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Tekapo Landco Ltd.

Plan Change Application to the
Mackenzie District Council

Lakeside Drive, Tekapo

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1. Introduction

1.1. Earthwork Landscape Architects

My name is Matthew Lester, a NZILA Registered Landscape Architect and director of Earthwork Landscape Architects Ltd with a Bachelor of Science (Geography) and a Post Graduate Diploma in Landscape Architecture. I have been practicing across a broad range of the profession since 1989.

A significant part of my professional experience has been with rural and natural landscapes at a range of scales. This has involved landscape planning and design with resulting consent work in Hurunui, Marlborough, Waimakariri Districts and Christchurch City.

1.2. Description of proposal

Earthwork Landscape Architects Ltd has been engaged by Tekapo Landco Limited (the applicant) to provide landscape planning and Assessment of Landscape Effects for a proposed District Plan change regarding the existing Special Travellers Accommodation Zone (STA Zone) and Residential 2 land, to a proposed Residential 1 Zone, a proposed Recreation P Zone, an amended Residential 2 Zone, and to apply the existing STA Zone to the present Camping Ground sub-zone.

1.3. Assessment Context

Earthwork's scope was to assess the site and in consultation with the other consultant's engaged, recommend the most appropriate zoning for the site within the site's landscape context, while addressing the topography, visual catchment and effect on surrounding areas.

Two site visits have been undertaken, on 25 February and 28 June 2014. Both were clear, sunny days. A complete walk over of the site and a review of the site in its close and more distant context were undertaken.

The landscape values used to assess the proposed plan change are set out below:

Natural Landscape

- Geology, Topography and Hydrology
- Ecology and Plant Cover
- Processes, Transient Values and Expressiveness

Cultural Landscape

- Heritage
- Tangata Whenua
- Current Use
- Shared and Recognised Value

Landscape Character

- General Landscape Character
- Aesthetic Value
- Transient Value

Visibility and Views

- SH8 – North and South
- Lakeside Drive

- Mt John
- Surrounding Views – Lake, township

This information is provided in the context of other professional assessments based on traffic (T D G Ltd), servicing and engineering (Tonkin & Taylor Ltd) and planning (Planz Consultants Ltd) information.

Consultation with appropriate parties is being undertaken as part of the plan change process.

2. Planning Context

Refer to graphic attachment pg 9 for current zoning maps.

The main aspects of the McKenzie District Plan that are relevant to this assessment are:

2.1. District Plan

2.1.1. STA Zone

The Special Travellers Accommodation Zone (STAZ) exists at Lake Tekapo and Twizel. It relates to land identified to the immediate west of Lake Tekapo Township set aside specifically to provide for low-density tourist accommodation, and the area including the camp ground at Lake Ruataniwha in Twizel. The zone incorporates the land currently occupied by the existing camping grounds and associated facilities. It is intended that the zone be developed in a manner that provides for the continuing operation of the camping grounds, and the addition of low density tourist accommodation involving cabins, chalets and the like, where appropriate.

Particularly relevant rules: 40% maximum building and hard surface site coverage (25% building, 15% hard surface) maximum building height of 10 metres; a maximum building footprint of 600m² adherence to the Lake Tekapo Design Guidelines and a restriction on the removal of trees within the zone. (Rule 8.7.1.a).

This rule treats the removal of trees as a discretionary activity. It does not include wilding trees.

The anticipated environmental results of the zone include: low density, recessive development, maintenance and enhancement of the forest area and the amenity of the adjacent open space.

2.1.2. Residential 2

The Residential 2 zone contains land, which because of its location on or near main roads, is particularly suitable for visitor accommodation.

Particularly relevant rules: 65% maximum building and hard surface site coverage; maximum building height of 8 metres in this area; adherence to the Lake Tekapo Design Guidelines (Appendix P)

2.1.3. Residential 1

The Residential 1 Zone covers the majority of the residential areas of Fairlie, Lake Tekapo, Burkes Pass, Kimbell and Albury. Particularly relevant rules: 50% maximum building and hard surface site coverage and a maximum building height of 8 metres.

2.2. Regional Plan - objectives, policies and methods

The issues relevant to the Regional Plan are well covered in the Planz report.

2.3. RMA

The issues relevant to the RMA are well covered in the Planz report.

3. Geotechnical, Ground Contamination & Services Capacity Assessment Summary

Refer to *Tonkin & Taylor Ltd's Lake Tekapo Holiday Park Geotechnical, Ground Contamination, and Services Capacity Assessment for further details covered in their report, dated May 2014.*

3.1. Geotechnical

Issues relevant to the landscape are:

- No development constraints were identified from natural hazards;
- Silty tills and lake sediments will influence the design of cut and fill slopes;
- Long term slope stability and landform stability will require slopes similar to the natural slope angle range of 15° to 25°. Steeper slopes will require engineered retention;
- Development adjacent to the subdued kettle hole will require specific investigation of the feature;

3.2. Infrastructure

Based on the current information available:

- A new stormwater system and outfalls to Lake Tekapo will be required. Based on site soils and recent local requirements for low-impact stormwater design, the new system is expected to require an engineered low-impact design solution. A stormwater discharge consent will be needed from Environment Canterbury.

4. Traffic Assessment Summary

Refer to *TDG's Integrated Transportation Assessment Report for further details covered in their report, dated May 2014.*

The proposed plan change will enable development of about 182 dwellings with a range of densities across the Residential 1 and Residential 2 zones. This level of development along with the traffic generation of the zones that are not part of the plan change is expected to generate 2,930vpd. Accordingly, the proposed plan change is only expected to generate an additional 400vpd above the permitted level of development. It is considered that if the road was widened to accommodate the permitted level of development then the effect of the potential traffic volume increase of the plan change would be minimal as it could be accommodated safely and without on- going maintenance costs on Lakeside Drive.

5. Site Description

Refer to graphic attachment pg 2 & 3

This site is an elongated block of land, 24 hectares in size, measuring 1km by 200 metres approximately. It sits wholly on a terminal moraine created by lake fed glaciers facing northeast, at the northwest end of the Tekapo township, overlooking Lake Tekapo (*graphic attachment pg 5*).

The Tekapo township needs little introduction, sitting on the moraine, overlooking Lake Tekapo and being valued by both tourists and locals for its spectacular mountain views, dramatic open landscapes and access to summer and winter recreation.

The existing zoning is an area of approximately 4 hectares in Residential 2 at the southeast of the site with the remainder of the site being STAZ with a campground subzone in a central, lower area facing Lakeside Drive. These zones do not quite fit the existing titles on the site or the existing campground area.

The site is bounded by Lakeside Drive to the east, over which is an area of Recreation P zoned lakefront reserve of open grassland and mature conifers. There is Residential 2 zoned land (MDC owned) to the southeast, state highway 8 to the south, an unformed local paper road and rural zoned land to the west with Tekapo Springs (Recreation A Zone) and rural zoned land to the north and west.

Mt John is the closest and most dominant landform to the site, with open views across Lake Tekapo to the Two Thumb range of the Southern Alps. There is currently public access on the western end of the site to Mt John through an easement, which is managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC).

The site is linked to the Tekapo Township by Lakeside Drive and pedestrian linkages but is not wholly visible from the township. The Residential 2 Zone also runs east, continuously from this site to the village centre.

The site is currently used, mainly for a campground. These facilities comprise a managers' quarters and office, motel units and a backpacker's building on the south east end of the site. In the centre of the site, on the lower flanks is the campground with a variety of the tent, campervan sites, cabins, some semi-permanent camps and ablution facilities.

The remainder of the site which is mainly the higher western and northern parts is in wilding conifers, being mainly Douglas fir, Corsican pine, Ponderosa pine and larch. This part of the site is not used for camping or accommodation activities. It corresponds approximately to the STA Zone outside the existing Residential 2 Zone and Campground Sub-zone. It does include the Mt John Walkway at the northern end above Tekapo Springs.

The character of the site is dense tree cover of wilding forest on the upper slopes and the mature, more open tree planting lower on the site and on the publicly owned lake frontage through which Lakeside Drive wanders.

Lakeside Drive accesses the campground, Tekapo Springs and the Mt John walkway car park. This all creates a well-used and recognised landscape.

6. Landscape Values

6.1. Natural Landscape

Refer to graphic attachment pg 4 & 5

6.1.1. Geology

This site is a distinctive and clear example of a glacial landscape, both in terms of the site and the landscape context. The lower part of the site, existing campground and Residential 2 zone, is on lake shore benches and beaches formed from various lake levels. The remaining area comprised of the STA Zone sits on extensive ablation and terminal moraine fields. These create a high natural science value.

The landscape type for this site has been identified as Intermontane Basin & Ranges. The land type is H3 – Glacial and Fluvial Basin Floor Land Type as described below: *(Refer to graphic attachment pg 4)*

Glacial and fluvial basin floor landforms, extensive ablation and terminal moraine, and associated meltwater channels, outwash terraces, minor lakes, fans, meandering floodplains, back swamps etc, and glacial moulded hills and mountains under 1300m. Elevation ranges from 400 to 1300m¹

The soils of the site are Tekapo mod deep silt loam, Mary stony sandy loam and Alexandrina Humose Orthic Brown Soil.²

Lake Tekapo formed as the large glaciers, which flowed down the Godley valley to fill the entire basin, retreated and their abandoned troughs filled with melt waters³.

¹ Canterbury Regional Landscape Study Review, Final Report July 2010, p 84

² S-map Soil Report. Landcare Research Manaaki Whenua.

³ Canterbury Regional Landscape Study Review, Final Report July 2010, p 88

6.1.2. Topography and Hydrology

The land is consistently sloped down toward the lake. There are a series of terraces on the lower flanks where the terminal moraine of the upper site has given way to the varying lake levels of the past.

The topography across the site varies, elevation near Lakeshore Drive starts approx. 715m above sea level while other areas of the site reach up to 785m. The Land Cover Data Base (LCDB v3.3) identifies the site as exotic forest and low producing grassland.⁴

Hydrology is addressed in the Tonkin and Taylor Report as summarised above as part of the overall application.

6.1.3. Ecology and Plant Cover

(Refer to graphic attachment pg5)

There is little evidence of indigenous ecology on the site. There are some good examples of mature matagouri and a variety of natural grasses and low shrubs. However none of this appears to form a cohesive ecosystem connection.

The plant cover mainly consists of introduced species. On the lower slopes there is more intentional planting with a mix of Corsican and Ponderosa pines as well as varied exotic deciduous trees. This generally complements a mature treed aesthetic that spreads across Lakeside Drive to include the neighbouring lakefront.

On the upper slopes there are mainly Douglas fir with Corsican pine, Ponderosa pine and larch. From photographic evidence (*graphic attachment pg 3*) this forest was planted on the site well before 1950 and there has been a continuous tree coverage since that time. However the forest has since become dominated by wildings from which there is recent wind-throw and signs of over maturity. These wilding areas are not maintained and many are in poor condition and a potential hazard to the existing users of the site being campers. There has been some removal on the site, especially along the southern boundary and within the road reserve.

It is of some note that trees on the adjoining land to the south have been removed in recent years.

6.1.4. Summary

The geomorphology of the site is obvious, largely retained and distinctive. The biological cover is less distinct with very little indigenous vegetation, a minority of permanent, high quality introduced planting on the lower part of the site and a lot of low quality wilding trees on the upper part. These have formed a long term landscape character but conceal the higher value natural aspects of the site's character.

⁴ Land Resource Information Systems (LRIS) Portal. Landcare Research Manaaki Whenua.

6.2. Cultural Landscape

6.2.1. Historic Landuse and Heritage

This area, beside Lake Tekapo's lakeshore has been used for ice skating since the early 1900s (*graphic attachment pg 3*), which has led to the Tekapo Springs development on the adjacent site to the north.

The campground has been operating for a number of years with a varied range and age of facilities and has been well used by local and overseas visitors.

Use of the rest of the site is less and distinct apart from the conifer trees that have occupied various parts of it since at least the 1950's but is currently unused apart from the Mt John Walkway.

The land along Lakeside Drive has a clear history of recreational use that is well recognised and valued by those that have used and visited it.

6.2.2. Tangata Whenua Values

In general Ngai Tahu's tangata whenua values are acknowledged in the Ngai Tahu Claims Settlement Act (1998) for their cultural, spiritual, historic and traditional associations. (Canterbury Regional Landscape Study Review, Final Report July 2010, p 91)

The Mackenzie Basin lakes (Tekapo, Pukaki and Ohau) are all referred to in the legend of "Nga Puna Wai Karikari o Rakaihautu" which describes how the principal lakes of Te Wai Pounamu were dug by the rangatira (chief) Rakaihautu.

Maori used the lakes in this area for mahinga kai, and these were a part of a wider mahinga kai trail that ran from Lake Pukaki to the coast. As a result of this history of occupation, there are a number of urupa and wahi tapu associated with these lakes.

The name Tekapo derives from Maori words Taka (sleeping mat) and Po (night).⁵

There is no known evidence that there are any urupa or wahi tapu sites associated with this particular site.

6.2.3. Current Land Use, Shared & Recognised Value

This location is valued as a place for locals, those on holiday and as a tourist destination with the campground, access to the lake, Mt John walkway and Tekapo Springs. The Mackenzie Basin and Tekapo village are highly identified and remembered as a landscape context to this site. The site itself has value in the consistent use of and memory of the campground.

6.2.4. Summary

The lower part of the site has a strong association with its recreation based past which creates landscape value. There are no known specific sites of cultural value

⁵ <http://laketekapountouched.co.nz/about-tekapo/flora-and-fauna/>

within this site. However it would be appropriate to require an archaeological protocol to be conditioned as part of any future subdivision of the site.

7. Landscape Character and Aesthetic Value

7.1. General Character And Aesthetic Value

In looking at the character of the site it is appropriate to look at the site itself and the site within its landscape context.

Within the site there are two main components. The lower part of the site which is generally the campground area and the upper part of the site which is generally covered in wilding trees.

The lower part has a character which is reasonably distinct in the Tekapo context in that it is reasonably well enclosed in mature, single and groups of trees. There are filtered views to the north through the mature conifers on the Recreation Reserve on the lakeshore and also within most of the campground. The site faces north and northeast, orientated to the sun. There is consistent activity from the use of Lakeside Drive and pedestrian connections. This creates a pleasant, semi protected but less expansive character than other parts of the village.

The upper part of the site is largely unused apart from the existing Mt John walkway and is consistently enclosed by a forest of wilding trees. There is only a short section along the southern boundary where the impact of SH8 is felt and an area at the north west corner that feels distant from or disconnected from the lake.

The site within its context has a number of character aspects. Generally the site feels connected to the landscape form that the village centre sits on, being the terminal moraine. This connection with the village is increased due to Lakeside Drive and Tekapo Springs and the Mt John Walkway. The north-western part of the site varies this relationship as it is the highest, rising up toward the southern flank of Mt John and cresting the terminal moraine.

There is however a degree of separation due to the contour of the land along the moraine. The site sits within the most treed part of the village's environment which also creates a different character to the rest of the village.

7.2. Transient Value

Transient values are those that change and in the case of this area, Tekapo is renowned for a number of transient landscape attributes. Seasonality with winter snow, deciduous trees and introduced springtime Lupins are complemented by the high value of the clear, dark night time sky. While these aspects are very important and valued, they are issues which are not limited to this site, rather to the location as a whole.

7.3. Summary

This site has a distinct character within the Tekapo village environment. The north facing, sheltered aspect is valuable as is the impact of people moving through and past the site. Its connected but separate relationship with the village makes it a valuable extension to the township.

8. Visibility and Views

The site is generally visually contained within one visual catchment that being the bay of the lake which it faces. It sits mainly within the moraine facing to the north east. There is a section at the northwest corner of the site that extends to the ridge of the moraine. Generally views into the site are diffused by the existing tree cover both within and outside the site. This complicates both the assessment of the site and the representation of it. (*Graphic attachment P21 pg 21*)

8.1. SH8 – From the North, South and West

(*Refer to graphic attachment pg17-19*)

Approaching Tekapo township from the east, the traveller descends down toward the lake where the close views of the new Residential 1 zoned houses are obvious at the eastern entrance to the town. The northern end of the site is partly visible across the lake for a short time at a distance of approximately 3km (*graphic attachment P16 pg 19*). These views are partly diffused by trees both within and outside the site. This aspect quickly becomes concealed as one progresses to the town entrance.

Viewed from SH8 immediately to the west of the town there are glimpsed views of the site, generally all below the road (*graphic attachment P13 pg 17*) travelling in both directions. Again these views are partly diffused by trees within and outside the site. Approaching from the west the available view is of a short section of the mid part of the site, below the road. Approaching from the east the available view is down over the campground and along the southwest boundary of the site again for a short time.

From further west of the site, at a viewing point opposite the airport entrance, given the existing tree cover, both within and outside the site, the site is not visible (*graphic attachment P15 pg18*). However having examined the contours and visibility of the site there is a section of the site whose aspect would be visible given a different vegetation cover. This view is potentially viewed for a longer time and the context of an open, natural view.

8.2. Lakeside Drive

The lower part of the site is consistently visible from Lakeside Drive as the visitor travels north and south. This is in the context of a strong, treed landscape on either side of the road, both within and outside the site. The existing buildings are consistently visible.

The upper parts of the site are not so visible partly as a result of the existing trees and the contour.

8.3. Mt John

The site is obscured from the Mt John Observatory. However walking to the south to a well-used lookout point there are views over the southern part of the site (*graphic attachment P17 pg 19*). These views vary again if the visitor descends the existing Mt John walkway track where most of the steeper south facing slope is covered in conifers.

8.4. Surrounding Views – Lake, Church and Township

The site is concealed from the village centre by the existing topography.

At the lake front reserve and from the Church of the Good Shepherd the north end of the site is visible. However the existing view is diffused by existing tree planting (*graphic attachment pg20*).which is outside of the plan change site.

There are areas on the lake and from the eastern shore of the lake from which the full extent of the site may be seen, the most significant of these would be approaching the slipway on the lakefront by boat. However the existing large conifers on the Recreation land outside the site diffuse views of the site from this point.

9. Description of the Proposed Plan Change

Refer to graphic attachment pg 22-23 for the proposed zoning maps

The brief for this proposal is to look at residential development opportunities while retaining the campground on the site. This is in the context of a plan change application where the suitability for development has been looked at in principle rather than as a detailed proposal. The proposed plan change seeks to create or amend the zoning on the site as follows.

- To extend the existing Residential 2 Zoning at the south east of the site. This would extend the zone to the northwest to the existing Campground Subzone and then follow a line to the southwest to the western boundary of the site. This line runs up an existing topographical ridge that separates the lower terrace of the site from one of the higher terraces and is a logical, physical separation.
- To define the campground within the existing Campground Subzone boundary with the existing STA Zone definition.
- To zone the northern end of the site as Recreation P Zone. Creating a buffer between the Tekapo Springs and proposed STA zone.
- To apply the Residential 1 zoning to the remainder of the site, being the generally higher western and northern part of the site. This land would become the western edge of the Tekapo township. This zoning is the same as is currently designated for the eastern entrance to the township where it extends over open country, to SH8 and is generally viewed within the confines of the existing moraine. From a landscape assessment point of view, there are several key issues to this proposal.

The above description of the site describes the distinctive character that is leant to the site by the existing tree cover. There is some discretionary protection afforded to the existing trees under the district plan (rule 8.7.1.a). However given the existing zoning of the majority of the site, being STA Zone and Residential 2 zones, nearly all of the existing trees would need to be removed to allow for the density of development that these zones facilitate.

This is illustrated by the height of the existing trees (say 15 metres) and the interdependent nature of most of them as wildings, combined with an allowed density of development at 40% (25% for building and 15% impervious surfaces) and 60%, respectively. In order to retain any of these trees, then there would have to be a clear zone of at least 15 metres (say 20m) to protect any buildings, property and people from falling danger, fire and winter shading. This would mean there would be 40 metres

between buildings. This assumption would also only work if the trees in question were strong, healthy independent specimens that had lived their lives in that same, exposed condition.

In this context, the assessment of any proposal needs to be looked at, knowing that, despite Rule 8.7.1(a) of the district plan, nearly all the trees on the site would need to be removed to achieve the existing zones' intentions and consequential density provisions. This being the case, the impact of the proposed plan change on treed character of the site is essentially identical to the existing plan rules.

There is also an area of land in the northern part of the site that is steeper over a greater area than the rest of the site. This is the area of the site to the west of Tekapo Springs and contains the designated Mt John Walkway. It may be possible to develop this steeper land however there would be a lower density, higher unit cost and greater visual and landscape impact than the rest of the site.

In terms of residential development this presents a different set of issues to the rest of the site. These in particular would be the need for hard engineering solutions to retaining on both public and private land to facilitate development. A slope of 1:6 is nominated here as a logical incline to define being the difference between the need for hard and soft engineering solutions. These are a major factor in the visual and character impact of development on the site.

One significant opportunity offered by not developing this area would be that the existing forest might be retained where it does not pose a falling or fire risk. This would serve to lessen the visual impact of proposed development by connecting to the surrounding existing forest and screening or diffusing views into the site.

Access to the site is discussed in the TDG report and would be via Lakeside Drive with no application to access the site from SH8 via the existing paper road connection. The location of roading and access on the site is a critical issue in terms of the visual impact of not just the infrastructure, but the built development as well. Controlling this access will be important to the impact of any subsequent development.

While most of the site is visually well contained and fronting built and well treed public access, there are viewpoints that are visually more natural and sensitive.

10. Assessment of Landscape Effects

10.1. Residential 2 Zoning Amendment

In assessing the site, it seems logical that the Residential 2 Zone that exists in the south-eastern corner could be extended. The proposed extension area comprises an existing terrace which forms its own small visual catchment. This will create a visual extension of the existing Residential 2 zone along to the existing campground subzone. There is a natural separation from SH8 along the southern boundary because of relatively steep banks leading up to the highway. Access from Lakeside Drive is straightforward. The Residential 2 rules and design guides will create a known and appropriate impact. From a landscape impact viewpoint

this is a logical extension of an existing zone with an appropriate and minimal impact.

10.2. STA Zone Amendment

Concentrating the campground into the existing campground sub zone seems like a logical rationalisation of the existing activity. The existing campground area is well used but the remainder of the STA Zone is not currently used for camping and very little else as previously described. The landscape impacts of this amendment are intended consequences of the existing zoning.

10.3. Residential 1 Zone Proposal

The proposed Residential 1 Zone occupies the largest part of the site. The zoning is used on the fringes of the great majority of the township so there is existing precedent for this proposal. In general the proposed zoning sits within the moraine skyline and below or separated from SH8. There are views however which are more sensitive. As previously described the site generally forms a continuation of the pattern of existing and proposed development for the township and connects to existing and well used activities.

In assessing the proposed zone change it is important to look at the changes to character that are permitted under the existing plan rules. This part of the site is able to have buildings of upto 600m² and a height of 10 metres. The density allowed for built development and hard surface is 40%. Constructing this on the site would mean there would be virtually no existing trees left.

Residential 1 development of the site would allow development up to 50% of the land area, with a lower maximum height of 8 metres. Again this pattern of development would mean virtually no trees left on the site.

The impacts of these development scenarios are very similar in terms of landscape impact. It is reasonable to argue that the minor difference in density of development (the existing STA Zone being the lower) is more than countered by: the lower height of the proposed Residential 1 Zone (8 metres), and; the potentially large footprint of the STA Zone permitted buildings (600m²).

In the existing STA zone the Lake Tekapo Design Guidelines applies, part of which is the compulsory use of the specified colour palette (LTDG CP) allowing a particular area of potential impact to be controlled. This is recommended but not compulsory in the existing Residential 1 zone. The colour palette while limiting, does a very good job of reducing the visual impact of buildings in this valuable alpine landscape. One particular aspect of this is having darker, natural colours specified for building roofs with low reflectivity and hence impact on the landscape. This is a common and accepted practice in areas of high visual and landscape value in other areas of the country.

In the Tekapo township, the LTDG CP has been volunteered by developers in the Residential 1 zones that now have significant existing built environments on the fringes of the town. This is serving the town well in terms of visual impact and has not proven to put people off purchasing properties.

The proposed site has areas of particular visual sensitivity, being the upper, western section of the site and areas that are visible from SH8 at the western edge of the town. Using the LTDG CP would bring the visual impact of a change from STA to Residential 1 zoning much more into line with the anticipated visual impact of the existing STA zone.

10.4. **Summary**

The issues that would be of potential significant impact are: the effect of removing the existing tree cover; building on the steeper land west of Tekapo Springs; the development of the road pattern; the development on the more visible parts of the site and; the relatively unrestrained (compared to Residential 2 and STA zoning) nature of the Residential 1 zone rules. Some of these issues are addressed through the plan change or are impacts that are already largely anticipated by the present zoning. Others such as the road design will require consideration during the detailed subdivision design.

11. **Assessment of Landscape Values**

The following information assesses the proposal in more detail under the already provided set of landscape values.

11.1. **Natural Landscape**

11.1.1. **Geology**

As previously described this site is a distinctive and clear example of a glacial landscape, both in terms of the site and the landscape context. Residential development has the potential to negatively impact on this distinctiveness through site earthworks. To a large extent this is already anticipated in the existing zoning. However the removal of trees that would be necessary given the existing and proposed zoning provisions would also mean that the distinctive landforms were more observable.

11.1.2. **Topography and Hydrology**

The topography generally provides well for the land uses envisaged being north facing and generally terraced apart from areas of steeper land, particularly in the north-west part of the site. The hydrology and solutions for stormwater run-off are covered in the Tonkin and Taylor report.

11.1.3. **Ecology and Plant Cover**

As described there is little observable, cohesive ecology visible on the site apart from several mature native plants. The remaining planting cover is a mix of planted and wilding trees which while they present a distinctive characteristic of the site also present a number of practical issues for existing and potential development of the site. The lack of maintenance, condition and age of the trees means that in the medium term safety issues may mean that regardless of any development this treed character will need to change. Notwithstanding this, there are potential

opportunities to reduce the impact of any development of the site by retaining trees on the steeper northwest slopes.

11.2. Cultural Landscape

11.2.1. Historic Landuse and Heritage

The camping use of the site is obviously a valuable asset as is the access the land use provides to local and overseas visitors to the Tekapo township. It is positive that the existing campground is proposed to stay as part of this proposal.

11.2.2. Tangata Whenua Values

As described the value of these lakes to Ngai Tahu is well recognised. Discussion of this particular site with Ngai Tahu would reveal any specific information of relevance. There also are well established protocols to protect specific sites should any be discovered during any subsequent site development works.

11.2.3. Current Land Use, Shared & Recognised Value

The information above concerning the historic use of the site also applies to its current use and shared value in that retaining the camping use recognises those values.

12. Landscape Character and Aesthetic Value

12.1. General Character And Aesthetic Value

The described site character of being partly or entirely enclosed in trees, responsive to the lakefront and Lakeside Drive and connected but separate to the village centre are all valuable character assets. While the proposed plan change has the potential to adversely impact these assets, particularly in relation to the treed character it must be recognised that the existing plan provisions allow for a very similar impact. Furthermore, retaining trees on the steeper part of the site, there being no plans at this point to remove trees from the existing campground and the strong treed character of the land surrounding the site, also lessen the visibility and impact of the proposal.

12.2. Transient Value

The transient values that are potentially affected with this proposal are mainly to do with the protection of the dark night sky. This issue has been well handled by the district plan rules related to street lighting as is evident in other residential developments around the township.

13. Visibility and Views

13.1. SH8 – From the East, West and South

As described there are fleeting or partial views to the site from a number of points along State Highway 8 and a prolonged possible view to the site on top of the moraine from the west of the site should existing vegetation on adjacent sites be removed. The change to the majority of the described views through the residential development proposed does not create a significant impact due to the nature of the existing permitted development,

the short viewing time in a vehicle, the distance to the site or its visual connection to the existing township.

Development of the higher, north-western end of the site does have the potential to create a greater visual change from SH8. However this is an impact that is already signalled with its STA zoning. The proposed Residential 1 zoning offers a slightly higher density of development to the STAZ (50% to 40%) but a lower building height at 8 metres versus 10 metres. The Residential 1 zone does not have compulsory design guidelines whereas the Residential 2 zone and existing STA, the latter currently covers the proposed Residential 1 area, are subject to the Lake Tekapo Design Guidelines. While it is not considered that the Residential 1 area, due to its less publicly visual prominence overall, need be subject to the full design guidance it is considered appropriate to apply the colour palette from the guideline to this area to ensure a degree of visual coherence and avoid future dwellings and other buildings detracting for this immediate environment.

A common characteristic of the visibility issues from SH8 is that appropriate treatment of the southern and western boundaries of the site would lessen the visual impacts of residential development. Appropriate planted character within the existing paper road would diffuse views of possible buildings while retaining views over the site where appropriate. This planting would be on the southern side of the site, retain views to the lake, sunlight, shelter from the southerly and be able to screen or diffuse views of houses and development while retaining views over the site to the lake where appropriate.

However as this pertains to public land it would be best handled by the District Council as part of any future subdivision proposal for the land.

13.2. Lakeside Drive

There will be visual impacts from the proposed site development from Lakeside Drive through possible changes to the treed character and the increased density of residential development. A significant part of this is anticipated in the existing district plan provisions with the Residential 2 zoning and permitted development within the STA Zone. Both of these zones will be retained along the important Lakeside Drive frontage. Any development within the Residential 2 zone and STA zone will thus be subject to assessment against the Lake Tekapo Design Guidelines. Apart from the change in treed character as discussed, the other potential impact could be the appearance of the development in the proposed Residential 1 land behind the campground and Residential 2 Zone. While this area's prominence from Lakeside Drive is somewhat less, than those areas immediately adjoining particularly given the Recreation P area, it is considered as discussed above there is a need to ensure a degree of visual coherence and avoid buildings detracting from this immediate environment. This can be managed by the introduction of the colour palette (LTDG CP) as discussed. Overall therefore this would mean that from Lakeside Drive the impact of this development is either as envisaged, or substantially as envisaged in the existing district plan.

13.3. Mt John

As discussed the site is obscured or partially visible from the vantage points on Mt John. The extent of development as proposed is not a significant departure from that already allowed and hence there is not a significant impact from Mt John. It is noted that the

District Plan already contains specific rules with regards to outdoor lighting which will apply to all the plan change areas.

13.4. **Surrounding Views – Lake, Church and Township**

As described the views to the site from the above points are either obscured or partial. The visual connectedness to the existing village, the existing trees outside the site and the existing Tekapo Springs development at the end of the lakeshore all help reduce the any visual impact of the proposed development.

Having said that the north-western corner of the site is somewhat visible from the wider area it is considered that the recommended colour palette will greatly reduce the impact of any development.

13.5. **Assessment Summary**

The proposed plan change creates a framework for an appropriate residential extension to the Tekapo Township. While there are potential adverse landscape impacts such as the clearing the existing trees, the visibility of the site from some views, building on steep parts of the site and the potential effect of the road layout on the site character.

These impacts are to be addressed through mitigation measures and proposed rules, including a colour palette for the Residential 1 area for the proposed plan change.

14. **Landscape Mitigation Measures**

14.1. **Proposed Recreation P Zone**

As discussed the impacts of building on steep land are far greater than those on flatter land. Hence a 1:6 slope is offered as a logical definition to this impact and approximately defined on the 'Proposed Zoning' map (Refer to Graphic Attachment Pg22) This area is recommended to be retained as open space (recreation zoned) with the specific western boundary defined in the subsequent surveying of the site to determine the appropriate contour line to form the zone boundary. This would avoid higher impact development, stop development on a visible part of the site, provide visual separation from the Tekapo Springs development, allow the treed character to remain in part and retain the Mt John Walkway as a treed environment thereby maintaining its character and appeal.

14.2. **Proposed Rules**

To remove ambiguity and create a definite, appropriate visual impact retaining the LTDG colour palette is recommended as a rule for the proposed Residential 1 Zone. While it is recognised the McKenzie District Plan has partially covered this issue with the existing colour palette and a non-binding rule, by making use of the LTDG CP a rule is a simple and unambiguous solution to any issues of inappropriate and previously unintended colour and hence impact in the landscape.

15. Conclusion

Generally this plan change proposes a very fitting and appropriate change to the district plan and the landscape of Tekapo Township. Many of the impacts are largely covered by the existing plan provisions or the changes are minor or implied in the plan.

The proposed change to the Residential 2 Zoning is small, logical and of little landscape impact. Rationalising the STA Zone and concentrating it onto the land that is currently used for this purpose makes sense, especially as the rest of the site is currently unused. The removal of trees on the site, specifically within the current STA Zone is implicit in the existing district plan and unchanged by this proposal.

There are remaining issues of landscape sensitivity that are addressed by the proposed landscape mitigation measures. Introducing the Lake Tekapo Design Guideline Colour Palette (LTDG CP) for the proposed Residential 1 Zone brings the impact more into line with that proposed under the existing district plan. The proposed Recreation P Zone, decreases the visual impact of the proposal, in particular the Residential 1 area, retains trees on the site and decreases visible infrastructure on public and private land by avoiding the steepest slopes.

Given the development of these mitigation measures and the plan change framework proposed, this application would, from a landscape perspective, create an appropriate and positive addition to the Lake Tekapo Township and environment with minimal impact.