

**BEFORE THE HEARING PANEL
AT QUEENSTOWN**

UNDER the Resource Management Act 1991 ("**RMA**")

IN THE MATTER of the Proposed Te Pūtahi Ladies Mile Plan Variation
to the Queenstown Lakes Proposed District Plan
(**"Variation"**)

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF JAMES ARTHUR BENTLEY ON BEHALF OF
QUEENSTOWN COUNTRY CLUB VILLAGE LIMITED**

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL

20 OCTOBER 2023

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 My name is James Arthur Bentley. I am employed as a landscape architect at Boffa Miskell.
- 1.2 This evidence relates to the submission of the Queenstown Country Club Village Limited which sought various amendments to the Te Pūtahi Ladies Mile Variation ("**TPLM**") to the Queenstown Lakes District Council Proposed District Plan including in relation to the proposed Building Restriction Area (BRA).
- 1.3 My evidence focuses on the appropriateness of the BRA (75m) proposed on the southern side of SH6/Ladies-Mile from a landscape perspective. It outlines the relevant background to the development of the 75m setback for the Queenstown Country Club ("**QCC**") site, describes the vision for Te Pūtahi Ladies Mile and considers the justification for the 75m in achieving this vision.
- 1.4 I consider that there is insufficient landscape justification for the retention of the 75m setback on the QCC site. The context of the QCC site has changed and the proposed future urban environment for Ladies Mile does not warrant relying on the past QCC consent.
- 1.5 The only justification appears to be that the 75m BRA width has already been considered as part of a resource consent process, is virtually built and greatly assists to achieve the Master Plan principles and landscape values of the area. This could be seen that the TPLM is 'borrowing' the large setbacks and amenity of QCC. In my view, it is how the corridor works as a whole. Therefore, it does not make sense that a larger setback is warranted where lower density development is located (QCC land) and that a narrower setback is required where proposed buildings are taller and more densely located.
- 1.6 Reducing the QCC BRA to 25m coupled with other provisions concerning a high-quality development outcome will also continue to protect views, provide a level of spaciousness and maintain a consistent landscape character of the SH6/ Ladies Mile corridor.
- 1.7 Whilst built form will appear closer to SH6/Ladies Mile, landscape values will still be retained, albeit considered within a more urban context. In my view, this reduced setback will not erode the existing amenity aspects of the corridor, and in many ways, reinforce a consistent setback width experienced. Furthermore, I am of the view that maintaining a grazed parcel of land on the QCC site within a more manicured and urban context created by TPLM would

appear out of character and out of context to what the TPLM Structure Plan is trying to achieve.

- 1.8 Overall, the landscape outcomes sought through the TPLM Variation can be achieved through a reduced setback of 25m along the QCC site.

2. INTRODUCTION

Qualifications and Experience

- 2.1 My full name is James Arthur Bentley.
- 2.2 I am an Associate Partner Landscape Architect at Boffa Miskell Limited, a national firm of consulting planners, ecologists and landscape architects.
- 2.3 I am a registered member (NZ, 2010) of the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects (NZILA) as well as an elected chartered member (London, 2002) of the British Landscape Institute (CMLI). I hold a post-graduate diploma (2000) in Landscape Architecture as well as a Bachelor of Arts with Honours Degree in Landscape Architecture (1998) from the Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education (now the University of Gloucestershire) in the UK. I am also a member of the Resource Management Law Association (RMLA).
- 2.4 I have practised as a landscape architect for over 20 years on a wide range of projects including landscape and visual effects assessments, landscape and natural character studies and research projects. Many of these projects have been within the Queenstown context, and many relate to the development of the Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) proposed District Plan, including, most recently, the Priority Area Landscape Schedules for Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes. In addition to this, I also lecture at Lincoln University to third year students on landscape planning matters.
- 2.5 In 2016 I, along with my colleague Jane Rennie, worked on and prepared evidence to a hearings panel concerning the application by Sanderson Group Limited for a comprehensive development including retirement village, care facilities and housing adjacent to Lake Hayes Estate and Shotover Country and referred to as Queenstown Country Club (QCC). The QCC proposal in 2016 was considered under the Housing Accords and Special Housing Areas Act 2013 ("**HASHAA**").

2.6 In this matter, I was engaged by Queenstown Country Club Village Limited to specifically address the 75m Building Restriction Area (BRA) or setback, as proposed by QLDC along part of the southern section of SH6 (Ladies Mile) associated with the QCC land, as part of their proposed Te Pūtahi Ladies Mile Plan Variation.

Code of conduct

2.7 I confirm that I have read the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses contained in the latest Environment Court Practice Note 2023 and that I agree to comply with it. I confirm that I have considered all the material facts that I am aware of that might alter or detract from the opinions that I express, and that this evidence is within my area of expertise, except where I state that I am relying on the evidence of another person.

2.8 I also confirm that I have read the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects Code of Conduct, amended 17 May 2023 and I will comply with it.

3. SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

3.1 My evidence relates to the submission¹ of Queenstown Country Club Village Limited, which sought various amendments to the Variation including in relation to the proposed Building Restriction Area. My evidence focuses on the appropriateness of the Building Restriction Area (75m) proposed on the Southern side of the Ladies-Mile.

3.2 In preparing my evidence, I have reviewed the following reports/evidence:

- (a) Statement of Evidence of Stephen Russel Skelton dated 29 September 2023.
- (b) Landscape Assessment Report, dated 2 June 2022, authored by Stephen Skelton of Patch Limited.
- (c) Statement of Evidence of Stuart James Dunn dated 29 September 2023.
- (d) Statement of Evidence of Roland Bruce Harland dated 29 September 2023.
- (e) Section 42 report, prepared by Jeffrey Andrew Brown.

¹ Submitter 106.

(f) QLDC Proposed District Plan.

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 As outlined, I, along with my urban design colleague, Jane Rennie, worked on the original QCC proposal in 2016/2017. As part of that work, I focussed on landscape (and visual) effects of the proposed retirement village, specifically focussing on rural character effects. QCC was the first comprehensively designed development on the 'upper terrace' and at grade to the SH6/Ladies Mile transport corridor. It was considered under a rural zoning in the QLDC District Plan at the time.

4.2 Specific consideration in the application and during the 2017 HASHAA hearing focussed on the setback from SH6/ Ladies Mile. Within the 2016 Design Statement and associated Assessment concerning the setback, I outlined the following:

- a) There is an acknowledgement that rural character, that was currently experienced will not be retained, however, the QCC will be building on the transitional landscape character that has already occurred with Shotover Country and Lake Hayes Estate.
- b) Sensitive treatment and to maintain a sense of openness to the rural character of the Frankton – Ladies Mile Highway, a 75m setback is proposed which comprises open paddocks, orchard planting as well as a double avenue of trees along the highway corridor. The main bulk of the development will be located approximately 120m from the highway. This will assist to retain a semblance of rural character, reflective of the parts of the broader area.
- c) This setback will assist to visually soften the built forms, but not screen them. It will create a setback that enables views of the Remarkables to still be obtained.
- d) The clustered villas within the orchard have been architecturally designed to showcase typical Otago rural dwellings. Planting will assist to visually soften the buildings. Limited use of fencing will amplify openness. Any fencing used will be post and rail. No mounding or bunding is considered appropriate.
- e) Open space would equate to 3.3 hectare and used for rural land uses such as grazing. This would extend approximately 50 metres from the

edge of the avenue to the proposed orchard tree planting. The orchard would extend for another 50 metres with clusters of rural styled dwellings set within the trees. Strategically placed evergreen plantings would screen views of the internal site from Ladies Mile. This 'layered' planting design approach would create the landscape character and appearance of an attractive rural residential environment with partial views of rural-styled residential clusters when seen from along Ladies Mile.



Figure 1: The Master Plan of the QCC site and BRA

- f) Central to the northern site frontage will be an architecturally designed club house, rising to 10m in height. This single-storey building will be a central feature to the development and clearly evident from Ladies Mile. It will be softened by proposed orchard and tree planting. Materials will be natural stone, in keeping with the Queenstown vernacular.

4.3 I also outline the following, contained in my evidence to the hearing panel:²

As already touched on earlier, the 75m setback distance of buildings from Ladies Mile will ensure that there is an aspect of rural character being maintained along this important transport corridor. Paddocks and an open character allowing for views towards the surrounds and the mountains will reinforce to some degree the rural aspects of this corridor. The orchard planting will provide a visual softening to the proposed villas and the club house will act as a local reference point along this corridor.

² Statement of Evidence of James Bentley, dated 9 December 2016, paragraph 17.

Design controls on the architecture and a strict building palette will ensure that any buildings visible will suit the local vernacular. Ms. Smetham agrees with this.

- 4.4 In their Interim Decision dated 13 March 2017, the panel hearing the application stated the following concerning the setback:³

We accept that the setback from Ladies Mile to the first row of the main development area in the retirement village is approximately 120m. The space between the 75m setback and this 120m line is transitional, comprising a mix of buildings and integrated landscape treatment. In our view, this buffer or transitional area is critical to the mitigation of the landscape effects of the development. We did consider whether a wider setback than 75m should be imposed but concluded that this would achieve little extra benefit in comparison to the careful treatment of the design of the villas and planting in this transitional space. Having said that, we acknowledge that the development will be visible and represents a considerable change to the environment.

- 4.5 The Interim Decision continued to state:⁴

We consider the 75m setback from Ladies Mile is sufficiently important that no building should occur in this area, nor should any other form of structure be erected here, while planting needs to be limited to the avenue of trees along the State Highway frontage. Equally, there should be no room for flexibility over the layout or design of the villas, and associated landscaping, in the 75m to 120m transitional space. To this end, the conditions include a consent notice mechanism to ensure the 75m strip is maintained as open pasture and that buildings and structures are prohibited.

- 4.6 Since the granting of consent of the QCC development, further work has occurred to the Ladies Mile corridor, including the Whakatipu Basin Land Use Study (WBLUS) which identified the land associated with SH6/Ladies Mile (including the QCC) as retaining low to medium capacity to absorb rural living (subject to a 75m setback from the road corridor).

- 4.7 More recently, and in light of potential further development occurring in the area, QLDC began work on the Te Pūtahi Ladies Mile Plan Variation. This was to avoid potential *ad hoc* and inefficient urban outcomes occurring along this corridor. In May 2019, QLDC agreed that a 'proactive Council led planning approach should be undertaken' concerning development of the Ladies Mile and surrounding area.

³ QLDC SHA Interim decision 13 March 2017, paragraph 97.

⁴ QLDC SHA Interim decision 13 March 2017, paragraph 98.

- 4.8 The Te Pūtahi Ladies Mile Plan Variation therefore anticipates a rezoning exercise to provide an urban environment, enabling a range of housing typologies, community related infrastructure and areas of commercial and open spaces provided.
- 4.9 In this vein, my landscape evidence recognises that the SH6/ Ladies Mile corridor is now within a different contextual environment to that assessed in 2016.

5. QCC AND SH6/ LADIES MILE EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

- 5.1 The landscape context is described within the evidence of Stephen Skelton in paragraphs 20 to 25. I broadly agree with these statements, where this part of the Whakatipu Basin, which is characterised by a broad alluvial terrace, is dominated by enclosing mountains and the Shotover and Kawarau Rivers. Landuse is predominantly pastoral grazing, with the exception of the development associated with the QCC land. Mature trees flank the southern side of SH6/ Ladies Mile, with more varied vegetation patterns along the northern side of the road. Despite the presence of the mature roadside trees, views of the Remarkables and Slope Hill are gained.
- 5.2 The QCC development is nearing completion, with the majority of development aligning the 75m BRA complete. This development is typically single storey large villas, clustered in small groups where open space is provided between these clusters. Mature trees flank SH6/ Ladies Mile in an avenue-type arrangement, with further planting occurring adjacent to the wooden post and rail fence. A cycleway is located between SH6/ Ladies Mile and the wooden post and rail fence. The distance to the post and rail fence is 25m. An area of open pasture, which is typically grazed, is located between the post and rail fence and the villas. The maximum height of the villas is eight metres, and they typically average 500m² in footprint.
- 5.3 Central to the QCC 75m BRA is a clubhouse, which is larger than the adjacent clusters of villas, extending to a height of 10m.

Existing visibility to surrounding areas

- 5.4 Stephen Skelton provides a reasonably comprehensive description of the overall visibility of the TPLM Structure Plan in paragraphs 29 – 50. Specifically, Stephen Skelton outlines in paragraph 46 views from SH6/ Ladies Mile to the surrounding mountains, and notes the dominance of Morven Hill and the Crown Range (**Image 8**) when travelling eastwards, as well as 'views to

Peninsula Hill and the distant lake and mountain landscape to the southwest (Images 9), intermittent views across an open landscape to the foot of Slope Hill (Images 7) and the dominant northern slopes of the Remarkables Mountains to the south (Image 10).⁵



Image 2: Image 10 from Stephen Skelton's evidence illustrating the current setback from SH6/ Ladies Mile.

5.5 Indeed, the dominance of the mountain setting surrounding the TPLM Structure Plan is a compelling component of views and glimpses of views when travelling along the SH6/ Ladies Mile corridor.

6. THE PROPOSED TE PŪTAHI LADIES MILE VARIATION

6.1 The proposed Te Pūtahi Ladies Mile Plan Variation is described in the Section 42A reports and supporting council evidence. Whilst I won't repeat this, the following are the key aspects from a landscape perspective that relate directly to the QCC land, and particularly the 75m BRA or setback.

- a) To establish a new town centre by providing a variety of urban related forms, including low, medium and high-density development, including open space.
- b) To seek to enhance and maintain an aesthetic interface between the highway and urban areas, in the form of BRAs (with 25m width being considered in most areas and 75m width for the QCC site).
- c) Maintain views towards the Remarkables, Slope Hill and Morven Hill.

⁵ Stephen Skelton evidence, paragraph 46.

d) Maintain existing trees and plant new trees.

6.2 The TPLM Variation proposes a series of precincts, including the Low Density Residential precinct and Open Space Precinct⁶. The QCC site, most of which is outside the TPLM Structure Plan, is proposed to be Low Density Suburban Residential under the PDP⁷, as illustrated below:

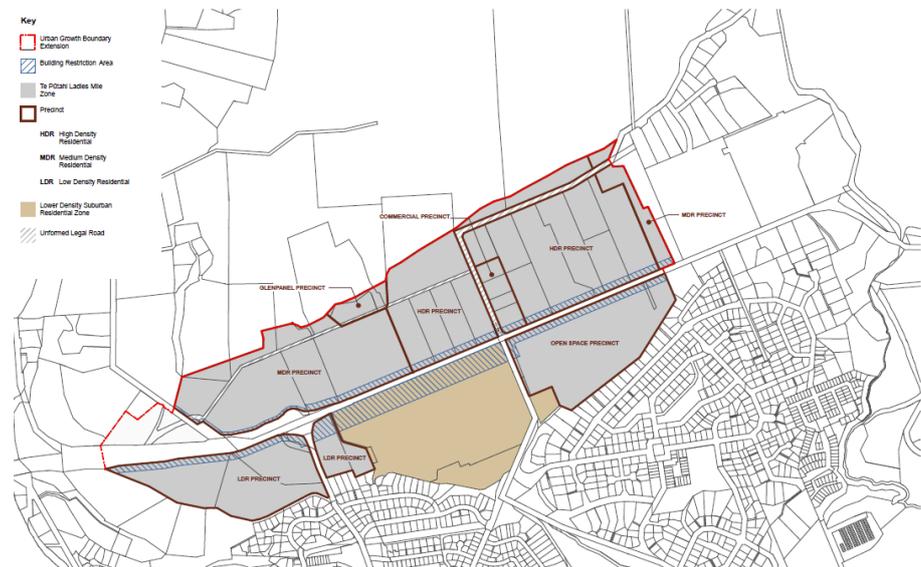


Figure 3: Proposed TPLM zoning plan

6.3 The TPLM Variation, as I understand it will contain a variety of built forms. I understand these building heights will vary and will include:

- a) High density: a maximum building height of 24m.
- b) Medium density: a maximum building height of 13m, and
- c) Low density: a maximum building height of 8m.

6.4 I understand that essentially height of buildings steps up (increases) from the SH6/ Ladies Mile corridor to the base of Slope Hill on the northern side. *Building heights are reduced closer to SH6/ Ladies Mile in order to recognise the landscape effects, and respond to the 'arrival experience'⁸.* I understand that the QCC site is proposed to be rezoned Low Density Residential, which equates to an 8m height limit.

⁶ Refer to paragraph 9 of the Section 42a report.

⁷ Relating to Chapter 7 of the PDP.

⁸ Stuart Dun evidence, paragraph 94.

6.5 In terms of a building setback, Bruce Harland states that following engagement with the community on the initial TPLM Structure Plan, changes were made to incorporate the following relevant aspects:

(b) *Providing a definitive 25m building setback to the north side SH6 which is seen as an important gateway into Queenstown allowing higher height limits further back from the state highway to reduce the visual impact and create opportunities to retain views to Slope Hill from the SH6.*

(c) *Retain the 75m setback on the southside of SH6 in the central part of the corridor (adjacent to the Queenstown Country Club) as part of re-imagining the central span of the corridor as a green, filtered urban edge, which acknowledges the importance of maintaining amenity and visual connections to the mountains (including the Remarkables) to the south'.⁹*

6.6 Maintaining views to the surrounding landscape are important, and this is mentioned throughout the evidence of Stephen Skelton¹⁰, Stuart Dun¹¹ and Bruce Harland.¹²

7. JUSTIFICATION FOR THE 75M BRA (OR SETBACK) IN COUNCIL EVIDENCE

7.1 There appears no real justification within the Section 42A council evidence to warrant a 75m BRA setback to solely the QCC site and to suggest a 25m BRA elsewhere. It appears that the 75m BRA has been broadly untested and that reliance on this setback distance is simply maintaining the status quo.

7.2 In reviewing evidence, Bruce Harland considers the Design Principles of the project/ TPLM Structure Plan¹³. My colleague Jane Rennie comments further on these from an urban design perspective, however, from a landscape perspective, the following design principles are discussed by Mr Harland. I comment where appropriate:

⁹ Bruce Harland evidence, paragraph 55.

¹⁰ Stephen Skelton evidence, paragraph 46.

¹¹ Stuart Dun evidence, paragraph 25(b).

¹² Such as those views expressed within Bruce Harland evidence, paragraph 59.

¹³ Bruce Harland evidence, paragraph 59.

Consider SH6 as a gateway to Queenstown

- a) The TPLM Structure Plan recognises the importance of the SH6/ Ladies Mile corridor and *'seeks to retain aspects of the existing corridor such as significant views and open space qualities.... while re-imagining the central span of the corridor as a green, filtered urban edge'*. This is translated into the Structure Plan by applying a BRA to both sides of Ladies Mile to retain a sense of spaciousness to the corridor. This is measured as a 25m Building restriction on the majority of the northern side of Ladies Mile (urban portion) and to retain the 75m building setback for QCC on south side of Ladies Mile (as part of their consented development) and to retain expansive views to the Remarkables.
- b) In my opinion, there appears to be no measured justification as to why a difference in BRA widths are required. Justification for retaining the 75m setback appears to be simply that it is currently present as part of the SH6/ Ladies Mile experience, where views to the Remarkables are currently gained above the development. It appears that no 'test' has been applied to determine why a 25m setback isn't considered appropriate for the entire TPLM Structure Plan. It has relied on the original QCC consent, which was assessed under a different context. By applying a consistent setback distance will assist to provide a level of cohesion to the corridor.

Foster a Unique Enduring Identity

- c) The TPLM Structure Plan demonstrates that developments should be responsive to the Māori and pioneer history of the area, as well as the ecological and landscape context. This is achieved by maintaining views to the surrounding mountains, applying BRAs, height limits and locations of open areas and schools. Specifically, views are protected to the surrounding mountains by *'lower height limits on the south side of SH6 and pushing taller buildings (ie over 3 stories) circa 100m from the northside of SH6'* and retaining setbacks of 25m and 75m.
- d) In my opinion, and as illustrated within the **Cross Section** attached as Appendix 1 to Jane Rennie's evidence, an adequate amount of space is provided around the road corridor, when seen in context to proposed development. The 25m BRA, coupled with the 8m height limit on the QCC site will enable views to the Remarkables to be obtained, as there is a sufficient distance/ building height ratio in the corridor for this to occur. I also consider that by applying a reduced setback will also better

support the visual connectedness across the corridor, reducing the sense of separation of the two sides of the corridor.

Supporting a healthy environment and ecology

- e) Mr Harland refers to providing a Master Plan which holistically utilises a landscape framework, around open spaces and aligning blue/ green networks.
- f) In my view, by providing a consistent BRA will ensure that the landscape framework is considered holistically. Trees will be retained on the QCC site, and new trees planted as part of the TPLM Structure Plan. Trees will assist to visually soften built forms, providing filtered views through to the development.

Create self-sustained and connected communities

- g) Mr Harland refers to enabling a vibrant community with a range of housing densities, where integration of the open space into the urban framework is integral including key active travel corridors.
- h) I agree that open space is integral to the urban framework and the location of the TPLM Structure Plan within the Whakatipu Basin will create a unique experience when travelling through on SH6/Ladies Mile. Areas of open space via recreational spaces and schools will amplify this, as will the BRA aligning the corridor. It is my view that a 25m BRA will still maintain views towards the surrounding mountains and maintain a level of spaciousness.

Ensuring sustainable transport networks

- i) My colleague Jane Rennie will comment on this.

Do density well, provide quality and diverse housing

- j) Mr Harland refers to enabling well distributed open spaces to ensure easy walking access around a centralised town centre and active public transport. Lower densities are provided away from the town centre and on south side of SH6.
- k) My colleague Jane Rennie will comment on this further.

Develop a resilient and adaptable framework

- l) Mr Harland refers to providing amenity setbacks from SH6/ Ladies Mile. This can be achieved by spatial arrangements of proposed zonings,

building setbacks from SH6, open space and school locations, keeping building heights lower on the south side of SH6 and keeping taller buildings on the northern side.

- m) In my view, as outlined previously, amenity setbacks via the BRA from SH6/ Ladies Mile will provide a high level of amenity to SH6/ Ladies Mile. Whilst different from what is experienced currently, the corridor will transform into a new urban gateway to Queenstown. The TPLM Structure Plan has been developed to protect landscape assets, including views towards the mountains. There appears no specific assessment why a difference in setback distances between the north and south of the corridor has been implemented.

7.3 From this analysis, it is apparent that there is no specific justification concerning the difference in BRA setback from the north of SH6/Ladies Mile, to the south. As outlined, the QCC site is proposed to be a low-density zoning, which QCC supports. This will mean development is restricted to 8 metres in height. Any development within the current 75m BRA would be consistent with what is already present.

7.4 With paragraphs 105 and 106 of the landscape evidence of Stephen Skelton, which comments specifically on the QCC submission, there appears little justification to maintain the 75m setback other than highlighting that:

The QCC was developed as part of an SHA proposal, and as part of that proposal it is understood the 75-metre setback was sought to maintain an assemblance of openness, rural qualities and views across the site towards the ONLs. Similarly, the spacious qualities between the buildings on the QCC side rendered them less intense than other forms of urban development.

7.5 Stephen Skelton continues by stating:

I consider the openness and open qualities of the land to the south of SH6 in the proposed BRA to be an important part of the proposal, in that these open qualities and views provide some relief to the more intense urban areas. Similarly, the trees to be retained along the highway provide for amenity. The existing 75 metre setback on the QCC land provides for an open quality which enhances visual amenity. I do not support QCC's proposal to remove the BRA on the QCC site.

7.6 It is agreed that the current 75m BRA provides a high level of visual amenity, however, as noted elsewhere within the evidence of Stephen Skelton:

the TPLM Variation seeks to change the TPLM Area from a mostly rural area to an urban area.¹⁴

The TPLM Variation will result in a change in the Ladies Mile's character. Change is anticipated in this LCU by its current Rural Lifestyle zoning, which will see the rural character become more rural living in character. The TPLM Variation seeks to elevate that change to urban. The TPLM Variation will retain a level of openness through the use of generous Building Restriction Areas (**BRAs**) along SH6. These BRAs will provide for an open approach to Queenstown and maintain valued views.¹⁵

The rural character of the TPLM Variation Area is changing and is likely to be significantly diminished regardless of this variation. I consider the proposal represents a well resolved urban solution to pressure on the landscape.¹⁶

- 7.7 It appears that the 25m BRA in northern part of the SH6/ Ladies Mile corridor, where higher densities and taller built forms are located close by, will ensure that the visual qualities associated with the contextual setting of the TPLM Structure Plan will be maintained/enhanced. Regarding the southern side, the only justification concerning the 75m BRA width is that this has already been considered as part of a resource consent process, is virtually built and greatly assists to achieve the Master Plan principles and landscape values of the area. This could be seen that the TPLM is 'borrowing' the large setbacks and amenity of QCC. In my view, it is how the corridor works as a whole. Therefore, it appears odd to me that a larger setback is warranted where lower density development is located (the QCC site) and that a narrower setback is required where proposed buildings are taller and more densely located.
- 7.8 The key question that in my view hasn't been asked is: *Can the vision of the TPLM variation be achieved with a reduced setback on the QCC site when the future state of the environment is now considered differently? And Will the 25m setback alone retain the landscape and visual amenity values articulated in Council's evidence?*
- 7.9 In terms of a response to my first question, I outline the following, factored around two of Mr Harland's Master Plan principles:
- Gateway aspects: A standard 25m setback is provided along the northern part of the road corridor where higher and more densely built development is proposed. Whilst foreground views will change, views

¹⁴ Stephen Skelton evidence, paragraph 14.

¹⁵ Stephen Skelton evidence, paragraph 17.

¹⁶ Stephen Skelton evidence, paragraph 18.

towards Slope Hill will still be achieved. I consider that a similar setback to the south will ensure that views towards the Remarkables will also be clearly visible. In my view, the presence of low-density dwellings (up to 8m in height) will essentially appear closer to the fence on the QCC land, however views above and between the 8m high built forms towards the Remarkables, will still be obtained. A similar pattern of low-density development (of similar height to what has been constructed on the QCC site) will be envisaged, using a similar palette of materials, colours and landscaping. Trees will assist to filter built forms. In my view, this will not erode amenity aspects of the corridor, and in many ways, reinforce a consistent setback width experienced. Furthermore, I am of the view that to maintain a grazed parcel of land within a more manicured and urban context would appear out of character and out of context to what the TPLM Structure Plan is trying to achieve.

- Foster a Unique Enduring Identity: The BRA setbacks are one of a suite of tools enabling a great outcome to reinforce identity. With lower heights of buildings located closer to SH6/ Ladies Mile, coupled with a 25m BRA and design controls, will ensure that views are maintained to the surrounding mountainous context, as illustrated on the Cross Section appended to Jane Rennie's evidence. To reinforce spaciousness, specific controls may be suggested in front of the existing taller Club House, for example that no development occurs, to maintain a greater sense of openness associated with the corridor.
- The remaining Master Plan principles, which contain a greater urban design emphasis, are covered in the evidence of Jane Rennie.

7.10 In terms of my second question, '*Will the 25m setback alone retain the landscape and visual amenity values articulated in Council's evidence*', I consider that this has already been answered. The QCC development has provided a high-quality level of amenity along part of the SH6/ Ladies Mile corridor. Additional built forms, that complements and integrates with existing development, utilising similar design controls will ensure that these values are maintained, even enhanced. Views to the mountains, mainly the Remarkables, will remain dominant in southerly facing views, filtered through existing trees aligning the carriageway.

7.11 Based on this, I do not consider that, from a landscape perspective, and under a different contextual environmental setting, a 75m BRA is required to only one side of SH6/ Ladies Mile. As outlined within the evidence of Stuart Dun, this

area represents a '*limited resource that must be used efficiently and wisely*¹⁷'. I agree with this. With a PDP low residential rezoning, coupled with the relevant zone provisions and design controls, any development in this area will be carefully considered. The reduced 25m BRA will still enable an urban environment with a high level of amenity and a high-quality environment for residents.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 Since the QCC site was granted resource consent, the context of SH6/ Ladies Mile has changed. A 75m BRA set was assessed as appropriate due to the rural contextual setting of the upper river terrace which contains SH6/ Ladies Mile and the QCC. Remaining development (Shotover Country and Lake Hayes Estate) were contained within the lower river terrace, away from views from SH6.
- 8.2 The TPLM Structure Plan envisions a different, more urban character. Within this, recognition of the importance of views from SH6/ Ladies Mile to the surrounding mountains and the visual amenity of the corridor have prompted a 25m BRA to most areas of the TPLM, where trees and room for footpaths and cycleways are possible. At the QCC site, this is 75m, without appropriate justification.
- 8.3 In my view, reducing the QCC BRA to 25m and coupled with other provisions concerning a high-quality development outcome will also continue to protect views, provide a level of spaciousness and maintain visual amenity of the SH6/ Ladies Mile corridor. It will also provide consistency with the outcomes of the TPLM Structure Plan. Low density residential development is proposed for the QCC site, which means that maximum building heights will be 8 metres. Development will be consistent with what is already evident. Whilst built form will appear closer to SH6/Ladies Mile, landscape values will still be retained, albeit considered within a more urban context.
- 8.4 Based on this, from a landscape perspective, I support a reduction of the QCC 75m BRA to 25m.

James Bentley
20 October 2023

¹⁷ Stuart Dun evidence, paragraph 21.