



# Laurel Hills Special Housing Area (SHA)

LAUREL HILLS LIMITED / QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Project No. 2018\_036| A

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### Laurel Hills Special Housing Area - LVIA

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### **Document history and status**

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## 1.INTRODUCTION AND PROPOSAL

DCM Urban Design Limited have been commissioned by Laurel Hills Limited to undertake a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of the Laurel Hill Special Housing Area located at 6-8 Layton Lane, Queenstown (Lot 1, DP431492; Lot 2, DP325561). The site is currently zoned Rural under the Operative District Plan and considered a Visual Amenity Landscape. The site is also subject to the Ladies Mile Master Plan which was approved by QLDC in 2017, identified as an area which was suitable for future housing intensification subject to meeting minimum housing densities. During the preparation of this report we have worked closely with the Applicant and Urban designer to develop mitigation measures which are incorporated into the design.

The Laurel Hill Special Housing Area (SHA) is 9.38Ha in area and consists of the following components:

- 156 residential lots allowing for the construction of a mix of residential dwelling typologies. The dwellings are restricted to 5.5m in height above the natural ground level. The size of the lots range from 163m² to 834m² with an density of 17.8 households/Ha;
- The creation of a local street network with access from Stalker Road, immediately to the north of the
  existing entrance to Maxs Way. Streets range in width from 6m lanes to 15m local streets. Two small
  pocket parks less than 100m² in area are included in the street network providing informal
  gathering/seating spaces;
- The creation of a neighbourhood reserve approximately 4,000m<sup>2</sup> in area located centrally within the development. The exact components of the reserve are subject to QLDC approval who have expressed a strong preference for a 30x30m flat area which is available for passive play;
- A landscape bund running parallel to SH6 to provide a visual screen between the SHA and the state highway. This will add a further 6,000m<sup>2</sup> of space to the neighbourhood reserve;
- A shared path, 2.5-3.0m wide, will eventually link the development to the Twin Rivers Trail which runs
  adjacent to the Shotover River and provides pedestrian and cycle links through to Arrowtown, Frankton
  and Queenstown. The shared path will run through the centre of the development, down Layton Lane to
  run parallel to Maxs Way and to connect to Stalker Road. This will bring the total neighbourhood reserve
  area to approximately 12,000m², or over 14% of the site;
- Landscape planting of the existing escarpment running parallel to Maxs Way and planting of the landscape bund running parallel to SH6.

This report is supported an appendix of Figures which include photos of the existing site and surrounding areas, and proposed mitigation measures.

### 2. **METHODOLOGY**

## 2.1 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

This landscape and visual assessment draws upon landscape assessment theory, professional best practice, the requirements of the RMA (particularly with regard to matters of national importance identified in section 6), the NZILA Best Practice Guide – Landscape Assessment and Sustainable Management (02.11.10), and procedures and principles established through case law in the Environment Court. The landscape and visual impact assessment consider the likely effects of the proposal in a holistic sense. There are three components to the assessment:

- Identification and assessment of the receiving environment and a description of the existing landscape character, including natural character. An assessment of the proposal against the existing built, landscape and natural character elements of the receiving environment.
- 2. An assessment of the proposal against recognised Landscape Values. Landscape Values are those which have been given to a site or receiving environment in either Statutory (sections 6 and 7 of the Resource Management Act (RMA)) or Non-Statutory documents;
- 3. The visual impact assessment is primarily concerned with the effects of the proposal on the visual amenity and people, evaluated against the character and quality of the existing visual catchment.

All of the locations identified in the figures were visited along with the project site. The methodology is based on the Landscape Assessment and Sustainable Management 10.1, (NZILA Education Foundation), dated 2.11.2010 and Visual Assessment Best Practice Methodologies (Lisa Rimmer) dated 4.11.2007.

#### 2.1.1 LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION AND CHARACTERISATION

Landscape attributes fall into 3 broad categories: biophysical features, patterns and processes; sensory qualities; and spiritual, cultural and social associations, including both activities and meanings.

- Biophysical features, patterns and processes may be natural and/or cultural in origin and range from the
  geology and landform that shape a landscape to the physical artefacts such as roads that mark human
  settlement and livelihood.
- Sensory qualities are landscape phenomena as directly perceived and experienced by humans, such as the view of a scenic landscape, or the distinctive smell and sound of the foreshore.
- Associated meanings are spiritual, cultural or social associations with particular landscape elements,
  features, or areas, such as tupuna awa and waahi tapu, and the tikanga appropriate to them, or sites of
  historic events or heritage. Associative activities are patterns of social activity that occur in particular
  parts of a landscape, for example, popular walking routes or fishing spots. Associative meanings and
  activities engender a sense of attachment and belonging.

Describing the landscape character is a process of interpreting the composite and cumulative character of a landscape, i.e. how attributes come together to create a landscape that can be distinguished from other landscapes. International best practice in characterisation has two dimensions of classification: the identification of distinctive types of landscape based on their distinctive patterns of natural and cultural features, processes and influences; and their geographical delineation. The characterisation of a landscape is not to rank or rate a landscape, as all landscapes have character, but determine what landscape attributes combine to give an area its identity, and importantly to determine an area's sensitivity, resilience or capacity for change.

**Table 1: Continuum of Natural Character** 

Natural	Near-natural	Semi-natu (including pa agriculture and forests)	storal I exotic	Agricultural (arable and intensive cropping)		Near-cultural	Cultural
Very high- pristine	High	Moderate High	Mode	erate	Moderate-low	Low	Very Low-nil

#### 2.1.2 LANDSCAPE VALUES

Following the descriptive phase of landscape assessment, an evaluative phase is undertaken whereby values or significance is ascribed to the landscape.

In many districts, this has been achieved by a District or Regional Landscape Study which has identified Landscapes of values or importance. These are registered as Outstanding Natural Landscapes or may be assigned a lesser value but are still recognised as having value. In many areas, Assessment Matters are also provided to assist with determining the effects of a proposal on Landscape Values.

An accepted approach, where the landscape value of the site is not identified in the District Plan under section 6(b) of the RMA, is to use criteria identified in Wakatipu Environmental Society Inc. & Ors v QLDC1 ("Pigeon Bay criteria"). The Pigeon Bay criteria include natural science factors, aesthetic value (an aspect of landscape values over which there is considerable debate regarding the theoretical basis for assessing visual or scenic quality), and the methods and techniques to be used. A professionally-based evaluation has been applied to the task of assessing aesthetic value, drawing upon the theoretical work of Kaplan and Kaplan (1989).<sup>2</sup> The technique used to assess aesthetic quality includes reference to several of the factors which form the framework for the assessment of landscape character.

#### 2.1.3 VISUAL ASSESSMENT

In response to section 7(c) of the RMA, an evaluation is undertaken to define and describe visual amenity values. As with aesthetic values, with which amenity values share considerable overlap, this evaluation was professionally-based using current and accepted good practice rather than community-based. Amenity values are defined in the Act as "those natural or physical qualities and characteristics of an area that contribute to people's appreciation of its pleasantness, aesthetic coherence, and cultural and recreational attributes." The visual assessment looks at the sensitivity of receptors to changes in their visual amenity through the analysis of selected representative viewpoints and wider visibility analysis. It identifies the potential sources for visual effect resulting from the Project and describes the existing character of the area in terms of openness, prominence, compatibility of the project with the existing visual context, viewing distances and the potential for obstruction of views.

The visual impact assessment involves the following procedures:

Identification of key viewpoints: A selection of key viewpoints is identified and verified for selection during the site visit. The viewpoints are considered representative of the various viewing audiences within the receiving catchment, being taken from public locations where views of the proposal were

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> [2000] NZRMA 59.

possible, some of which would be very similar to views from nearby houses. The identification of the visual catchment is prepared as a desktop study in the first instance using Council GIS for aerials and contours. This information is then ground-truthed on site to determine the key viewpoints and potential audience.

Assessment of the degree of sensitivity of receptors to changes in visual amenity resulting from the
proposal: Factors affecting the sensitivity of receptors for evaluation of visual effects include the value
and quality of existing views, the type of receiver, duration or frequency of view, distance from the
proposal and the degree of visibility.

For example, those who view the change from their homes are considered to be highly sensitive. The attractiveness or otherwise of the outlook from their home will have a significant effect on their perception of the quality and acceptability of their home environment and their general quality of life. Those who view the change from their workplace are considered to be only moderately sensitive as the attractiveness or otherwise of the outlook will have a less important, although still material, effect on their perception of their quality of life. The degree to which this applies depends on whether the workplace is industrial, retail or commercial. Those who view the change whilst taking part in an outdoor leisure activity may display varying sensitivity depending on the type of leisure activity. For example, walkers in open country on a long distance tramp are considered to be highly sensitive to change while other walkers may not be so focused on the surrounding landscape. Those who view the change whilst travelling on a public thoroughfare will also display varying sensitivity depending on the speed and direction of travel and whether the view is continuous or occasionally glimpsed.

- Identification of potential mitigation measures: These may take the form of revisions/refinements to the engineering and architectural design to minimise potential effects, and/or the implementation of landscape design measures (e.g. screen tree planting, colour design of hard landscape features etc.) to alleviate adverse visual effects and generate potentially beneficial long-term visual effects.
- Prediction and identification of the residual visual effects after the implementation of the mitigation measures.

The assessment of likely effects based on the NZILA Best Practice Guide – Landscape Assessment and Sustainable Management (02.11.10) with a seven-point scale and the Quality Planning Websites, being:

#### EXTREME / VERY HIGH / HIGH / MODERATE / LOW / VERY LOW / NEGLIGIBLE

In determining the extent of adverse effects, the level of effects is along a continuum to ensure that each effect has been considered consistently and in turn cumulatively. This continuum may include the following effects:

#### Indiscernible Effects

No effects at all or are too small to register.

### • Less than Minor Adverse Effects

Adverse effects that are discernible day-to-day effects, but too small to adversely affect other persons.

#### Minor Adverse Effects

Adverse effects that are noticeable but will not cause any significant adverse impacts.

#### • More than Minor Adverse Effects

Adverse effects that are noticeable that may cause an adverse impact but could be potentially mitigated or remedied.

#### Significant Adverse Effects that could be remedied or mitigated.

An effect that is noticeable and will have a serious adverse impact on the environment but could potentially be mitigated or remedied.

#### Unacceptable Adverse Effects

Extensive adverse effects that cannot be avoided, remedied or mitigated.

#### 2.2 PHOTOGRAPHY METHODOLOGY

All photos are taken using either a Fuji Finepix 5600 digital camera with a focal length of 50mm or on an Iphone XS (26mm focal length). No zoom was used. In the case of stitched photos used as the viewpoint images, a series of 4 portrait photos were taken from the same position to create a panorama. The photos were stitched together automatically in Adobe Photoshop to create the panorama presented in the figures.

#### 2.3 STATUTORY AND NON-STATUTORY DOCUMENTS

Relevant statutory documents in terms of Landscape Values and Visual Amenity are referred to below are the Resource Management Act 1991, and the Queenstown Lakes District Council. Relevant non-statutory documents include the Ladies Mile Master Plan.

#### 2.3.1 Resource Management Act 1991

Section 6 of the RMA identifies matters of national importance:

"In achieving the purpose of this Act, all persons exercising functions and powers under it, its relation to managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources, shall recognise and provide for the following matters of national importance:

- s.6 (a) The preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment (including the coastal marine area), wetlands, and lakes and rivers and their margins, and the protection of them from inappropriate subdivision, use and development;
- s.6 (b) The protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development;
- s.6 (c) The protection of areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna."

Other matters are included under Section 7:

"In achieving the purpose of this Act, all persons exercising functions and powers under it, in relation to managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources, shall have particular regard to-

(c) The maintenance and enhancement of amenity values."

### 2.3.2 Queenstown Lakes Operative District Plan

Under the Operative Queenstown Lakes District Plan, the site is zoned Rural (Map 30: Lake Hayes). Relevant Objectives and policies include:

Objective 1 - Character and Landscape Value

To protect the character and landscape value of the rural area by promoting sustainable management of natural and physical resources and the control of adverse effects caused through inappropriate activities.

Policies:

- 1.1 Consider fully the district wide landscape objectives and policies when considering subdivision, use and development in the Rural General Zone.
- 1.2 Allow for the establishment of a range of activities, which utilise the soil resource of the rural area in a sustainable manner.
- 1.3 Ensure land with potential value for rural productive activities is not compromised by the inappropriate location of other developments and buildings.
- 1.4 Ensure activities not based on the rural resources of the area occur only where the character of the rural area will not be adversely impacted.
- 1.5 Provide for a range of buildings allied to rural productive activity and worker accommodation.
- 1.6 Avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects of development on the landscape values of the District.
- 1.7 Preserve the visual coherence of the landscape by ensuring all structures are to be located in areas with the potential to absorb change.
- 1.8 Avoid remedy or mitigate the adverse effects of the location of structures and water tanks on skylines, ridges, hills and prominent slopes.
- 1.9 Ensure adverse effects of new commercial Ski Area activities on the landscape and amenity values are avoided or mitigated.

#### 2.3.3 Ladies Mile Master Plan

The Ladies Mile Master Plan was approved by Council earlier this year. The master plan added Ladies Mile to Category 2 of the Special Housing Area Lead Policy, which allows for streamlined consenting process.

By including Ladies Mile in to Category 2 of QLDC's Special Housing Area Lead Policy, Council has the ability to ensure development proceeds in a responsible manner and can require developers to follow an indicative masterplan. It also allows for development to proceed at a faster rate, if the SHA is approved by the Building and Construction Minister. Any housing would be expected to be of a medium to high density and developed in such a way as to optimise open spaces, ensure a community focus and encourage public transport. The proposed location is an extension of SHA applications in the same vicinity (Queenstown Country Club, Bridesdale, Onslow Road and Shotover Country) and the benefit of including it at this stage would enable master planning that could

consider matters like housing density community heart facilities, infrastructure (i.e. water supply) and traffic management.

## 3. ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

### 3.1 LANDSCAPE AND NATURAL CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

The site is located within the Ladies Mile area of Queenstown, being approximately 8.5km northeast from the centre of Queenstown and 3km from the main Frankton roundabout. The site is on the southern side of the Frankton-Ladies Mile Highway (SH6) with unformed access from Stalker Road. It has a south-south westerly aspect looking out towards the Remarkables (+2,000masl), Bayonet Peaks (+1564masl) and Peninsula Hill (+834masl). To the north views are possible of Coronet Peak (+ 1,651 masl), Slope Hill (+625 masl), Ferry Hill (+694 masl).

Topographical features in the wider area provide significant landscape features and character to the landscape. Shotover River (+300 masl) is 350m due west of the site and Lake Hayes is located approximately 2.5km to the east from the site.

The site's elevation ranges from 344m to 366masl with the majority of the site being between 350-360masl. The site itself is a wedge between state highway 6 and Maxs Way with the proposal covering two small terraces which are relatively flat and each separated by a small 3-4m high escarpment which runs east-west through the middle of the site. The site's eastern boundary is characterised by an 8-10m high escarpment which separates the site from 12 Stalker Road, with a step access track on the north-eastern corner of the site. The escarpment is currently covered in a belt of *Pinus radiata* trees, estimated to be ~16m in height. Along the full length of the southern boundary there is an 8m high escarpment, which physically separates the site from Shotover Country and Maxs Way. Access to the site is possible via Layton Lane which runs off Maxs Way midway along the escarpment. The escarpment is relatively steep, estimated to be a 1:1 - 1:2 slope and is currently covered in grass. There are several large grey poplar trees along the southern boundary, estimated to be taller than 20m in height, but are not on the proposal site (refer to pages 13-15, appendix 1) and will not be affected by the development. These trees screen views through to Coronet Peak from some of the dwellings located on Maxs Way.

The site is also physically separated from SH6 by topographical changes, with the road cutting into the original landform to cross over the Shotover River at a lower elevation. At the eastern end of the site, the site is lower than the state highway but by the midway point, travelling west, the state highway becomes lower than the site with steep cuttings formed on either side of the road. Adjacent to 12 Stalker Road, the state highway is at the same elevation with a landscape bund formed to create a physical separation so that views into the site are not possible from the state highway. Landscape bunds are common in the area and have been formed to varying success. Some bunds are steep and have a modified appearance while others are shallower with a more-natural appearance.

The proposal site is largely clear of any vegetation of significance. Grass paddocks are the predominant groundcover with large specimen trees located on steeper slopes or on the edge of escarpments. Broom and flax plantings are visible on the edge of the site adjacent to the state highway. As mentioned above there is a belt of *Pinus radiata* trees on the eastern boundary.

Ladies Mile is undergoing extensive change from a rural area to a suburban settlement with the development of

Shotover Country, Lake Hayes Estate and more recently Bridesdale. Construction is still occurring in both Shotover Country and Bridesdale. Houses in these developments are typically large, single storey detached dwellings with internal garaging although there are some examples of terrace housing and duplex typologies. There is a primary school within Shotover Country and there is a small commercial area in Lake Hayes Estate. Access from SH6 is via either Stalker Road or Howards Drive further to the east. The densities within these developments are typically low with less than 10 households per hectare, although Bridesdale has lots typically smaller, being around the 300m² mark. Existing dwellings within an 800mm radius from the centre of the site are shown on page 7 in the appendix. Character photos of existing dwellings are shown in photos i, j, k and I on page 11 of the appendix.

There is an existing large, single storey dwelling on the site which has a large pond and water race immediately to the north. Access to the dwelling is currently via a gravel drive off Layton Lane. (Refer to Photo D, page 9, Appendix 1). This dwelling is to be retained in the current design but is not considered an element necessary of protection.

Based on the description above, the site is considered to be a Visual Amenity Landscape.

#### 3.2 EFFECTS ON LANDSCAPE VALUES

Located in the Rural General zone, we are of the opinion that the site is a Visual Amenity Landscape (VAL) given its proximity to an Outstanding Natural Landscape (ONL) and the Shotover River although given its proximity to residential development the site could be considered an 'Other Rural Landscape'. The site has a high level of visual amenity but also has a high ability to absorb development, being compatible with the residential developments adjoining the site. A full description of the site's character is outlined above, including vegetation, topography, landuse and visibility. Taking a conservative approach we have assessed the proposal against the VAL assessment matters, as opposed to Other Rural Landscapes, outlined in 5.4.2.2(3) of the Operative District Plan:

- Effects on Natural and Pastoral Character
- Visibility of the development
- Form and density of development
- Cumulative Effects of Development on the Landscape
- Rural Amenities

### 3.2.1 Effects on natural and pastoral character

The development is considered a continuation of the suburban developments at Shotover Country and Lake Hayes Estates and while there will be a change in the pastoral character of the site, it is a change which is anticipated by the approved Ladies Mile master plan. The natural values of the surrounding area are largely related to topographical features and waterbodies with vegetation in the immediate area being almost predominantly exotic and of low value. No natural waterways are affected by the proposal. Views of the development from SH6 will be softened using a combination of earth bunds and landscape planting, retaining an open character and allowing views through to the surrounding mountains but screening views of buildings in the foreground. We consider that the effects on natural and pastoral character will be less than minor and that the development will not compromise the open character of the Shotover River corridor or nearby ONL areas.

### 3.2.2 Visibility of the development

A full visual impact assessment has been undertaken below. This determined, that although the site is close to SH6, the scale of the buildings and their position set below SH6 will result in future dwellings largely not being visible from the road. If they are visible, it will only be partial glimpses of roof tops but they will not break the line and form of any part of the skyline. The proposal will be most visible to residents living on and adjacent to Maxs Way but in most cases their views will be screened or partially screened by the existing escarpment and existing vegetation combined with the low form of the proposed dwellings (less than 5.5m above the natural ground level).

Fencing, bunds and landscaping will be designed to appear natural and avoid the creation of arbitrary lines or patterns.

#### 3.2.3 Form and density of development

The scale and form of the proposed buildings is similar in character to existing developments in Shotover Country and Lake Hayes but with a density more consistent with Bridesdale. There will be a mix of one and two storey dwellings, mostly detached, with all buildings having a maximum height of 5.5m above the natural ground level. Large amounts of green space have been incorporated into the design which will provide pedestrian and cycle links between the Twin Rivers Trail and Stalker Road. In terms of density the proposal is characteristic of an urban area, but it is also consistent with the Ladies Mile Master Plan which encourages higher densities in this location.

It is not proposed to nominate building platforms at this stage given the SHA character of this development. This is not considered an issue given the character of the area and the purpose of the SHA.

#### 3.2.4 Cumulative effects of development on landscape

The development will add to the suburban character of Ladies Mile, which is transitioning into a settlement in its own right. This is the intention of the Ladies Mile Master Plan and the Housing Accord to create more housing for residents, of a higher density than what has been developed previously. Lake Hayes Estate, Shotover Country, the Queenstown Country Club and Bridesdale are part of a single urban area, of which Laurel Hills will become part of. To the north of SH6, plans are currently being prepared for two other SHAs. Cumulatively, the developments are changing the character of the landscape from an arcadian pastoral character to a new town.

The existing terraces on the site are largely remaining unmodified.

#### 3.2.5 Rural amenities

We consider that the proposal will have an adverse effect on rural amenities given its scale but will maintain adequate and appropriate visual access to open space. A neighbourhood reserve, 4,000m² in size, is proposed in the centre of the development. The reserve provides a pedestrian and cycle link through the development, linking to the Twin Rivers Trail (Shotover River) and through to Stalker Road (primary school). A concept plan for the Neighbourhood Reserve is shown on page 30 of the appendix.

Overall, we consider that the proposal is consistent with the Ladies Mile Master Plan. Landscaping, including fencing and entranceways, will be consistent with the character of the area and will encourage a high level of amenity. For existing residents on Maxs Way and for travellers on SH6, building placement, landscape planting and earth bunds have been designed to minimise potential visual effects and ensure that a sense of rural character is maintained for these residents/travellers while the master plan is achieved. Further details on landscape planting are outlined in Section 4, Mitigation Measures and shown on pages 3, 23, and 31 of the appendix.

#### 3.3 EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY

The visual context of the receiving environment is considered to be an 800m offset from the edge of the proposed development. This distance has been used due to the character of the receiving environment and the relatively contained nature of the site due to vegetation and topography resulting in views from further away not being possible or any proposed changes being indiscernible at distance. A series of key viewpoints were selected to show a representative sample of the likely visual effects which could result from the proposal (refer to Appendix 1 for the relevant photo). Viewpoints are generally located on public land, and where possible located as close as possible to existing or proposed residential dwellings. In assessing the potential effect of a proposal, the quality and openness of the view is considered as well as the availability of alternative views. The viewpoints used were as follows:

- 1. View northeast 53 Maxs Way
- 2. View northeast 49 Maxs Way
- 3. View northeast Boundary of 47 and 49 Maxs way
- 4. View north 37 Maxs Way
- 5. View west Maxs Way Entrance close to 9 Oxfordshire Avenue
- 6. View west 35 Stalker Road
- 7. View north 2 Cotswald Court
- 8. View west SH6
- 9. View east SH6 Boundary
- View west SH6 Boundary (Midway)
- 11. View East SH6 Boundary (Western End)

In assessing the potential effects on visually sensitive receptors, the key viewpoints outlined above have been used as a reference point where it is considered that the effects are likely to be similar to the viewpoint and for a group of viewers. The viewpoint is a representative view, as close as possible to the view likely to be experienced from private residence or property but obtained from a public location. Below is an outline of the potential visual effects each Visually Sensitive Receptor might receive and how the effects may potentially be mitigated. The effects take into account the likely sensitivity of the receptor (based on type), combined with the likely magnitude of effects (a combination of distance from the proposal and degree of change) to determine what the likely residual effects from the proposal will be. Mitigation measures are outlined in Section 4 and a series of cross sections have been developed (refer to pages 23-26 of the appendix).

### RESIDENTS AT 53 MAXS WAY

Relevant Viewpoint 1. View northeast - 53 Maxs Way (Appendix 1, page 12)

Distance from Proposal (m) 170m

Type of View Partial

Sensitivity of VSR High

Magnitude of Change Moderate

The existing view is of a large open grassed paddock in front of a steep, grass escarpment marking the edge of the proposed site boundary. There is a low level of existing vegetation dispersed in groups along the top of the terraced topography. The upper slopes of Slope Hill are visible in the background. The proposed development sits on top of the terrace, but is not visible due to the viewpoints lower elevation. Planting is proposed along the

top of the escarpment edge, approximately 1m high to soften views of proposed dwellings, with only the roof tops likely to be visible. The height of proposed dwellings is limited to 5.5m above the original ground level.

Residual Effect after Mitigation Minor

#### **RESIDENTS AT 49 MAXS WAY**

Relevant Viewpoint 2. View northeast - 49 Maxs Way (Appendix 1, page 13)

Distance from Proposal (m)

Type of View
Partial
Sensitivity of VSR
High
Magnitude of Change
Moderate

The existing view is of a large open grassed paddock with an evergreen conifer hedge running along the northern boundary. This hedge is estimated to be 6-8m in height and largely screens any views of Coronet Peak and the western end of the development. The upper slopes of Slope Hill are visible in the background with a row of grey poplars (+20m in height) on the right side of the view, when looking north. The proposed development will sit on top of the terrace, but will be largely not visible due to the positioning of the dwelling back from the escarpment edge and the height of proposed dwellings is limited to 5.5m above the original ground level. Planting is proposed along the top of the escarpment edge, approximately 1m high to soften views of proposed dwellings, with only the roof tops likely to be visible.

Residual Effect after Mitigation Minor

#### **RESIDENTS AT 47 MAXS WAY**

Relevant Viewpoint 3. View northeast – Boundary of 47 and 49 Maxs Way (Appendix 1, page 14)

Distance from Proposal (m) 93m

Type of View Partial

Sensitivity of VSR High

Magnitude of Change Moderate

The residents of 47 Maxs Way would not provide access for photos, however the existing residential viewpoint contains a large open grassed paddock in front of a steep terrace marking the edge of the proposed site boundary. An established hedge runs along the left-hand edge of the viewpoint and partially screens the area behind. There is a level of existing vegetation dispersed in groups along the top of the terraced topography, with existing poplar trees located in front of the proposals site boundary. In the background of the image snow-capped mountain ranges are partially visible through the trees. The proposed development sits on top of the terrace, following the topography towards SH6. The boundary of the development visible from this viewpoint is planted with a native planting buffer. This buffer consists of planting approximately 1m high, softening the edge of the development against the edge of the embankment allowing for the area to have a greater sensitivity to change. A landscaped park creates an open greenspace, with feature planting that will be visible from this viewpoint. This space helps sustain a level of openness through the proposed development and provides improved visual interest. A buffer strip of native planting along the edge of the state highway provides a backdrop behind the proposed development, reducing the overall visual impact of the development against the existing skyline and landscape.

Residual Effect after Mitigation Minor

#### **RESIDENTS AT 37 MAXS WAY**

Relevant Viewpoint 4. View northeast – 37 Maxs Way (Appendix 1, page 15)

Distance from Proposal (m) 76m
Type of View Partial
Sensitivity of VSR High
Magnitude of Change Moderate

The existing viewpoint contains a large open grassed paddock with dispersed specimen plantings in front of a steep terrace marking the edge of the proposed site boundary. The site boundary follows the topography down

towards Maxs Way. There is a level of existing vegetation dispersed in groups along the top of the terraced topography, with some existing poplar tree located in front of the proposals site boundary. The poplar trees in right hand side of the viewpoint are within the site boundary. In the background of the image snow-capped mountain ranges are partially visible. A clear viewshaft through to Coronet Peak above the embankment is visible from this viewpoint. The proposed development sits on top of the terrace, following the topography towards SH6. The boundary of the development visible from this viewpoint is planted with a native planting buffer. This buffer consists of planting approximately 1m high, softening the edge of the development against the edge of the embankment allowing for the area to have a greater sensitivity to change. A landscaped park creates an open greenspace, with feature planting is visible from this viewpoint. This space helps sustain a level of openness through the proposed development and provides improved visual interest. The location of the landscaped park also preserves the viewshaft through to Coronet Peak. A buffer strip of native planting along the edge of the state highway provides a backdrop behind the proposed development, reducing the overall visual impact of the development against the existing skyline and landscape.

Residual Effect after Mitigation Minor

#### SHOTOVER COUNTRY RESIDENTS LIVING ON OXFORDSHIRE AVENUE

Relevant Viewpoint 5. View west – Maxs Way Entrance (Appendix 1, page 16)

Distance from Proposal (m) >20m
Type of View Partial
Sensitivity of VSR High
Magnitude of Change Moderate

The existing viewpoint shows Maxs Way and the adjacent embankment. marking the edge of the proposed site boundary. There is a level of existing vegetation dispersed in groups along the top of the terraced topography including a grouping of existing *Pinus radiata* trees. The topography of the site and existing vegetation provides partial views into the site. The proposed development sits on top of the embankment, following the topography towards SH6. The boundary of the embankment is planted with planting buffer of native planting. The existing pine trees are to be removed as part of the proposed development.

Residual Effect after Mitigation Minor

#### TRAVELLERS ON STALKER ROAD

Relevant Viewpoint 6. View west – 35 Stalker Road (Appendix 1, page 17)

Distance from Proposal (m) >100m
Type of View Partial
Sensitivity of VSR Low
Magnitude of Change Moderate

This viewpoint contains existing typical development seen within Shotover Country, including low level detached housing and suburban streets. A steep terrace marks the edge of the proposed site boundary. There is a low level of existing vegetation dispersed in groups along the top of the escarpment, including a belt of existing *Pinus radiata* trees. In the background of the image snow-capped mountain ranges are visible. The proposed development sits on top of the terrace, following the topography towards SH6. The proposed use of native planting and specimen trees blends with the current use of similar plants within Shotover Country.

Residual Effect after Mitigation Less than Minor

### RESIDENTS IN SHOTOVER COUNTRY

Relevant Viewpoint 7. View west – 2 Cotswold Court (Appendix 1, page 18)

Distance from Proposal (m) >70m

Type of View Partial

Sensitivity of VSR High

Magnitude of Change Moderate

This viewpoint contains existing residential development, typical of Shotover Country, including low level

detached housing and suburban streets. An escarpment marks the edge of the proposed development with the site boundary, at the base of the escarpment, screened by a large existing hedge which runs parallel to Maxs Way. The existing *Pinus radiata* trees are visible on the right of the frame. The proposed development will sit on top of the terrace, with the rooftops likely to be visible. The 5.5m height restriction for dwellings combined with the proposed landscape planting will reduce visual effects.

Residual Effect after Mitigation Minor

#### **TRAVELLERS ON SH6**

Relevant Viewpoint 8. View west – SH6 (Appendix 1, page 19)

9. View east - SH6 (Appendix 1, page 20)

10. View west - SH6 Boundary (midway) (Appendix 1, page 21)

11. View east – SH6 Boundary (western end)( Appendix 1, page 22)

Distance from Proposal (m) 20m

Type of View Partial / Screened

Sensitivity of VSR Low Magnitude of Change Low

The existing viewpoint shows SH6 running adjacent to the proposed site. Views are currently open towards the remarkable with parts of the Shotover river visible. An existing post and wire fence run along the boundary of the proposed development. There is a level of existing vegetation dispersed in groups along the top of the terraced topography including a grouping of existing pine and poplar trees. The boundary adjacent to the state highway is to be screened with earthworks and plantings. This drastically reduces views over the site, greatly reducing the visual impact of the proposed development. The sensitivity of road users is considered less given the transient nature and high speeds moving past the site. Given the existing topography of the site limiting views in, and combined with the proposed bund and planting, any development on site will largely be screened.

Residual Effect after Mitigation Less than Minor

### 4. MITIGATION MEASURES

The following mitigation measures are proposed to avoid, remedy or mitigate any adverse effects on the landscape character of the receiving environment from the Project. A plan showing their location is attached in Appendix 1, page 23:

MM1 - Highway Buffer Strip

A mix of native and exotic plant species are to be planted on an earth bund running parallel with SH6. These are designed to soften views into the site from SH6 as well as provide a screen for future residents from highway traffic. The bund would be designed provide for a shared path as well as screening the path from future residential dwellings. The bund facing SH6 will have a relatively shallow gradient, between 1:3 and 1:6 to create a more natural appearance and avoid the creation of a solid 'wall' appearance. The bund would be constructed across the rear boundaries of the properties with either a covenant of easement placed over the sections to ensure the retention of the bund. Close board timber fencing would be prohibited along the rear boundary to ensure an open character is retained.

MM2 - Central Park / Open Space

A 4,000m² neighbourhood reserve open space is centrally located within the design providing a green link between the state highway and the embankment. The reserve contains a mix of recreation spaces and activities along with a flat area which is at least 30x30m. The reserve is positioned to ensure a clear viewshaft of Coronet Peak from the dwelling at 37 Maxs Way is maintained.

MM3 - Connection to Twin River Trail

A 2.5-3.0m wide gravel /crushed dust shared path will provide a pedestrian and cycle link between the Twin Rivers Trail, the development and eventually Stalker Road. Signage would match existing signage developed along the trail.

MM4 - Escarpment Planting

Planting of native groundcovers, grasses and shrubs are proposed along the escarpment adjacent to Maxs Way to soften the visual appearance of the proposal from Shotover Country dwellings. The planting will be no higher than 3m in height once established. This will soften views while ensuring properties below are not adversely shaded. Existing willow trees are to be removed.

MM5 - Boundary Planting

Along the top edge of the escarpment west of Layton Lane, the existing hedge planting is to be retained. Where there are gaps, a single row of hedge plants (recommended species *Griselinia littoralis*) are to be planted. These plants are to be maintained at a height of approximately 1m.

MM6 - Pocket Parks

Small, green spaces are to be provided within the design for the amenity of future residents.

MM7 - Shared Path on Layton Lane

A shared path is utilise Layton Lane, linking the central park with a new path adjacent to Maxs Way which provides off-street connectivity to Stalker Road.

MM8 – Removal of Pine Trees

The existing pine trees on the escarpment between the site and 12 Stalker Road are to be removed and replaced with amenity plantings at the Stalker Road end of this terrace and above the proposed new housing.

MM9 - Street Tree Plantings

Street tree plantings are proposed throughout the project to provide amenity.

### 5. CONCLUSIONS

The Laurel Hills SHA development is consistent with the Ladies Mile Master Plan and from a Landscape and Visual impact perspective will have the following effects:

The landscape character of Ladies Mile has changed dramatically over the last ten years with the development of Lake Hayes Estate, Shotover Country and more recently the Queenstown Country Club (SHA). Large scale landscape elements such as Slope Hill, the Shotover River, and the general landform of the area has remained unchanged. Vegetation clearance has occurred but typically the receiving environment had an open character with large grass paddocks. The largest change has been the construction of road infrastructure and low-density housing. In some locations the landscape character is more suburban than rural. The proposed development is consistent with the changes that are currently occurring locally to landscape character.

While zoned Rural, the proposal is consistent with the Ladies Mile Master Plan which was adopted by

Queenstown Lakes District Council earlier this year. The development will result in a housing density of just under 20 households / hectare which is appropriate for the development of medium density dwellings. The proposal is not located in an Outstanding Natural Landscape. This assessment, against the Landscape Values of the District Plan, with the area considered a Visual Amenity Landscape, found the effects to be acceptable.

In terms of visual amenity, the largest potential adverse effects will be experienced by existing rural-residential dwellings on Maxs Way and the residential dwellings which back onto Maxs Way but are accessed from Oxfordshire Ave. These people will have partial views of the development above the escarpment. The placement of buildings and the proposed height limits will largely mitigate most visual effects with the tops of roofs partially visible.

Dave Compton-Moen



### LAUREL HILLS SHA, QUEENSTOWN

Project no: 2018\_036

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Revision:

Date: 15 JANUARY 2018
Client name: LAUREL HILLS LIMITED

Author: David Compton-Moen

File name: \ADMIN\dcm urban share\4\_DCM - Projects\2018\_036 - Trinity - Laurel Hills

 $Block \ 3\_Working \ Files \ \ 3\_Indesign \ \ 2018\_036\_Laurel \ Hills\_LVIA\_Appendix. indd$ 

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Α	3/12/2018	Minor Corrections	DCM		
В	19/12/2018	Draft Final	DCM		TA
С	15/01/2019	Addition of Berm Diagram	DCM		





Queenstown, New Zealand

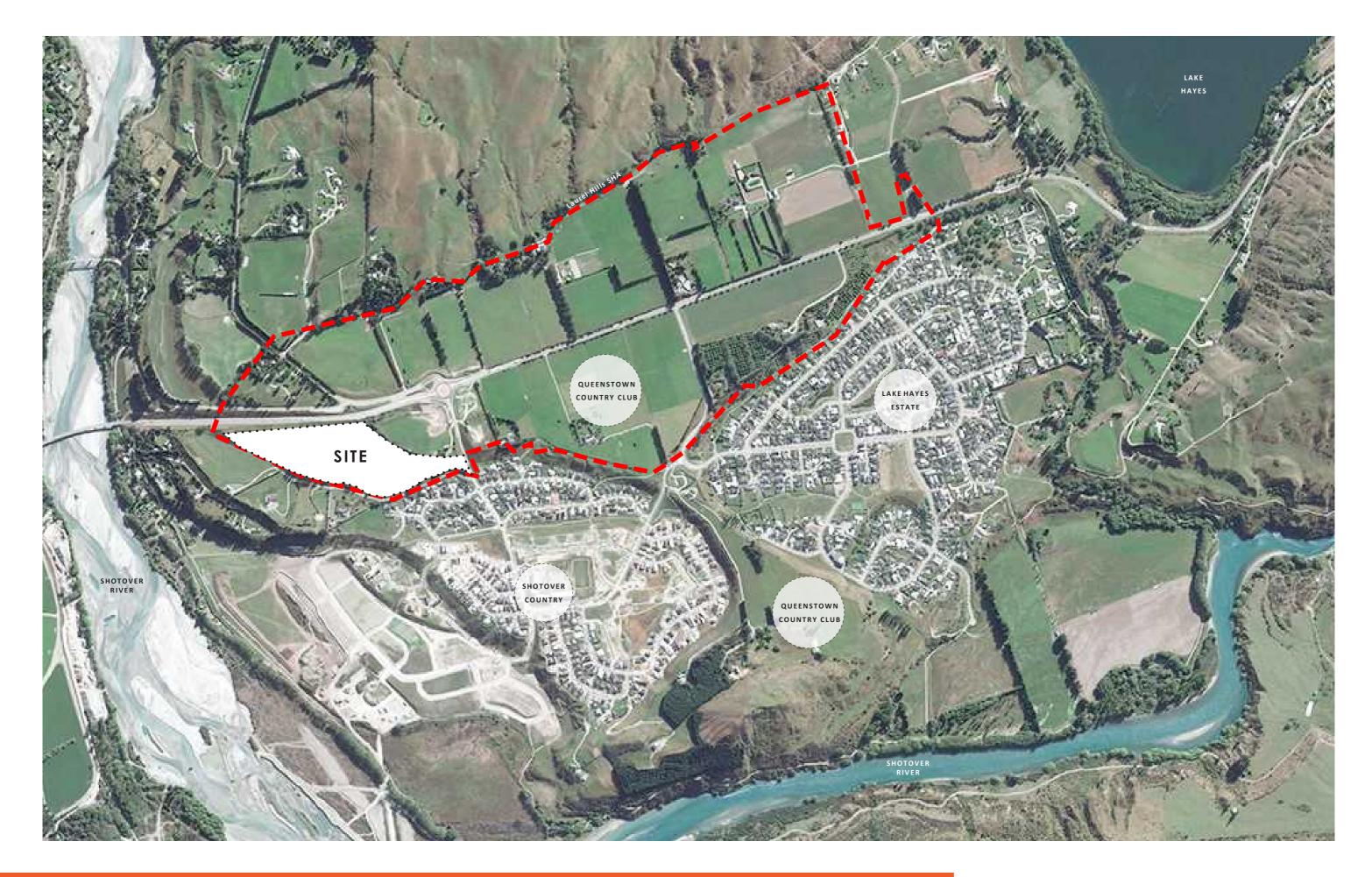
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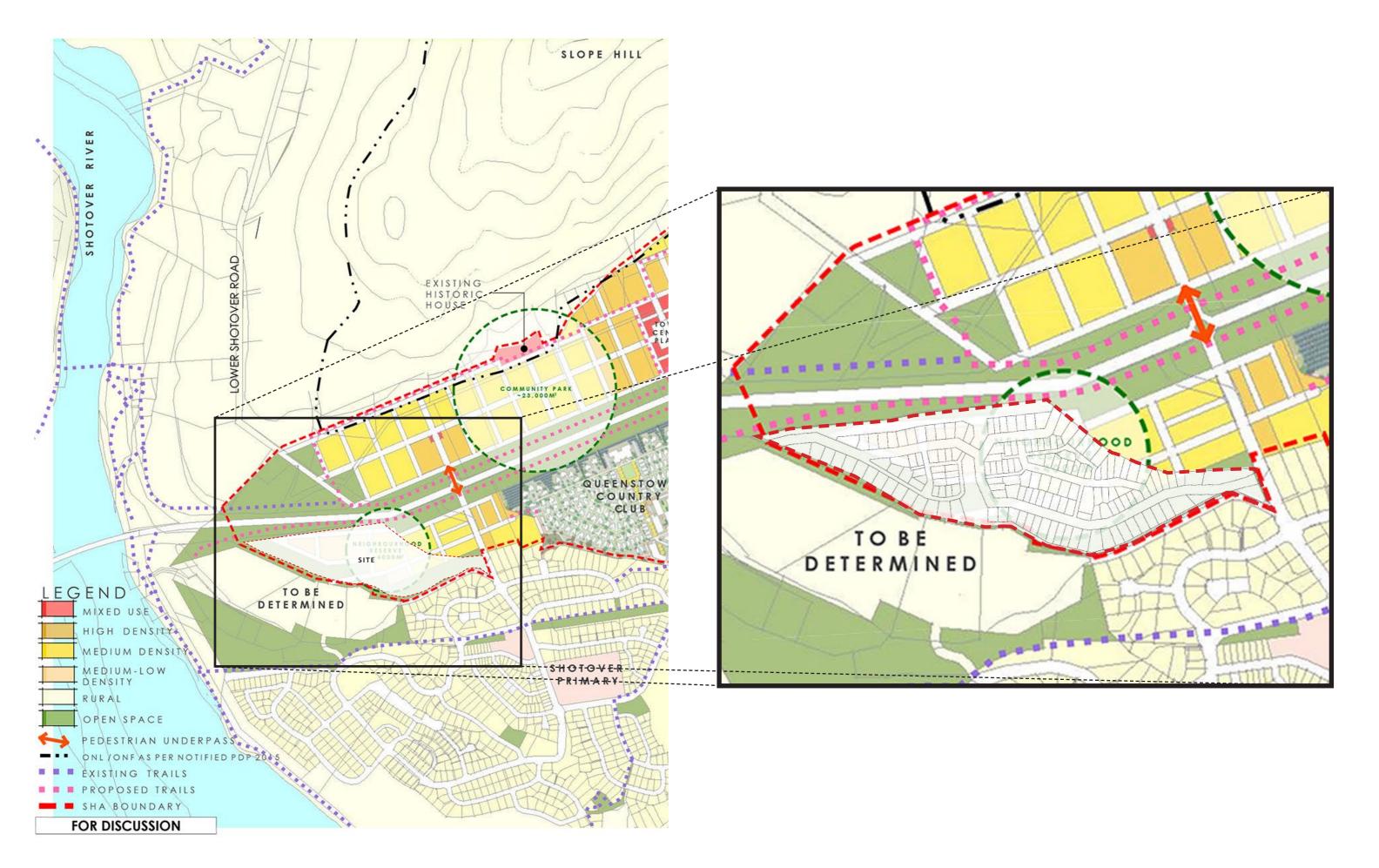
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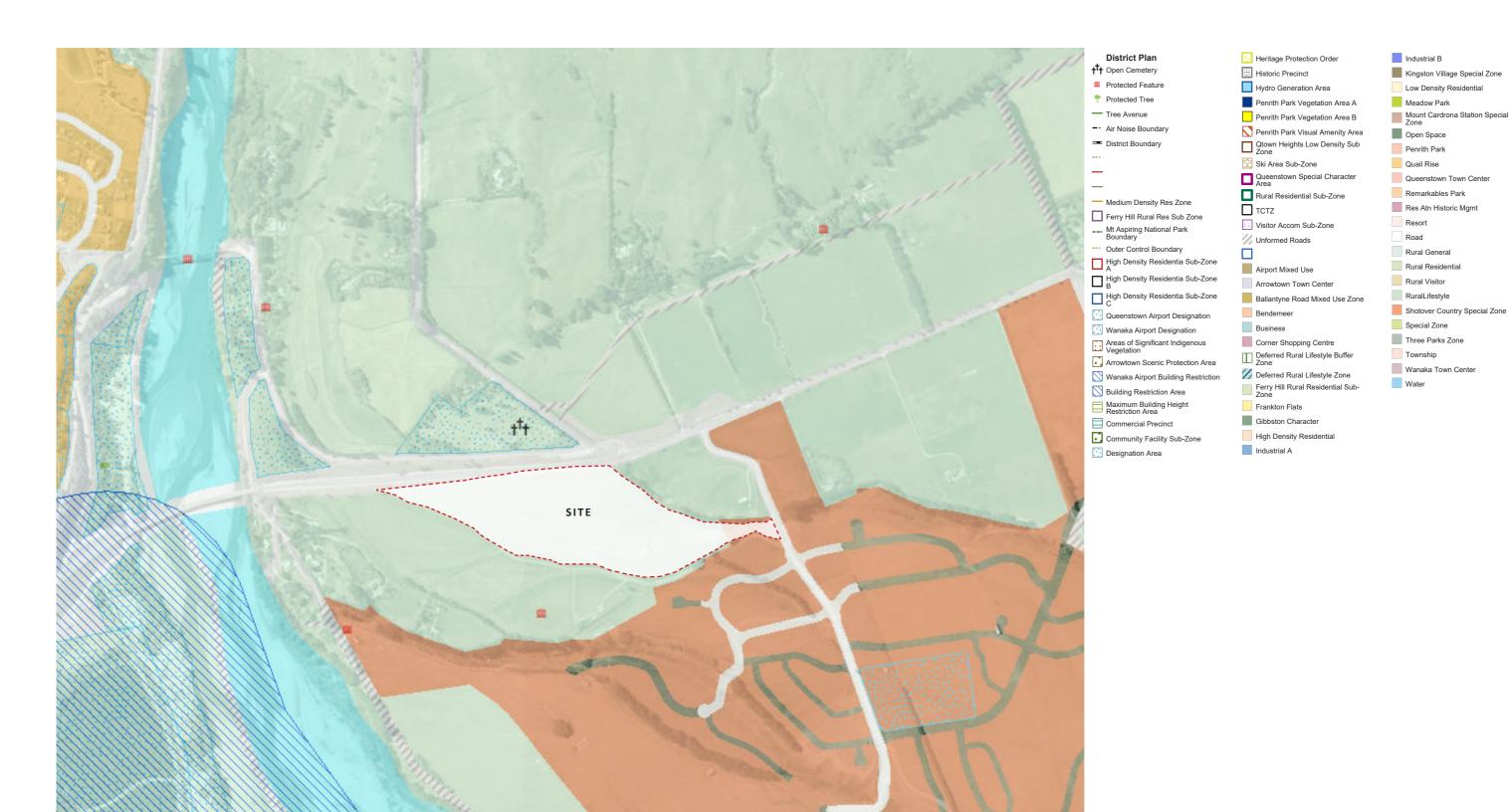
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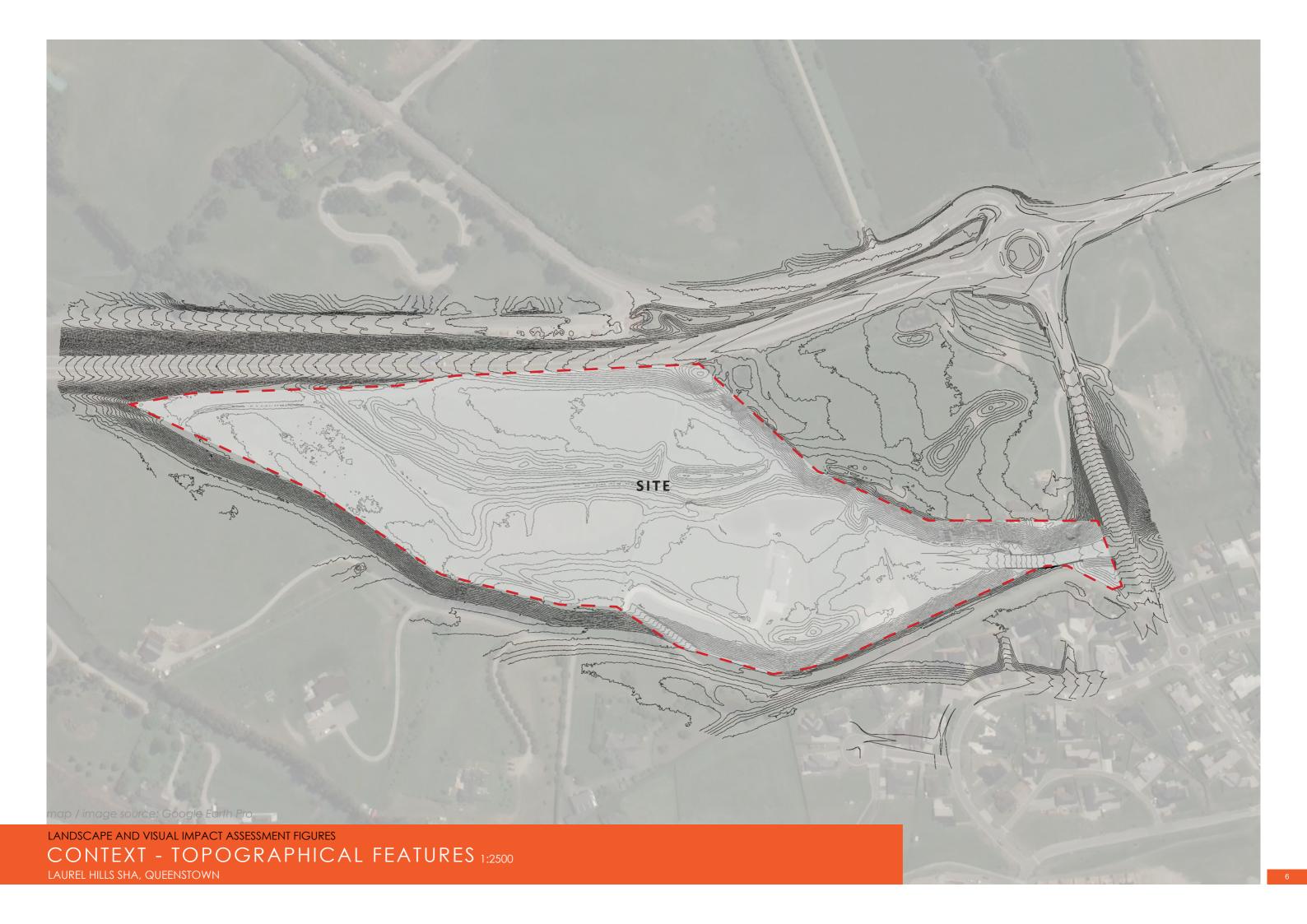




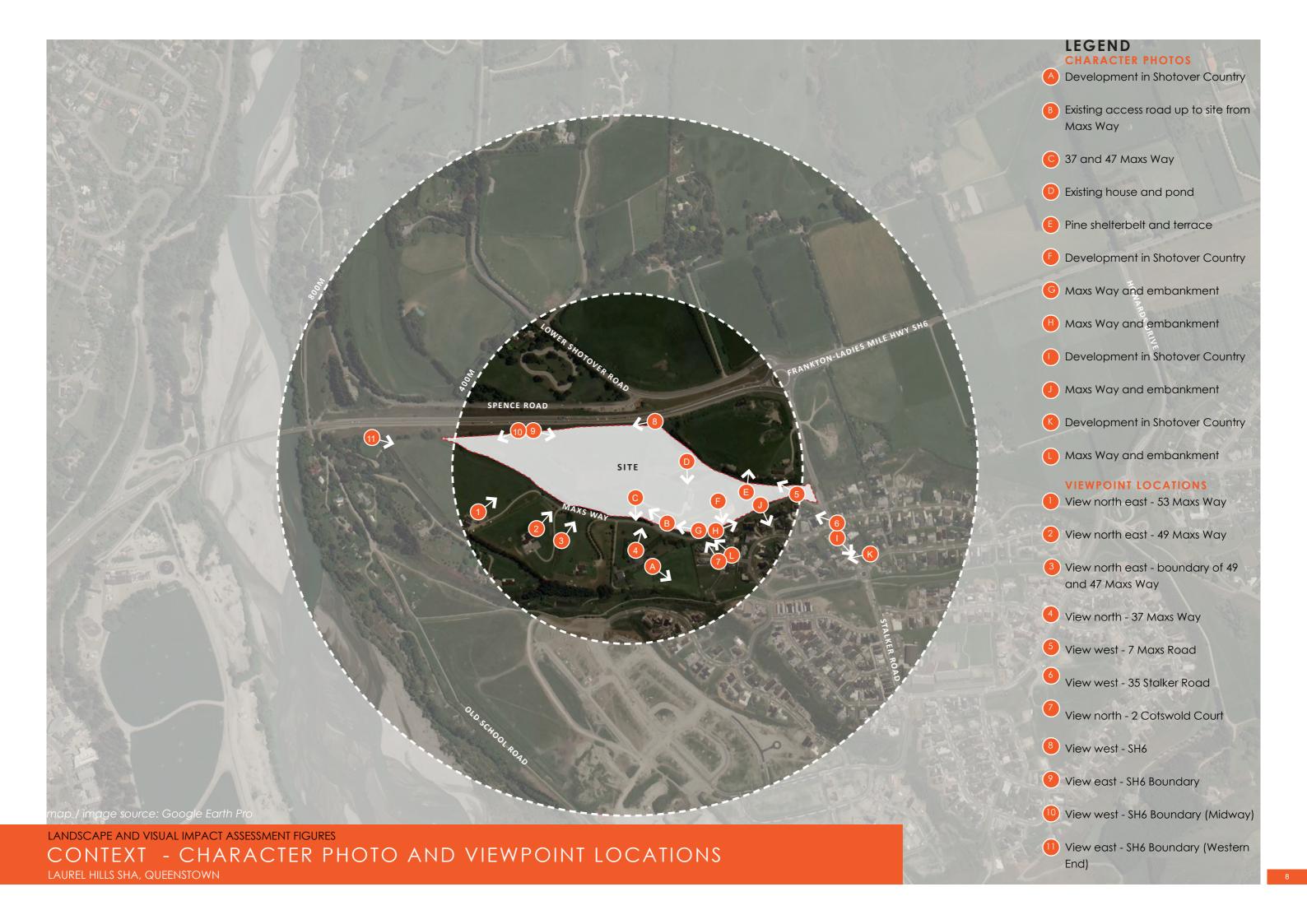


map / image source: QLDC Website











Development in Shotover Country is typically single storey, large footprint dwellings. This photo was taken from the rear of 37 Maxs Way looking through a gap in the fence.



The view from the southern edge of the project site looking south towards 37 Maxs Way. Laurel Bank House, no. 47 Maxs Way is on the right of the frame, sited approximately 130m away from where the photo has been taken from.



Layton Lane provides the only current access to the site, from Maxs Way. The four poplars in the middle of the frame are on the proposal site. The embankment to the left of Layton Lane is not in the proposal site with the boundary being at the top of the slope.



The existing house is a large single storey dwelling orientated to the west. There is a large, man-made pond on the property along with an irrigation race which runs along the northern edge of the pond before being piped underground.



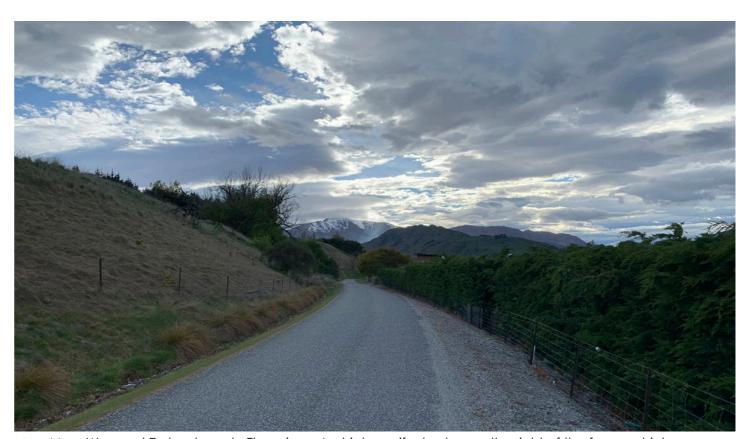
There is an existing pine shelter belt and embankment running along the terrace which separates the proposal and 12 Stalker Road. The embankment is approximately 8m high with the pine trees estimated to be ~16m in height.



The height difference between Maxs Way and the proposal site is approximately 8m with the embankment part of the SHA site east of Layton Lane (the access road). To the west of Layton Lane, the embankment is under the ownership of 37, 47, and 53 Maxs Way.



Shotover Country is a mix of single and two storey residential dwellings. Houses are typically fully detached with internal garaging. Side and rear boundaries are defined by close board timber fences.



Maxs Way and Embankment - There is a ~4m high conifer hedge on the right of the frame which screens existing houses in Shotover Country. The embankment on the left is part of the proposal area, estimated to be 8m high.



Shotover Country typically consists of single storey detached dwellings although there are some two storey dwellings. Dwellings typically have internal garaging with access directly from the main road, as opposed to service lane. Road widths are wide with an open character.



Large, single storey detached dwellings are common in Shotover Country. Solid style fencing is limited in the development although some fences were observed.



Maxs Way is in the foreground of this photo, at the base of the escarpment, with the houses in the foreground accessed from Cotswold Court and Oxfordshire Way. There is no access onto Maxs Way from these dwellings.



The view from the parking area at the end of Cotswold Court looking up to the site. There is an existing conifer hedge, estimated to be ~4m high between the houses in the foreground and Maxs Way.

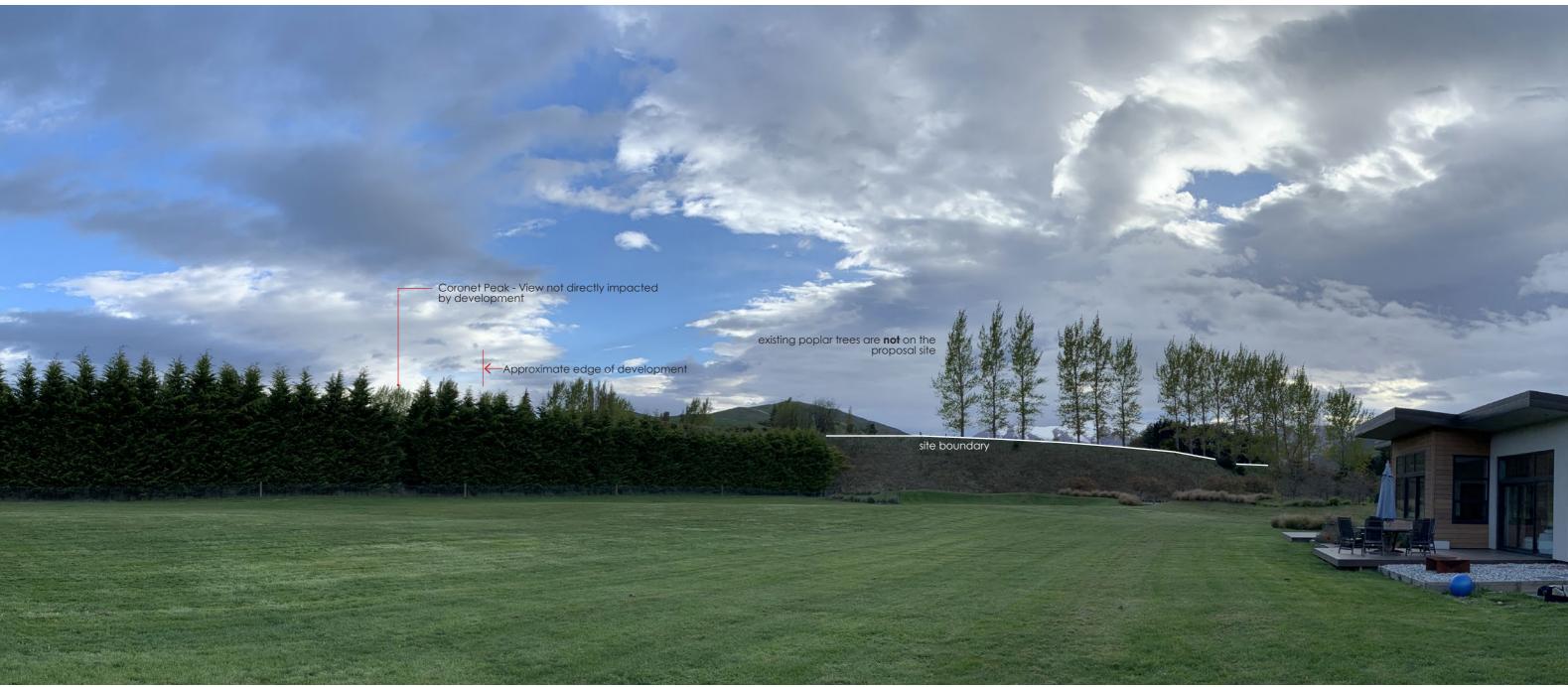


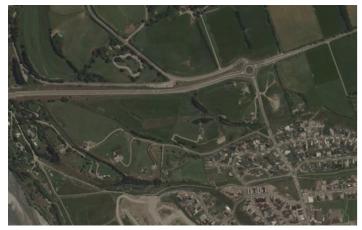
A. IMAGE LOCATION





A. IMAGE LOCATION



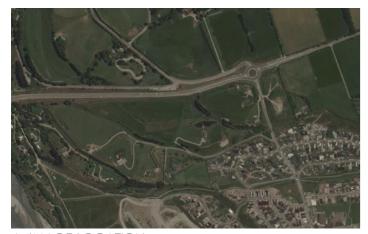


A. IMAGE LOCATION



3 VP3 - VIEW NORTH EAST - BOUNDARY OF 49 AND 47 MAXS WAY LAUREL HILLS SHA, QUEENSTOWN

Image captured on iPhone XS
Focal length of 26mm.
Date: 17th October 2018 at 8:36 am.
Height of 1.7 metres
45° 0'11.94"S 168°46'0.94"E
Photos merged in Photoshop CS to create panorama



A. IMAGE LOCATION





A. IMAGE LOCATION



LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT FIGURES

VP5 - VIEW WEST - MAXS WAY ENTRANCE
LAUREL HILLS SHA, QUEENSTOWN

Image captured on iPhone XS
Focal length of 26mm.
Date: 17th October 2018 at 9:22 am.
Height of 1.7 metres
45° 0'8.93"S 5° 0'9.96"S 168°46'24.05"E
Photos merged in Photoshop CS to create panorama



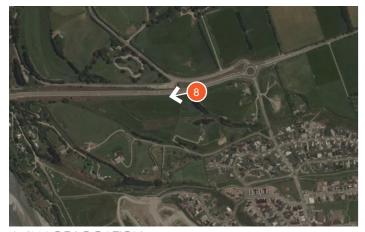
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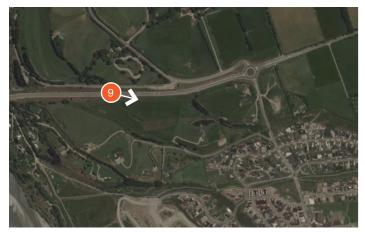
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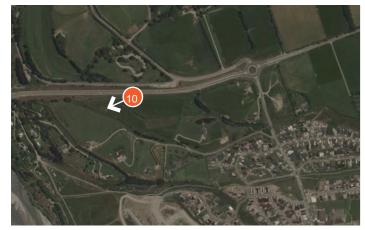
A. IMAGE LOCATION





A. IMAGE LOCATION





A. IMAGE LOCATION





A. IMAGE LOCATION



LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT FIGURES

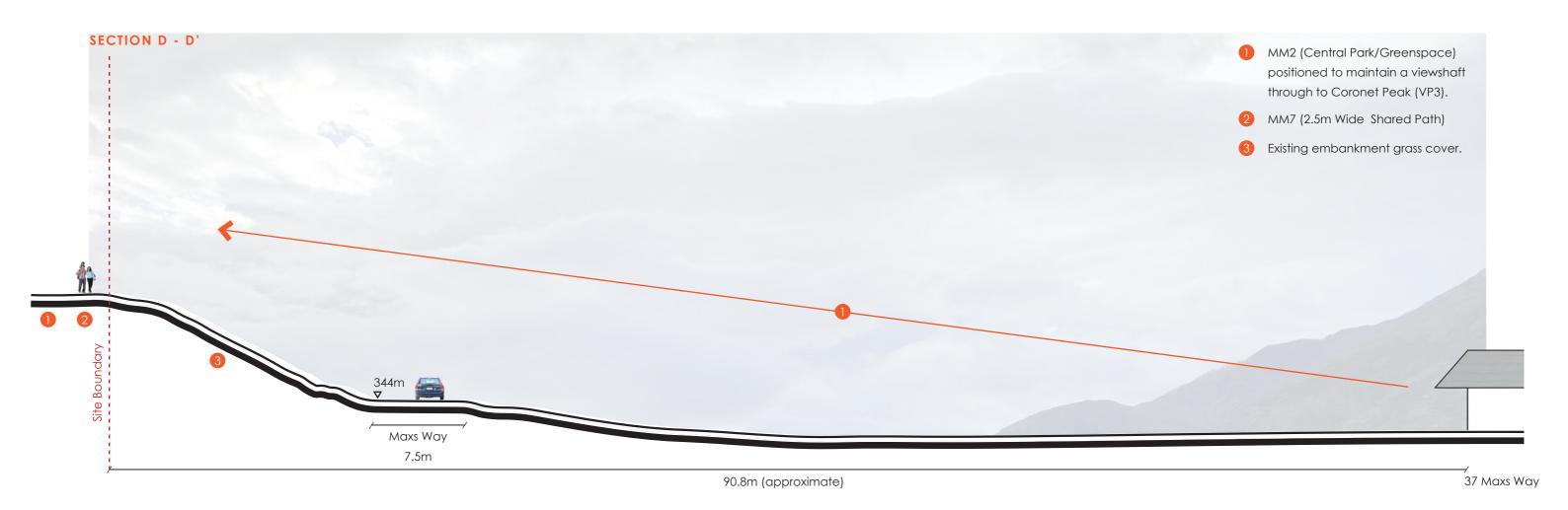
VP11 - VIEW EAST - SH6 BOUNDARY (WESTERN END)

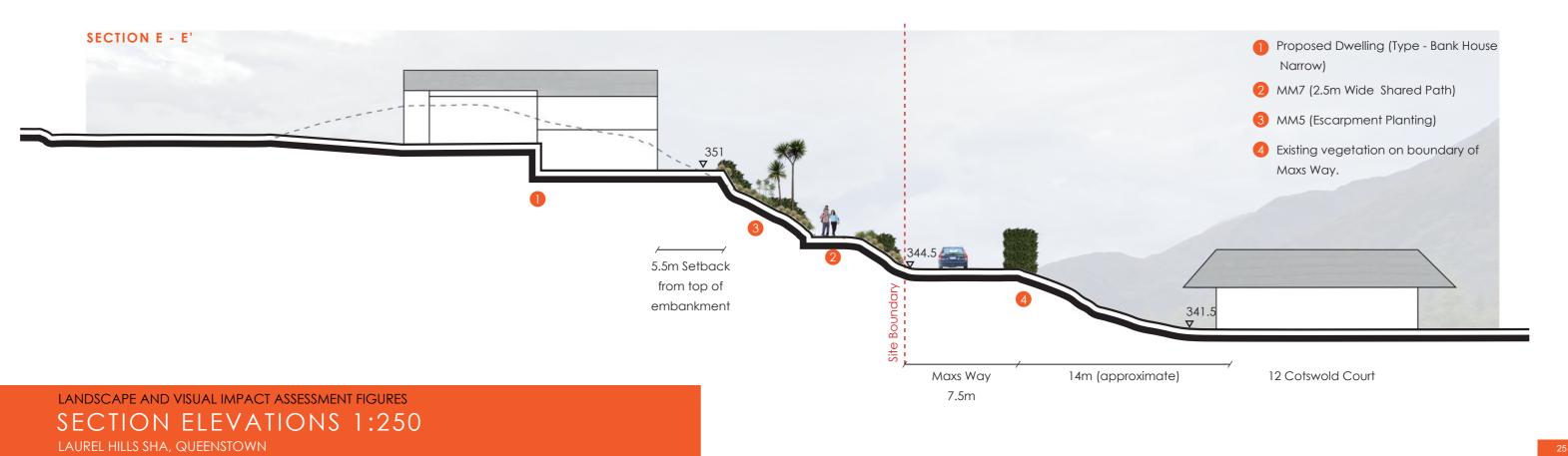
LAUREL HILLS SHA, QUEENSTOWN

Image captured on iPhone XS
Focal length of 26mm.
Date: 17th October 2018 at 3.56pm.
Height of 1.7 metres
Co-ordinates: 168.45.44 South; 45.0.5 East; Elevation 349.9m
Photos (4) merged in Photoshop CS to create panorama



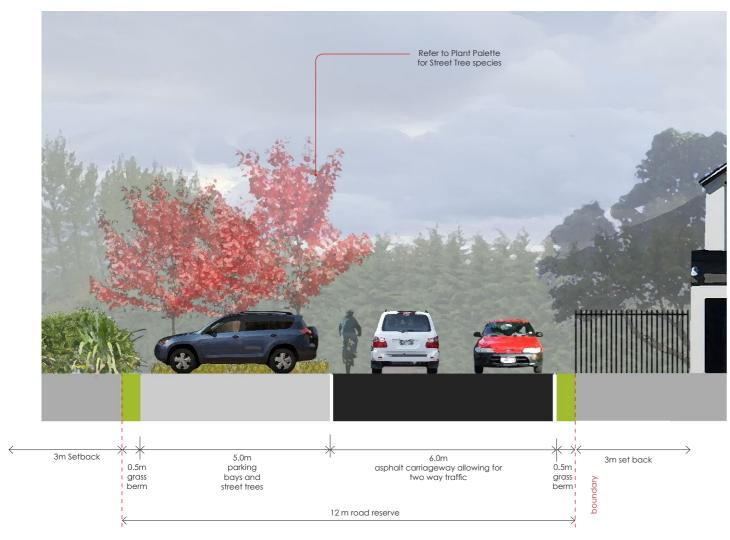








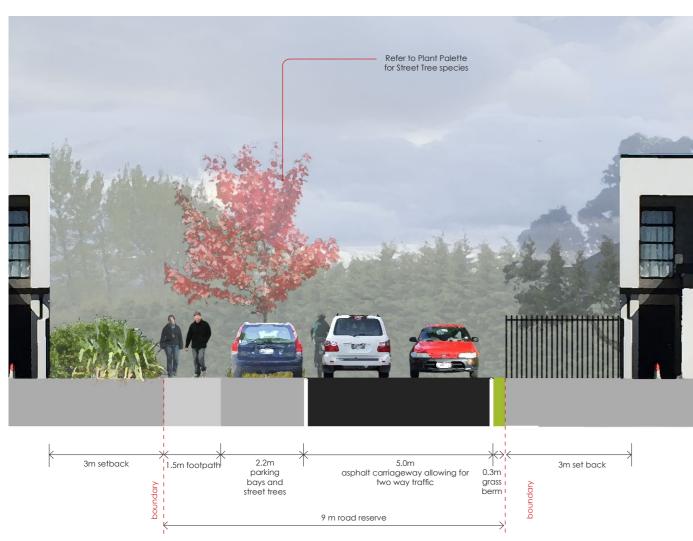




1. CROSS-SECTION



2. AXOMETRIC OF STREET LAYOUT



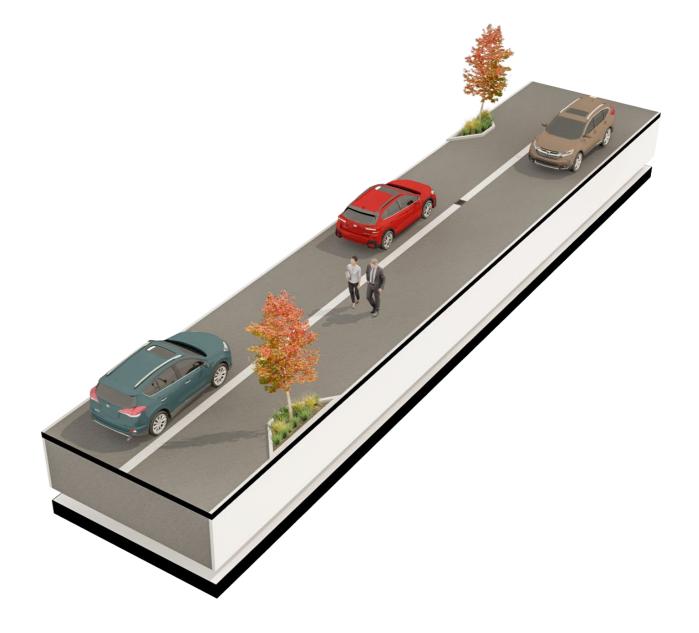
### 1. CROSS-SECTION



2. AXOMETRIC OF STREET LAYOUT



1. CROSS-SECTION



2. AXOMETRIC OF STREET LAYOUT



A. EXISTING VIEW

## KEY

- Landscape bund running parallel to SH6 to soften views into the site. Planting along this bund would be predominantly native species with exotic specimen trees to provide character and seasonal interest.
- B A 2.5 3.0m wide gravel / crusher dust shared path providing a pedestrian and cycle link between the Twin Rivers Trail, the development and eventually Stalker Road. Signage would match existing signage developed along the trail.
- An internal landscape bund provides screening between the proposed development and the shared path. The bund would be constructed across the rear boundaries of the properties with either a covenant or easement placed over the sections to ensure the retention of the bund. Close board timber fencing would be prohibited along the rear boundary to ensure an open character is retained.
- Once vegetation is established it is likely future buildings will be completely screened from SH6 with potentially only rooftops visible. Living areas would not be visible from either the shared path or SH6.



B. MITIGATED VIEW



LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT FIGURES

LANDSCAPE CONCEPT PLAN - PERSPECTIVE

LAUREL HILLS SHA, QUEENSTOWN

#### **SPECIMEN TREES (RESERVES AND STREEETS**



Quercus robur English Oak



Fuscospora cliffortoidies Mountain Beech



Liquidambar styraciflua Liquidambar / Sweetgum



Acer rubrum Red maple



Sophora microphylla Kowhai



Pyrus calleryana Ornamental pear



Prunus accolade Flowering Cherry Tree

#### **AMENITY PLANTING - STREETS AND RESERVES**



Vitis vinifera Common grape vine



Rosa 'Carpet Appleblossom' Apple Blossom Carpet Rose



Poa cita Silver Tussock



Hebe salicifolia Koromiko



Hebe cupressoidies Hebe



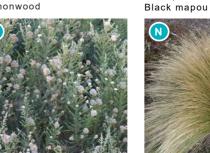
Austroderia richardii South Island Toetoe

Libertia perigrinans

NZ Iris, Mikoikoi



Lemonwood



Ozothamnus leptophyllus Cottonwood



Phormium cookianum 'green dwarf"

Mountain Flax

Pittosporum tenufolium



Koromiko

N

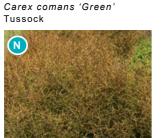
Chionochloa flavicans Miniature toetoe



Hebe treadwellii Hebe



Coprosma rugosa NZ Coprosma





Carex comans 'Bronze'

Tussock

Libertia perigrinans NZ Iris, Mikoikoi



Carex testacea

Tussock

NZ Blueberry



Anemanthele lessoniana

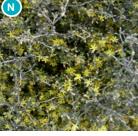
Wind Grass

Prunus Iusitanica Portuguese laurel

## **HEDGING - STREETS, RESERVES AND BOUNDARIES**



Kapuka



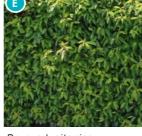
Corokoia



Carpinus betulus English Hornbeam



Fagus sylvatica English Beech



# NATIVE BUFFER PLANTING - ADJACENT TO SH6 AND ON EMBANKMENT



Leptospermum scoparium Manuka





Oleria odorata Scented tree daisy



Dianella nigra NZ Blueberry



Cabbage Tree, ti kouka



NZ flax





Hebe salicifolia

#### Griselinia littoralis Corokia cotoneaster

# PLANTING PALETTE

LAUREL HILLS SHA, QUEENSTOWN

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT FIGURES

= Exotic N = Native



