, or stand alone. I note that the s42A recommendation supports standalone guidelines but I defer to the expertise of others as to whether these elements are in or stand outside the Plan.

- 151 Regarding this, I also understand that the Council seeks to require the Millbrook Design Guidelines, via proposed Rule 43.3.2.3, be submitted to the Council prior to any development.

## **CONCLUSION**

- 152 Returning to the landscape issues that I identified earlier in my evidence; it is my opinion that none present insurmountable impediments to the proposed re-zoning.
- 153 The subject site is not subject to RMA s6 (a) or (b) matters.
- 154 Salient natural features such as Mill Stream and prominent land forms will be maintained and enhanced in their natural state.
- 155 The one recognised heritage feature is protected and appropriately accommodated in the Structure Plan and relevant District Plan provisions.
- 156 Amenity will be high despite being derived from a new source following development of the site. In this regard it is my opinion that amenity in Millbrook presently is very high and that this will continue into the subject site. I would also expect my peers and non-experts to generally agree.
- 157 While land use will change, the proposed re-zoning and subsequent development will more or less maintain existing landscape patterns. This is particularly so with regard to the generous provision of vegetated open space, small scale building development which is well integrated into its landscape setting.

- 158 Finally the proposed re-zoning will not be contrary to what people expect to occur within the immediate environs of Millbrook.
- 159 Nor is the proposal contrary to any of the proposed District Plan objectives and policies. My analysis of these is such that I am confident the landscape outcomes anticipated by these will be readily achieved. Further 'tweaking' of the rules and Millbrook Design Guidelines via this Plan process will certainly cement these outcomes thereby providing certainty that desired landscape character and amenity will result.
- 160 I note too that there are no submissions (excepting that by X-Ray Trust #356 since settled) that raise in any substantive way landscape character and amenity issues that would impede re-zoning.
- 161 Finally, it is evident from the Council's landscape evidence and s42A report that the proposed re-zoning is generally supported subject to recommended amendments to some of the Plan provisions.
- 162 Overall, it is my opinion that the proposed re-zoning will result in a very high amenity environment that is entirely appropriate within the context of both its landscape and statutory setting. Although the landscape will change, it does not automatically follow that change alone generates adverse effects. In my opinion there will be no adverse effects, as these have all been avoided through the proposed Plan provisions, Structure Plan and amended Millbrook Design Guidelines. The effects therefore, are entirely positive.

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**Andrew Craig** – *Landscape Architect*



Dated: 3 February 2017

BEFORE THE HEARINGS PANEL  
FOR THE PROPOSED QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT PLAN

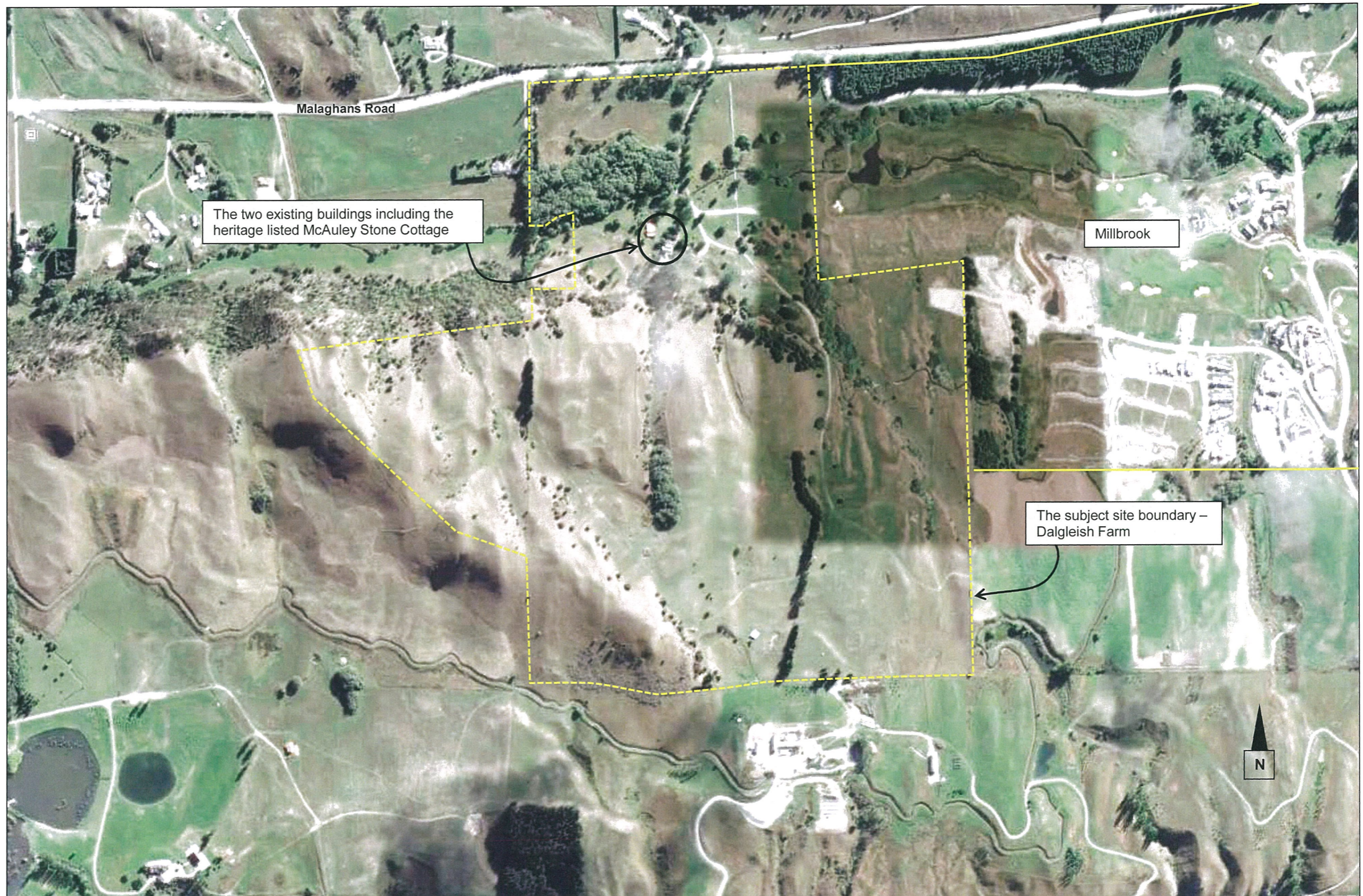
IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

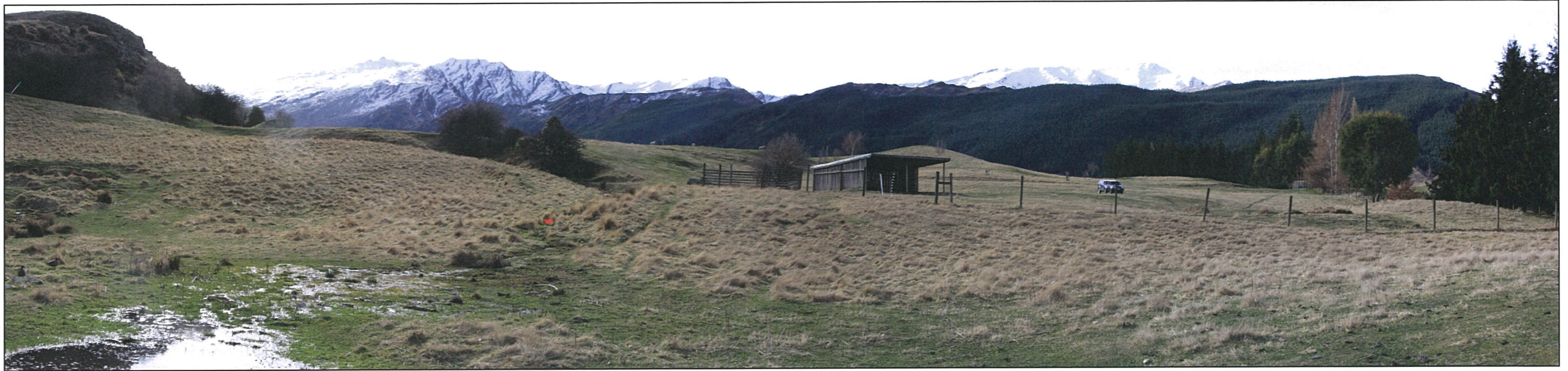
IN THE MATTER of Resort Zone Hearing Stream 9 – Millbrook Zone

STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF ANDREW WILLIAM CRAIG ON BEHALF OF MILLBROOK COUNTRY CLUB LIMITED

LANDSCAPE GRAPHIC ATTACHMENT



**Figure 1** Aerial photograph showing the location and extent of the subject site (Dalgleish Farm). Also shown are existing building locations



**Figure 2** Existing landscape character of the upper reaches of the site.



**Figure 3** The landscape character of the site as seen from Malaghans Road.  
The western site boundary corresponds with the driveway visible in the foreground.



**Figure 4** *Mill Creek which runs through the subject site and into Millbrook Resort. The creek will be ecologically enhanced. The water pipeline seen in the background will be removed.*





**Figure 5** *The hillocks that demarcate the western site boundary. These will be included in the landscape protection area.*

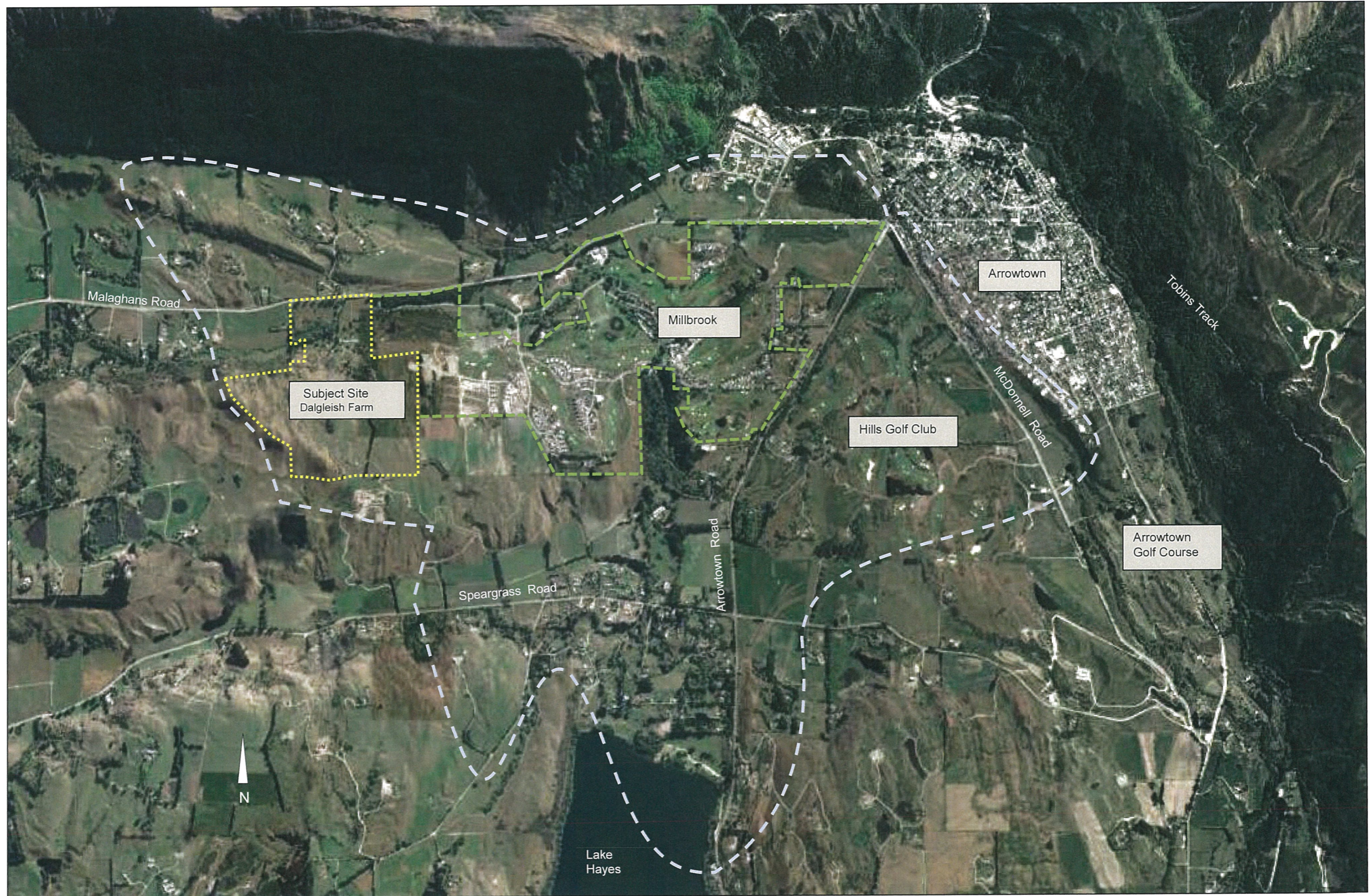


**Figure 6** *The pipeline that crosses the site is one of the few existing physical features. It will be removed once development proceeds.*



Map source: Macauley Land Base Plan prepared by Clark Fortune McDonald & Associates

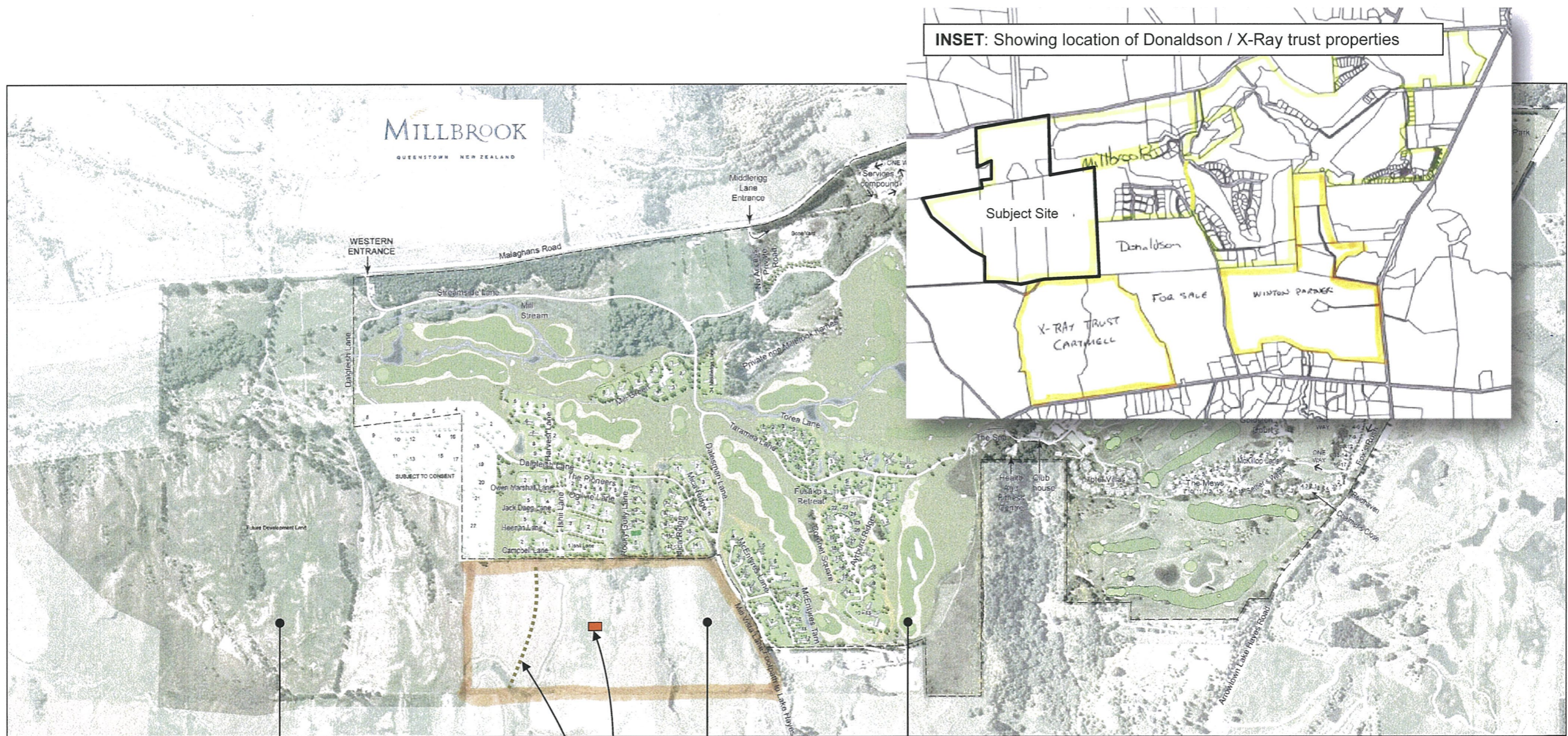
Figure 7 Map showing the major landform features on the subject site.



**Figure 8** The approximate extent of the receiving environment denoted by the dashed pale blue line, being that where visual effects are potentially significant. The site is visible from further afield, but the distance is such that the visual effects will be insignificant. Tobins Track and Coronet ski field are examples of the latter.



**Figure 9** Aerial photograph showing the points from which the graphic attachment photographs and photo-simulations viewpoints [VP] were taken.



Subject Site (Dalglish Farm)

ridge – screens view of subject site

Approximate location of approved building platform

Donaldson land

Millbrook

Figure 10 Location of Donaldson Land (submission #446)