

Proposed SHA at Hawea

Landscape and Urban Design Review



Prepared for Universal Developments Hawea Ltd by:

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Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	The Site and its Context.....	1
3	Landscape Considerations.....	2
4	Urban Design Considerations	3
5	Conclusions.....	6

Cover image: Google Earth

1 Introduction

- 1.1 RA Skidmore Urban Design Ltd. has been requested by Universal Developments Hawea Ltd to carry out a landscape and urban design review in relation to a proposed Special Housing Area (“SHA”) at Hawea.
- 1.2 The following review is based on the indicative masterplan (revision dated 14/05/18) contained in the expression of interest document.
- 1.3 In carrying out the review, I visited the site and surrounding environs on the 21st April 2018. On the same day I also attended a community meeting where the proposal was discussed.
- 1.4 I have provided feedback and input as the proposal has been tested and refined.

2 The Site and its Context

[See Attachments 1 and 2 to view the Site in its context]

The Site

- 2.1 The subject property (the “Site”) is located at the southern periphery of the township of Hawea. Its northern boundary fronts Cemetery Road. It has an area of 34.5 ha. 32ha of this is proposed as the SHA. The land is flat and contains areas of pine plantation and pine shelterbelts defining open pasture areas. The Site is currently zoned Rural in the Queenstown Lakes District Plan.

Site Context

- 2.2 Like much of the District, the settlement of Hawea is located within a spectacular mountain setting. It sits on the southern shores of Lake Hawea, the northernmost of the Otago glacial lakes. Both Lake Wanaka and Lake Hawea were created by advances of great glacial systems which extended down from the alps to fill the valley and carve out the valley floor. The southern foreshore of the lake, the location of the existing township, was created by moraine that mounded and dammed the lake. The Hawea River drains from the southwestern corner of the lake and then joins the Clutha River which drains from Lake Wanaka.
- 2.3 The Hawea dam construction began in 1955. The raising of the Lake level ended in around 1958. Following the influx of workers involved in the construction of the dam, the settlement gradually developed, primarily as a holiday destination.

- 2.4 Today, the main entrance to Hawea is from the direction of Wanaka across the dam at the head of the Hawea River. Dwellings in the northern area of the older part of the settlement enjoy an outlook over Lake Hawea extending to the north. The settlement has a somewhat circuitous network of streets that traverse the undulating moraine topography. While there has more recently been construction of larger houses within the established settlement, it retains an informal character with a predominance of modest houses of various styles. The settlement is well vegetated, and the streets have an informal character without formal kerb and channelling.
- 2.5 More recently there has been considerable expansion of the settlement to the south (see Attachment 3, Photograph 1). A distinct terrace at the southern edge of the older settlement creates a separation between the older and newer settlement pattern (see Attachment 3, Photograph 2). Two residential neighbourhoods to the south of the terrace, Tims Field and Sentinel Park, are currently being developed. Further to the east, more undulating land has been developed with larger lots.
- 2.6 Properties immediately to the north of the site are accessed internally, turning their back on Cemetery Road which runs east-west in this location. Cemetery Road currently forms the southern edge of the settlement. Immediately to the west of the Site, subdivision consent has been granted for a neighbourhood containing lots of around 4,000m².

3 Landscape Considerations

- 3.1 Around 95% of the Queenstown Lakes District is identified as an Outstanding Natural Landscape (“ONL”) in the District Plan. While located in a spectacular setting, the Site and the surrounding rural environment is not identified as an ONL and nor does it exhibit particular landscape sensitivity.
- 3.2 The Site has a rural character, although it does not exhibit the same productive elements other land in the wider Hawea Basin exhibits, such as centre pivot irrigators or pasture grass. The land currently is visually defined by mature pine trees enclosing grass areas and wilding pines. It does not exhibit any particular features that create a sensitive rural environment.
- 3.3 At a broad level, the mountain ranges that generally have a north-south orientation provide eastern and western enclosure to the settlement of Hawea and the Hawea Flats behind (see Attachment 4, Photographs 3 and 4). The enclosing mountains provide a distinctive landscape setting and contribute to the character of the area.
- 3.4 Water bodies also provide distinct edges and enclosure. Lake Hawea to the north creates a clear edge and provides a visual and recreation amenity that strongly contributes to the settlement's sense of place. The Hawea River creates a strong edge to the western extent of the settlement. The land is terraced down to the river so that it is not highly visible from the settlement. Existing trails along its bank provide

connectivity and contribute to the recreational values of the township. Considerably further to the south, the Clutha River also creates an edge to the productive flat lands.

- 3.5 The flat topography of the Site presents no constraints to urban development. Development of the land would not adversely impact on the key landscape features in the surrounding environment. To the east, an identified flood hazard area limits the extent of development eastward.
- 3.6 Development of the Site as an extension of the Hawea settlement would form part of the newer settlement pattern immediately to the north of Cemetery Road. The visual separation created by the terrace to the north creates a distinction between the older established part of the settlement and the newer area on the flats behind.
- 3.7 Cemetery Road currently defines the southern extent of the Hawea settlement. However, consent has been granted for subdivision of the land immediately to the west of the Site and south of Cemetery Road to create residential lots of around 4,000m². This establishes an increased residential focus south of Cemetery Road. The location and configuration of the proposed SHA has been carefully considered to create a logical and seamless extension to the settlement. While it will result in a change in character from rural to urban to the south of Cemetery Road, it will knit seamlessly with the established settlement. In my opinion, this is a suitable location to accommodate growth of the settlement in a planned manner. It is an efficient use of suitable land and could not be described as 'sprawl'. Further comment about the way the proposed SHA integrates with the existing settlement is set out in the following section. In my opinion, Cemetery Road does not form a constraint or suitable boundary to the settlement.
- 3.8 Overall, it is concluded that there are no landscape impediments to the development of the land as an extension of the Hawea settlement.

4 Urban Design Considerations

- 4.1 In response to consideration of a range of factors, including feedback received from the local community, the proposal has been scaled back from an area providing for 1000 houses. As shown in the indicative masterplan, development is proposed immediately to the south of Cemetery Road, opposite Sentinel Park. The area will accommodate approximately 400 residential sites. A community hub is also proposed that will accommodate a range of ancillary activities to support the local settlement. The indicative masterplan also identifies suitable locations for neighbourhood reserves.
- 4.2 The area sought for identification as an SHA does not preclude further consideration of the wider area as part of a strategic consideration of the longer-term growth of the settlement.

Integration with Existing Settlement

- 4.3 Taking into account the characteristics of the land south of Cemetery Road, and particularly the similarity of the landform north and south of the road, the opportunity exists for further development to reinforce Cemetery Road as a key east-west axis for the settlement. As noted above, while the existing settlement stops at Cemetery Road, there is no rationale for this to be a boundary to the settlement. It is not a strong landscape feature that is suitable as a boundary to limit growth.
- 4.4 Immediately to the north of Cemetery Road, Capell Ave is a paper road. It currently forms part of the pedestrian/cycle route to Hawea Flat School. Once formed as a street, this will provide a primary north-south axis through the settlement. The proposed masterplan is aligned to reinforce this axis, continuing the street alignment to the south through a 'community hub'. The indicative masterplan also demonstrates a block structure and street network that can connect directly with the local streets of Sentinel Drive and Grand View Drive.
- 4.5 In my opinion, the proposed SHA is well located to provided good integration with the existing settlement.

Connectivity

- 4.6 As noted above, the indicative masterplan has been configured to integrate directly with the existing network of streets and to create a seamless extension of the settlement. The layout proposed will extend and reinforce Capell Avenue as a key north-south axis through the settlement. The alignment of the 'community hub' to front this street will further reinforce its role as a primary axis.
- 4.7 The flat topography of the Site creates no constraints to the alignment of streets. The proposed grid block layout will have good legibility and provide a selection of routes to navigate through the neighbourhood. The east-west street alignments will provide viewshafts to the enclosing mountain ranges.
- 4.8 The pattern of streets proposed is also suitable to provide good connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists.

Housing Choice and Affordability

- 4.9 The primary purpose of the HASHAA legislation is to enhance housing affordability by facilitating an increase in land and housing supply in locations where housing has become unaffordable for the local community. The Expression of Interest report outlines the mechanisms proposed to deliver affordable housing in the SHA. In my opinion, the Site is well located to accommodate housing that is affordable and provides a good amenity for the local community.

- 4.10 The regular grid network of streets proposed creates a block structure that is flexible to accommodate a range of site sizes with good amenity. The blocks are aligned to create east-west facing lots, which is a good orientation to maximise solar access and achieve a positive street interface. The regular block configuration and depth of blocks also facilitates a subdivision pattern that is dominated by front lots, contributing to the creation of a positive street interface and good interaction with the street.
- 4.11 The creation of lots with a regular proportion will also facilitate efficient site layouts, contributing to the affordability of development.
- 4.12 The indicative masterplan identifies two neighbourhood reserves. These are located to provide easy access for local residents and contribute to the amenity of the neighbourhood. Both are located to have good visibility from adjacent streets. The westernmost reserve is shown adjacent to mixed use/commercial land to enable a good synergy between a commercial activity, the open space, and the surrounding residential neighbourhood.

Community Hub

- 4.13 The indicative masterplan identifies a community hub that could accommodate a mix of commercial and service activities. In addition to contributing to the amenity of the new neighbourhood, the creation of such a hub would benefit the wider settlement. There are currently few commercial or service activities in Hawea and little land available to create a consolidated hub within the established settlement. The creation of such a hub within the SHA would create a focus for the settlement and would contribute to the resilience and sustainability of Hawea by enabling greater self-sufficiency and reducing the requirement to travel to Albert Town and Wanaka for a range of services and amenities. The establishment of a mixed commercial hub would also contribute to employment opportunities within the settlement.
- 4.14 The proposed community hub is located and configured to enable development to front and reinforce the extension of Capell Avenue as the primary north-south axis. Its location is suitable to be accessed from the established area of Hawea to the north and from possible future residential expansion immediately to the west.

Hawea Character

- 4.15 As noted above, a clear terrace and change in level creates a distinction between the older, northern area of Hawea and the more recently developed area on the flats to the south between the terrace and Cemetery Road. The proposed SHA area will be compatible with the character of the settlement immediately to the north. The established character of the older part of the settlement will be maintained.
- 4.16 The Site does not contain any landscape features that could contribute to the character of the new neighbourhood. At the stage of detailed subdivision design, particular

consideration should be given to the introduction of features that respond to and contribute to the local character of the area. In particular, the design of the public realm, including parks and streets, should include planting and hard landscape features to contribute to the settlement's sense of place.

- 4.17 Recently developed properties on the northern side of Cemetery Road have provided a street interface with variable amenity. At the detailed design phase, it will be important to provide mechanisms to ensure a good street amenity outcome is achieved, both for residential and commercial properties that interface with the street.

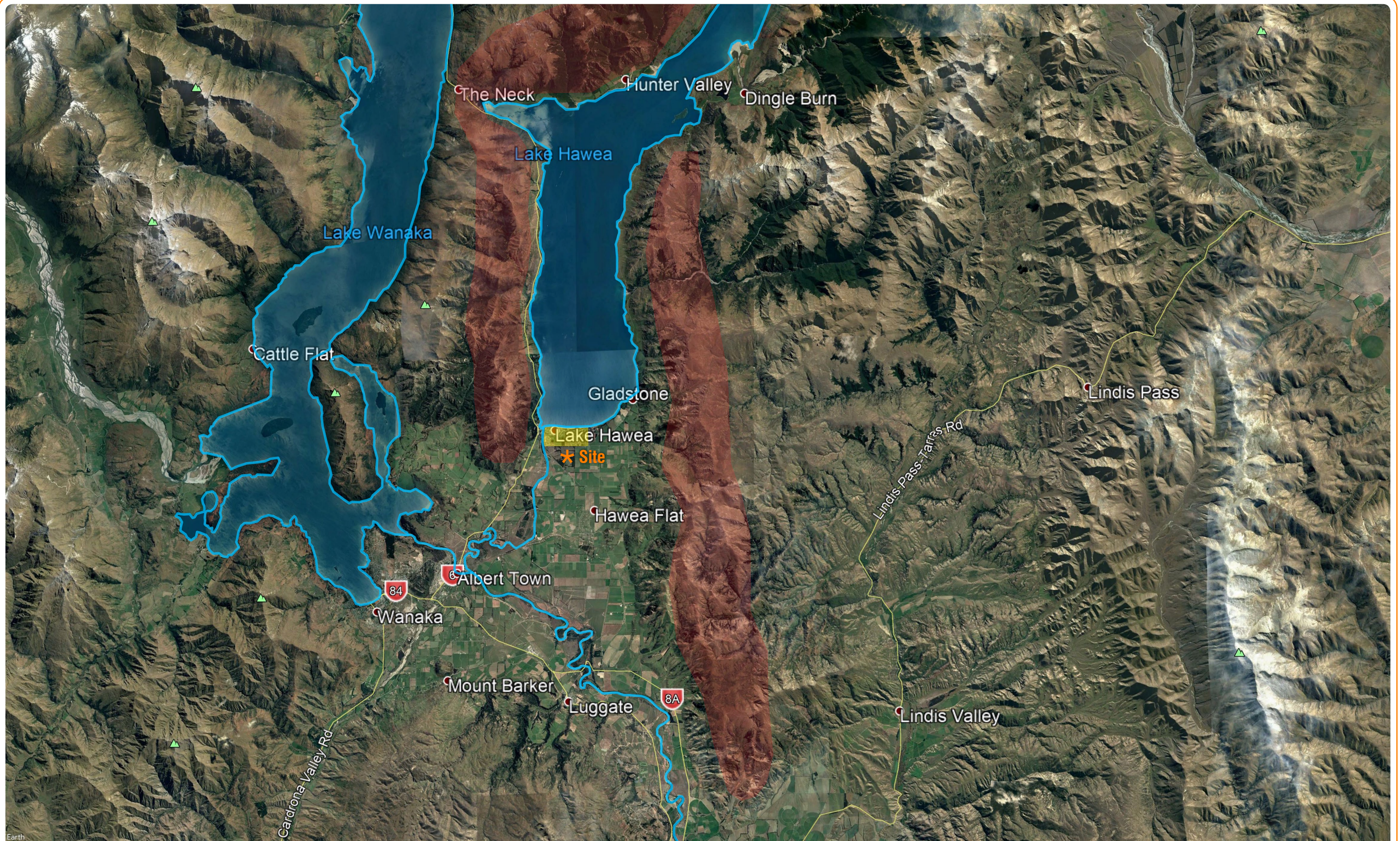
5 Conclusions

- 5.1 Hawea is an established township that is contained by a dramatic landscape setting. In particular, Lake Hawea to the north and mountain ranges to the east and west provide a containment to the settlement that also contributes to its character and sense of place. Less visibly prominent is the containment created by Hawea River.
- 5.2 The township has evolved over time with the older part of town located in the elevated northern area oriented towards the Lake. A more recent extension of the township is located to the south on a lower terrace.
- 5.3 The flat land of the lower terrace extends expansively to the Hawea Flats; rural land kept in various productive uses. The Site is located immediately to the south of the existing settlement and its development is not constrained by any significant landscape features.
- 5.4 The review set out above considers the suitability of this land to accommodate expansion of the settlement in terms of: integration with the existing settlement; connectivity; housing choice and affordability; creation of a community hub; and the effect on the character of Hawea. It is concluded that the area proposed, and the layout shown in the indicative masterplan, has been well considered and will create a suitable extension to the Hawea settlement.



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May 2018



Source: Google Earth
Imagery date: 15 March 2017

KEY

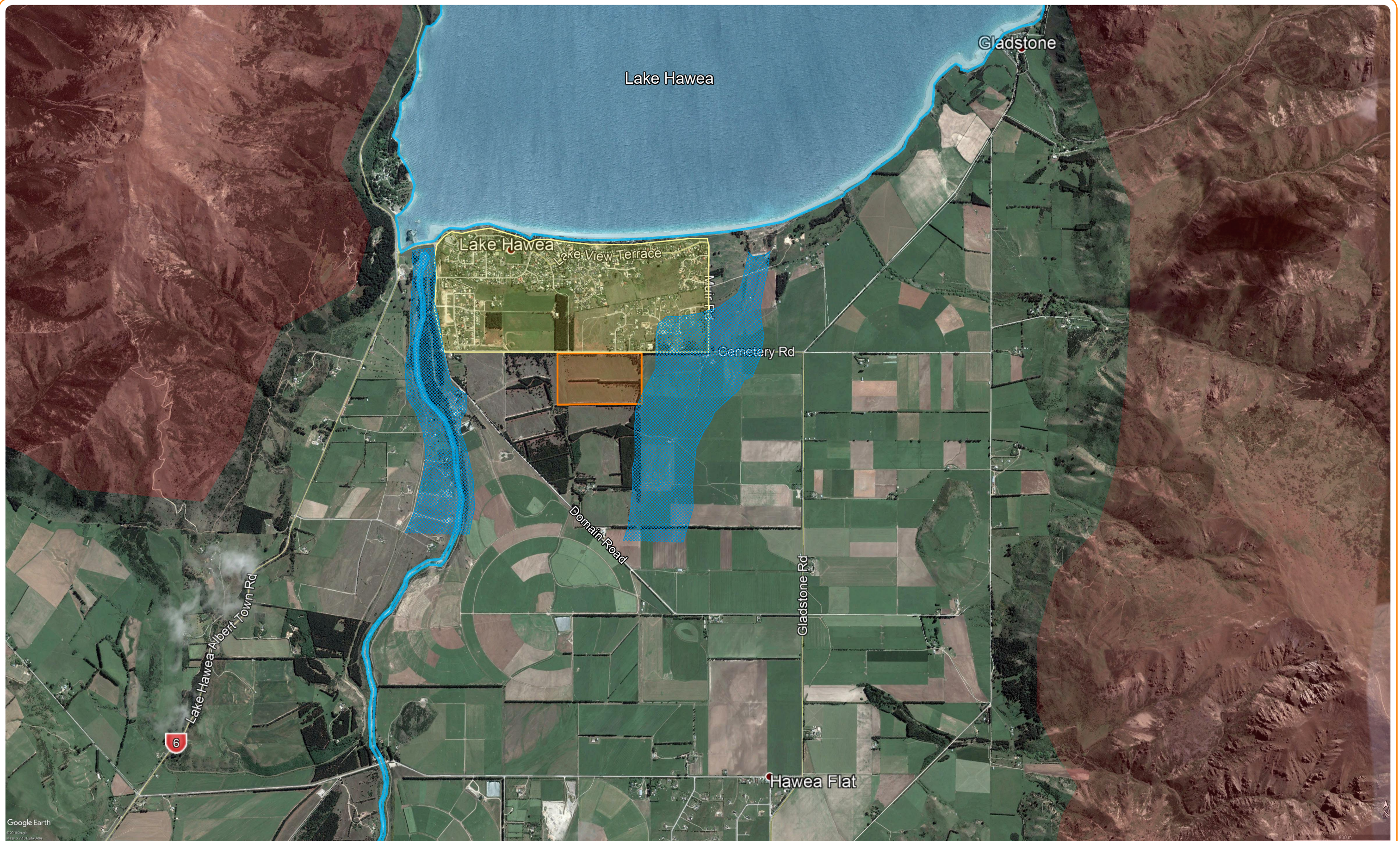
- Water landscape features
- Enclosing mountain ranges
- Hawea

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The Site in its Wider Context
Proposed SHA at Hawea
LANDSCAPE AND URBAN DESIGN REVIEW

ATTACHMENT 1

MAY 2018



Source: Google Earth
Imagery date: 18 November 2016

KEY

- Water landscape features
- ▨ Hazard (flooding due to damburst)
- Enclosing mountain ranges
- Existing settlement boundary
- Site boundary

The Site in its Context
Proposed SHA at Hawea
LANDSCAPE AND URBAN DESIGN REVIEW

ATTACHMENT **2**

MAY 2018



PHOTOGRAPH 1: Expanding area of Hawea looking south from top of terrace



PHOTOGRAPH 2: Terrace viewed from Cemetery Road



PHOTOGRAPH 3: Enclosing mountains to east



PHOTOGRAPH 4: Enclosing mountains to west