

# FRANKTON FLATS PRELIMINARY LANDSCAPE REPORT



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 I have been commissioned by the Queenstown Lakes District Council to comment on the Frankton Flats Zone and surroundings, which is located on the Frankton Flats directly to the north east of the residential area of Frankton. The proposed Zone and can be seen on Map 31 and 31a of the Queenstown Lakes District Council's Planning Maps. The area is currently zoned as Rural General.

1.2 The brief provided by the Queenstown Lakes District Council outlined the following issues that are to be commented on specifically within this report:

- (i) The classification of the landscape containing the site of the Frankton Flats Zone and immediate surrounds.
- (ii) Whether there is any landscape merit in zoning the land adjacent to the Airport as Rural General.
- (iii) The treatment of zone boundary with the State Highway and whether this will achieve the desired landscape outcomes.
- (iv) A further deliverable outside of this report is a site visit to determine the main vista of the landscape that needs to be captured through the road layout of the Zone. This would involve a site visit with a traffic engineer that may be a representative of Transit.

1.3 This report is divided into the following headings that aim to address the issues within the brief above.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION
2. LANDSCAPE CLASSIFICATION
3. TREATMENT OF BOUNDARY ADJACENT TO STATE HIGHWAY
4. ANALYSIS OF RURAL GENERAL LAND ADJACENT TO AIRPORT
5. CONCLUSION

## 2. LANDSCAPE CLASSIFICATION

2.1 As stated in the Explanation and Principal Reasons for Adoption of Objective 1:

*“Frankton Flats is located at the entrance to Queenstown, and as such provide a first impression of the Queenstown urban environment. The Frankton Flats area so adjoins the airport, the events centre, the industrial zone and, to the south of the airport runway, the Remarkables Park Zone and land to the north of State Highway 6.*

2.2 Looking at planning map 31, it is evident that the vast majority of the landmass that comprises the Frankton Flats has been zoned for a use other than rural and will be non rural in appearance. This includes 150 hectares of land zoned for Remarkables Park (includes commercial and suburban character), the Airport Mixed use zone (airport terminal and air hangars, maintenance buildings), the Queenstown Events Centre and Frankton Golf course (which has a recreation designation), the low density residential zoning of Frankton (that appears suburban) and the industrial land of the Glenda Drive Industrial Estate. While the Events Centre has a rural general zoning, it no longer appears rural due to the scale of the Events Centre building and proposed swimming pool complex, urban style entrance, car parks and large lights associated with outdoor sports activities. The area that still appears rural is located either side of the Queenstown airport and the subject site itself.

2.3 The landscape character that has provided this area with a high level of visual amenity has been eroded to the point where the characteristics of a visual amenity landscape (i.e. the pastoral scene) is no longer dominant. While it is recognised that it is the intention of the Frankton Flats Zone to retain a corridor of pastoral land of high amenity adjacent to the State Highway, it is not considered that the overall character (when looking at the Frankton Flats as a landscape) will be rural. Rezoning this area for a mixed use Zone would replace this rural landscape character with a more urbanised character, therefore the question has been asked – what is the best use of this land? Should this area remain rural or should its connection to the urban form of Queenstown be recognised?

- 2.4 In the Hawthorn decision C83/2004<sup>1</sup> the Environment Court surmised that if the cultural character is dominant over the majority of the landscape, then as the landscape character is cultural rather than natural, then the landscape is an other rural landscape. It also discussed the occurrence of a remnant landscape that is a minority area that has been left undeveloped. The Frankton Flats is a similar scenario to what happened in the Domain Road Triangle, with the exception of the fact that the developed character has largely been the result of areas zoned for different activities being developed accordingly rather than consented concentrated development within the rural general zone.
- 2.5 As landscape classification is not a zone, a landscape can overlay areas zoned for different activities as is the case of the Frankton Flats – where the Flats are considered to be one landscape that has clear topographical boundaries. The Ladies Mile/Morven Slope Hill area has a different landscape character again that is more rural in appearance.
- 2.6 The Environment Court has discussed the appropriate scale for a landscape; however this is to be applied loosely:
- That evidence suggests that in most circumstances in the district a flat area that has the following characteristics may begin to be considered as a separate landscape:
- (a) it must contain at least one (preferably more) rectangle with at least 1.5 x 2 kilometre sides;
  - (b) no part of the landscape may be more than 1 kilometre from such a rectangle;
  - (c) it must contain a minimum area of 600 hectares;
  - (d) internal corners should be rounded.
- 2.7 Given these guidelines, the Frankton Flats is large enough to be considered a landscape, yet when considering the dominant character of this area (a mix of industrial, commercial, recreational and rural) there is no overall cohesion to the Frankton Flats Area – with the rural land a smaller remnant landscape surrounded by land that was not rural.
- 2.8 In the landscape classification of Jacks Point, with regard to remnant landscapes the Court considered the following:<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Environment Court Decision C83/2004 paragraph 28-35

<sup>2</sup>C90/2005 Paragraph 45

*“The more appropriate approach is to determine the extent of the landscape of which the land in question is a part, to determine what effect any actual or potential urbanisation has on that landscape, and to determine what the landscape classification of that landscape is in terms of the categories in section 4 of the plan. If the total landscape is not outstanding natural landscape or Visual Amenity Landscape, any rural part of another landscape should be classified as Other Rural Landscape to address the requirements of section 5 of the district plan”*

- 2.9 I agree with this approach of landscape classification. Applying this to the land, the urbanisation that has occurred through the Airport, and the Events Centre (both in Rural General) has eroded the natural qualities of the landscape. The surrounding commercial and industrial land of Frankton Low Density Residential, Remarkables Park – and at the north eastern end the Glenda Drive Industrial Estate, has created a cultural overlay that dominates the Frankton Flats. For this reason I consider that the rural land adjoining the Frankton Flats is not a visual amenity landscape and is not outstanding natural landscape and therefore falls in to the category of other rural landscape. Were the Council to re-zone the Frankton Flats into a zone that had commercial, industrial or low to high density residential components, then the remnant landscape would decrease further and would be even more likely to be considered as an other rural landscape.

### **3. TREATMENT OF BOUNDARY ADJACENT TO STATE HIGHWAY**

- 3.1 Previous advice to the Council has been that a green corridor should be retained along the boundary of Frankton Flats and State Highway 6. The purpose of this is twofold.

- 1) To create a landscaped corridor that acts as a method of increasing the visual amenity and a sense of arrival into the destination of Queenstown. This corridor would reduce the prominence of the built form associated with the Frankton Flats Zone, while creating a natural foreground to the grandeur of the Remarkables.
- 2) To retain the view of the outstanding natural landscape of the Remarkables from the State Highway.

- 3.2 The Council has indicated through the Entrances to Queenstown document that they would prefer to keep the planting to low lying natives and shrubs so that the view of the Remarkables is unimpeded. I consider that a natural foreground and will aid in screening the development area and will complement the backdrop of the Remarkables. A setback is an appropriate method of achieving this. This could allow for the provision of a pedestrian access/ cycleway a safe distance from the State Highway in a pleasant setting.
- 3.3 The area of Frankton Flats that has been rezoned has a setback from the State Highway of 50 metres and this setback will contain a pedestrian/cycleway. I consider the size of this buffer (being 50 metres) is small; however I concede that this site is closer to the urban form of Frankton and is not as connected to the rural landscape as the proposed rezoning site. With regard to the proposed rezoning area, the buffer should be of a greater size to enable both views of the Remarkables and an enhanced amenity on the approach to Queenstown.
- 3.4 I consider 80 - 150 metres would be appropriate, however this needs refinement to ensure that the buffer area is neither too small nor too large (i.e. potential development space is not wasted or conversely, the buffer being of insufficient size to achieve the desired outcome of protecting views of the Remarkables and an important view of Morven Hill to the east. This needs more accurate consideration during the next phase of assessment. I would suggest using a surveying company that can ensure the height restriction and setback maintained sufficient view of the Remarkables. The landscape in the foreground already influences views of the base of the mountain.
- 3.5 The Council has the opportunity to create a sense of arrival through landscaping of the land adjacent to the SH6. Unfortunately the long view of the "U" shaped valley down the southern arm of the Lake towards Kingston would be lost.

#### **4. ANALYSIS OF RURAL GENERAL LAND ADJACENT TO AIRPORT**

- 4.1 The Council have also asked me to consider the land adjacent to the airport and whether there is any benefit on landscape terms in maintaining rural land adjacent to the Queenstown Airport.
- 4.2 The airport terminal is already connected to residential and commercial development to the west and south; therefore the land in question is to the north on either side of the runways.
- 4.3 Rural General Land adjacent to the Airport will not be visible from the State Highway if the land in the foreground is developed through a rezoning. The two main views of this area are gained when flying out and in to Queenstown, and from the terminal building when waiting to leave or for a flight to come in.
- 4.4 The foreground view from the airport terminal is currently typified by flat and relatively open pasture, with occasional exotic trees for shade and amenity. Currently, along or close to the Remarkables Park boundary is a large long mound of earth which reduces the visibility of the Remarkables Park land.
- 4.5 The view of the farmland forms a relatively natural foreground to the Remarkables, the Crown terrace with Morven Hill in the Foreground and Ferry hill to the east.
- 4.6 I understand there is a private agreement with regards to the Remarkables Park land that has resulted in a potential 200m buffer from the airport boundary. This is a private agreement outside of the District Plan and could change without any input from the Council, however matching this or a similar setback on the Frankton Flats side of the Airport would create a consistent approach and an appropriate buffer to allow for landscaping or retention of "rurality".
- 4.7 I consider that a buffer area similar to that proposed by Remarkables Park would be appropriate. This area would not have to be innately rural and would not need a rural general zoning, but does need to be landscaped with a high degree of green space – a green corridor that performs a visual buffer for those entering Queenstown and a buffer

for noise sensitive areas is important. Any built form in this area should if possible be of a low form, allowing the green landscaped character to dominate.

- 4.8 Remarkables Park has rural, recreational and infrastructural activities in this area. I consider that there needs to be more cohesion on the subject land that could be offered by creating rules that relate to landscaping to ensure a unifying theme.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

### **Classification**

- 5.1 I consider that the rural general land within the Frankton Flats area (contained by Glenda Drive across to the Residential area of Frankton and to the Remarkables Park area adjacent to the Kawarau River) is a remnant landscape that is surrounded on all but one side by residential, commercial and industrial development. These surrounding activities have reduced the rural amenity of the remaining rural general Land. With Councils planned zone change to the Frankton Flats area, the area of Rural General within the larger Frankton Flats area will be surrounded by non rural land within which it is not possible to retain rural amenity, due to the density of development. This remnant rural general landscape has an other rural landscape classification due to the fact the landscape character will not have sufficient amenity to be protected as a visual amenity landscape under section 7 of the RMA. This however is still an important landscape due to its location at the eastern entrance to Queenstown.

### **Setback**

- 5.2 Establishing a setback from State highway will retain the important vista of the Remarkables. It is important that this is not a hard line, but is more organic to create a softer line of development when viewed from the Road – this will also allow for the retention of important views such as the view across the site to Morven Hill, and also of the Remarkables.
- 5.3 It is of crucial importance to establish view corridors that can be maintained through the design layout of the road system within the Frankton Flats Zone. The main access into the subdivision will also provide an important view corridor towards the Remarkables. If possible emphasis should be placed on the orientation of this access way to gain the

most visual benefits from the road location. This thought process needs to be in the foremost of the minds of the developers before any road network becomes inflexible in this regard. For this reason I think it would be beneficial to conduct a site visit with a traffic engineer/Zone planners and/or developers to establish a way that this could be incorporated into the Zone.

### **Rural General adjacent to the airport**

- 5.4 Vistas of any rural general land adjacent to the airport will not be appreciated from the State Highway; however it would be viewed when flying in and out of Queenstown and from the Airport Terminal building. As this is another point of arrival into Queenstown, the land either side of the airport is important. In my opinion, this area does not need to be traditionally rural in character and does not need to retain a rural general zoning, but development should be dominated and screened by a natural green character (i.e. a mixture of trees or grasses). This area needs to be of high amenity as this area will be one of the first impressions of Queenstown.

**Other suggestions when developing Frankton Flats Zone:**

- Maintenance and protection of views across the site to the mountain peaks beyond when viewed from the State Highway.
  - Requiring the external appearance, bulk and location of buildings to have regard to landscape values
  - Requiring development in accordance with a structure plan so that the impact on landscape values is mitigated.
  - Height limit on trees within the State Highway landscape corridor to maintain views of the mountain peaks beyond (or limit the number of taller trees within this area).
  - Ensuring that the visual amenity values of the eastern entrance to Queenstown are not compromised.
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**Report Prepared by**

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# FRANKTON FLATS LANDSCAPE REPORT INDUSTRIAL AREA: ADJACENT TO AIRPORT



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

1. I have been commissioned by the Queenstown Lakes District Council to comment on the effect of an industrial area within the Frankton Flats Zone situated adjacent to the Queenstown Airport. This report follows a previous report titled "Frankton Flats: Preliminary Landscape Report" which considered the landscape classification of the site, the zoning of the land adjacent to the Airport and the treatment of the zone boundary and SH 6. The proposed Zone can be seen on Map 31 and 31a of the Queenstown Lakes District Council's Planning Maps. The area is currently zoned as Rural General.
2. The brief provided by the Queenstown Lakes District Council outlined the following issues that are to be commented on specifically within this report:

- Assess the amenity of an industrial area adjacent to the airport designation.
- Mitigation techniques that would promote a high level of amenity for this area.
- Any recommendations to assist in the master planning of this area.

3. This report is divided into the following headings that aim to address the issues within the brief above.
  1. INTRODUCTION
  2. EFFECTS ON AMENITY
  3. MITIGATION TECHNIQUES & RECOMMENDATIONS
  4. CONCLUSION

### EFFECTS ON AMENITY

4. Were the Council to develop the land adjacent to the airport for industrial, the effects as mentioned previously would largely be on views from the terminal building and when flying in and out of Queenstown Airport. These views are important as they form the first impression for visitors arriving in Queenstown by flight.

5. The views afforded from the terminal building consist of foreground views of the outstanding natural landscape of the Remarkables to the south east. Views of the outstanding natural features of Slope Hill to the North West and Morven Hill to the north east are the prominent forms within the middle ground of the Wakatipu basin, with the outstanding natural landscape forming the background containment (including the mountains of Coronet Peak and the Crown Range). This is an extremely impressive view.
6. The introduction of industrial in to this area could have an adverse effect on amenity if appropriate consideration is not given to amenity planting. My main areas of concern are:
  - The detracting from views gained currently from the airport terminal,
  - The lack of softening or “greening” of views from the air of any future airport industrial area.
  - Treatment of the boundary between the industrial area and any other precinct of the Frankton Flats.
  - The internal amenity within the new industrial zone.

#### MITIGATION TECHNIQUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7. My previous report detailed the possibility of a landscaped buffer between the runways and the edge of the industrial area. The width of this was previously suggested to be 200 metres as that is the width provided by Remarkables Park (on the southern side of the runway). This width could be reduced, however should be thick enough to provide some low shrubs adjoining the airport, with an avenue of trees of greater height (depending on any limitations prescribed for safety for aircraft) adjoining the industrial area. This could appear more natural when looking from the airport runway, and more formal on the industrial side of the buffer. This will provide a green cover which will soften the visibility of the industrial area, and tie the foreground landscape in with the outstanding landscape that forms the backdrop.
8. These trees would also form a cover from the air, however this should be bolstered by ensuring that the streetscape is planned to include greenery including trees evenly

spaced on either side of any main road. I also consider the provision of trees within individual lots to be important. The combination of these trees through out the zone will soften the appearance of the industrial area from the air. Building materials should be muted to reduce reflectivity and prominence from the air.

9. More low lying shrubs, grasses and small trees should be encouraged to provide screening and increased amenity of the parking areas that will be necessary. These do not take up a considerable amount of room, yet provide instant amenity.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- A landscaped buffer strip should be designed and implemented by the Council to screen the industrial area and maintain the high amenity currently associated with views from the airport. This is of high importance given the fact that this is the first impression gained by the public on arrival at Queenstown Airport.
- Buildings bordering the airport runway should be softened by a green landscaped area so that surrounding views are not detracted from.
- The exterior treatment of buildings within the industrial zone should be muted and roofs should be of low reflectivity.
- A landscape plan should be provided for the outline development plan process within the Industrial area to provide streetscape amenity and a tidy appearance to the industrial area.
- A landscape plan should be submitted at landuse stage to show how any areas of parking/rubbish/storage areas are suitably screened to ensure visual amenity within the industrial zone.
- It may be considered appropriate to ensure that each Lot provides one tree within their site to build up amenity within the industrial area. Each tree should be 3m at the time of planting and staked following good horticultural practice.
- Treatment of the transition area between the industrial zone and any adjoining commercial/residential precinct to ensure no loss of amenity is experienced within the neighbouring area. Methods of mitigating the effects of lighting, noise, traffic, and speed of traffic and the visual aspects of the industrial area should be considered when dealing with this area. Some of this could be achieved through planting and the use of mounds to reduce noise; however location and design of

elements such as arterial roads, rules controlling lux spill and other methods also need to be considered.

## **CONCLUSION**

10. The land next to the airport could be utilised for industrial purposes, however it is crucial that consideration is given to the integration of this zoning into the land so that the quality of view currently experienced on entering and exiting Queenstown by air is not degraded.
  11. I consider that the Council should design and implement the buffer area between the airport and the industrial area to ensure a high level of both screening and amenity is achieved.
  12. Landscaping must be carried through into the street plans and individual lots within the industrial area to ensure that greening occurs, and this must be considered in the design phase (at the time of the outline development plan), rather than as an afterthought, therefore this needs to be carried through into the plan as rules and assessment matters.
  13. Building materials should be muted to reduce reflectivity and prominence from the air.
  14. Consideration needs to be given to any adjoining commercial/residential precinct so that any adverse effects associated with the industrial area (whether associated with noise, traffic or visual amenity) are contained or mitigated.
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