

**BEFORE THE MACKENZIE DISTRICT PLAN HEARINGS PANEL**

**UNDER                      the Resource Management Act 1991**

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER      Proposed Plan Change 29 to the  
Mackenzie District Plan**

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**Statement of Evidence of Richard Tyler**

**On behalf of Tekapo Landco Limited and Godwit Leisure Limited**

**9 May 2025**

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## **1.0 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This statement provides expert landscape assessment evidence in relation to rezoning proposed by Tekapo Landco Limited and Godwit Leisure Limited (TLGL) at the northwestern edge of Lake Tekapo Township (within Lot 401 DP 560853). This relates to Plan Change 29 of the Mackenzie District Plan.
- 1.2 Drawing on my experience, I assess that the proposed changes - subject to recommended site coverage limits, will result in at most *very low* adverse effects on landscape character and visual amenity. The proposed rezoning will integrate appropriately with existing development and support the recreational and residential role of the township while maintaining key landscape values of the Township.

## **2.0 QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**

- 2.1 My name is Richard Tyler.
- 2.2 My qualifications include a Bachelor in Landscape Architecture with Honours at Lincoln University and I am registered with the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architecture.
- 2.3 I have over 25 years' experience in the industry, having worked for several design and planning consultancies throughout New Zealand. My expertise includes landscape architecture, urban design, master planning and assessment.
- 2.4 In January 2017 I founded SITE Landscape Architects, with the majority of our projects located in Wakatipu Basin and Wanaka. Prior to this my employment history includes working for Darby Partners in Queenstown and Boffa Miskell in Auckland.
- 2.5 I have been involved in a wide range of design and assessment projects at plan change resource consent and hearing phase. I have also undertaken a number of peer review assessments for QLDC.

## **3.0 CODE OF CONDUCT**

- 3.1 I confirm that I have read the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses contained in the Environment Court's Practice Note 2023 and I agree to comply with it. I have

read and agree to comply with that Code. In that regard I confirm that this evidence is within my area of expertise, except where I state that I am relying upon the specified evidence of another person. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions that I express.

#### 4.0 SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

4.1 My evidence is structured as follows:

- a) Methodology;
- b) Proposal Overview and Site Context;
- c) Assessment of Visual Effects;
- d) Effects on Landscape Values;
- e) Conclusion.

#### 5.0 METHODOLOGY

5.1 This assessment has been undertaken in accordance with Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines (New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects, 2022), which represent national best practice in landscape assessment. The methodology includes a review of the receiving environment, an identification of existing landscape character and values, and an assessment of the potential effects of the proposed rezoning on both visual amenity and landscape character. Effects have been assessed using the 7-point scale derived from the NZILA Guidelines and aligned with relevant terminology under the Resource Management Act (RMA).

5.2 Assessment scale:

							Significant
Planning:	less than minor		minor		more than minor		
Landscape:	very low	low	low-mod	moderate	mod-high	high	very high

## **6.0 PROPOSED OVERVIEW AND SITE CONTEXT**

6.1 The proposal involves rezoning land located at the northwestern edge of the Lake Tekapo Township. The subject area sits on a terrace above the Lakes Edge Holiday Park and on steeper ground at the toe of Mount John. The land is currently zoned Open Space (OSZ), and the proposal seeks to change the zoning to Sport and Active Recreation Zone (SARZ) on the steeper sloping land, and Medium Density Residential Zone (MRZ) on the flatter terrace above. A small portion of land will remain as OSZ, including land consented as a reserve under RM210135.

6.2 The SARZ will be situated between the Tekapo Springs and the Station Bay development. This zone would enable activities such as commercial recreation, outdoor pursuits, and associated buildings. The MRZ extension will cover a small portion of land adjacent to the existing MRZ zone, which would allow a limited increase in residential development on suitable topography.

6.3 The surrounding landscape includes the prominent natural features of Mount John to the north, Lake Tekapo to the east, and a mix of alpine vegetation and emerging residential areas. Station Bay and other parts of the township are undergoing significant development, with the removal of pine forest and the construction of new residential housing as part of planned urban growth.

6.4 Changes Made since the Submission:

The proposal has been revised since the submission – in the location of the consented reserve (RM210135), proposed zoning has been updated from MRZ to OSZ. This change is reflected on update Figure 01 appended, with the reserve marked with a green dashed line.

6.5 Submission made by Tekapo Springs Limited

I understand that a submission was made by Tekapo Springs Limited to rezone land to the east and west of Tekapo Springs from OSZ to SARZ. The portion of land to the west they propose to be rezoned is a smaller area that borders the Springs western boundary. The eastern area is a slither of publicly owned land that extends along the waterfront to the east of the Springs.

6.6 While I have only undertaken a brief assessment of this proposal, I consider that acceptance of this zoning would require a similar appropriate building site coverage

to be applied as is proposed to be applied to the SARZ to the west of the Springs to maintain landscape character.

## **7.0 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND VISUAL AMENITY**

7.1 Lake Tekapo is recognised for its distinctive alpine setting, with the township nestled along the lake's edge and framed by open plains and mountainous backdrops. The character of the township is defined by its low-rise form, visual access to surrounding natural features, and the way built development is visually subordinate to the surrounding landscape.

7.2 The subject site sits within this context — visible from some public viewpoints but largely framed by existing and emerging development. The character values identified in this assessment include:

- The dominance of the natural landscape over built form;
- Clear view shafts to the lake and surrounding mountains;
- Visual cohesion in the township's expansion;
- Protection of residential and visitor amenity values, particularly along key transport routes.

## **8.0 ASSESSMENT OF VISUAL EFFECTS**

8.1 From a landscape and visual perspective, the proposed rezoning introduces potential changes in built form and land use, but these are assessed as having very low effects if managed appropriately.

8.2 **SARZ Area (Area 1 on Figure 01&02):** The most sensitive aspect of the proposal relates to the steeper slopes proposed to be rezoned as SARZ. While the zone enables commercial recreation and structures with up to 40% site coverage, such an extent of development would risk visually dominating the landform and eroding its open space character. For this reason, my assessment recommends limiting site coverage to **2,700m<sup>2</sup> (approximately 10% of the area)**. This constraint ensures that built development is secondary to the landscape, preserves the green backdrop to Tekapo Springs, and retains visual coherence of the slope.

- 8.3 From key viewpoints along Lakeside Drive and adjacent to the hot pools, the proposed SARZ will be visible but will appear contained within the wider landform. With the recommended restrictions in place, development would integrate with the surrounding environment without appearing intrusive or out of character.
- 8.4 **MRZ Areas (2, 2A):** The proposed extensions of the Medium Density Residential Zone involve relatively minor changes to the zoning boundary. These areas are adjacent to the existing terrace and form a logical continuation of the residential footprint. Visual change resulting from this extension will be small and will blend with the surrounding residential pattern.
- 8.5 From Lakeside Drive, the extension would appear as a minor addition to existing development already visible along the ridge. From State Highway 8, the site is set low in the landscape, beneath more prominent landforms such as Mount John, and any increase in built form will be largely imperceptible within the broader visual composition.

## 9.0 EFFECTS ON LANDSCAPE VALUES

- 9.1 The assessment finds that the proposal, including the recommended restrictions, will not compromise the key landscape values that define Tekapo. These include:
- **Visual coherence:** The extensions are modest in scale and well-aligned with existing urban form.
  - **Natural dominance:** The proposal maintains the dominance of the natural landscape in key views by limiting site coverage and aligning built development with topography.
  - **Recreational character:** The SARZ proposal aligns with adjacent land uses such as Tekapo Springs and would support a continued recreational function in this part of the township.
  - **Amenity values:** Both visual and experiential amenity for residents and visitors will be maintained, as the character of the wider alpine setting remains intact.

## **10.0 CONCLUSION**

- 10.1 In summary, our assessment concludes that the proposed zoning amendments will result in at most very low adverse effects on landscape character and visual amenity. Subject to the adoption of the recommended site coverage restriction within the SARZ, the changes are appropriate in landscape terms and are consistent with the intended character and development pattern of the Tekapo Township.
- 10.2 The landscape values associated with Lake Tekapo - including openness, views to natural features, and integration of built form within the landform will be maintained. The proposal recognises the sensitivity of steeper parts of site while enabling practical land use outcomes that complement the township's recreational and residential role.

Richard Tyler

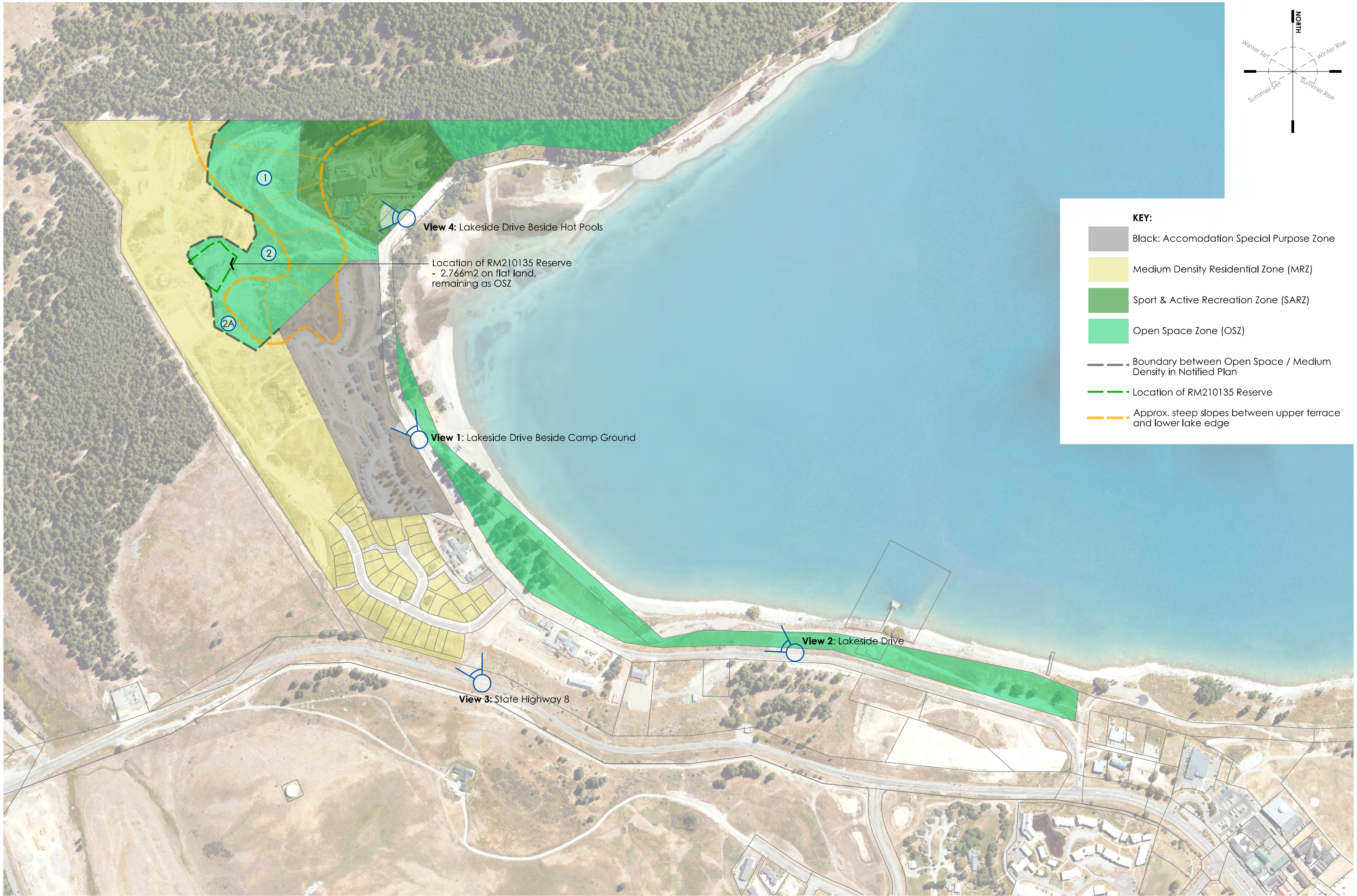
Landscape Architect, SITE Landscape Architects

9th May 2025

## 11.0 APPENDICES

- Figure 1: MDC District Plan **Notified** (with view locations)
- Figure 2: MDC District Plan **Proposed** (with view locations)
- Landscape Views 1 – 4

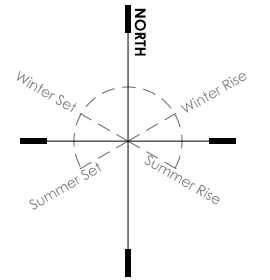
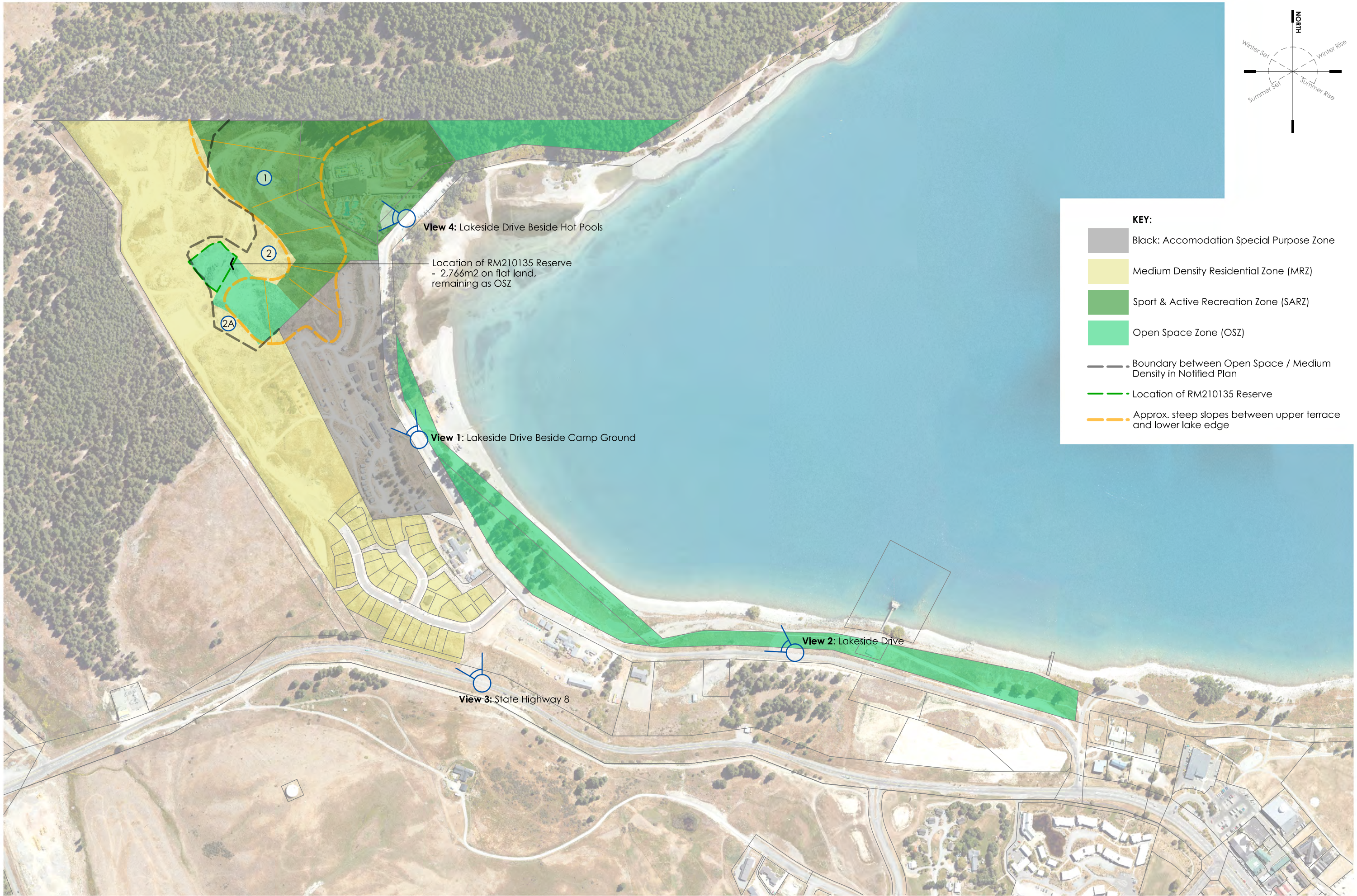




**KEY:**

- Black: Accommodation Special Purpose Zone
- Medium Density Residential Zone (MRZ)
- Sport & Active Recreation Zone (SARZ)
- Open Space Zone (OSZ)
- Boundary between Open Space / Medium Density in Notified Plan
- Location of RM210135 Reserve
- Approx. steep slopes between upper terrace and lower lake edge





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Location of RM210135 Reserve

In notified plan the area below black dashed line is zoned OSZ

**Photo Notes:**

Camera: Iphone 13 Pro  
Lens: 1X, 26mm, 72 degree view angle. (Represents near peripheral and small part of mid peripheral view)  
Photo taken: 20.11.24

Hold printed A3 sheet 30cm from eye to replicate real view scale

**Proposed zoning within applicant's land:**  
Black: Accomodation Special Purpose Zone  
Yellow: Medium Density Residential Zone  
Dark Green: Sport & Active Recreation Zone  
Light Green: Open Space Zone

Black dashed line: Boundary between Open Space / Medium Density in Notified Plan

Areas were imported into Google Earth, view from same location exported, lined up / overlaid over photo then graphic traced as shown.





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Photo taken: 07.03.22

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