

## Memo

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**To:** Mark Benjamin, Mt Hobson Group

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**Date:** 15 July 2022

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**Reference:** TAUMATA / LAKEVIEW MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT FAST TRACK CONSENT APPLICATION – URBAN DESIGN RESPONSE TO FURTHER INFORMATION REQUEST

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# 1 Further Information Request and Responses

## Item 5

- 1.1 The Item 5 request relating to visual simulations and assessment from identified viewpoints relates primarily to the landscape and visual effects assessment and a response is provided by Brad Coombs of Isthmus. However, I provide additional comment below. I note that clarification was sought on the information required and the Panel provided additional clarification.
- 1.2 I note that my assessment has been primarily guided by the operative District Plan provisions and these are referenced in my assessment report.
- 1.3 While the background technical reports for the PC can provide some useful context, they were carried out to assist the preparation of the Plan Change provisions and provided an assessment tool for the proposed provisions. It is the operative provisions that were determined through the statutory hearing process that provide the relevant foundation for considering the Proposal.
- 1.4 The Queenstown Height Study: Landscape and Urban Design Assessment (H. Mellsop and N. Karlovsky) (the “Melsop Karlovsky report”) was prepared in 2009 as a preliminary investigation to explore the implications of increasing the maximum building height in the high density residential-zoned areas of the town adjoining the base of Ben Lomond. Therefore, the report should be viewed in the context of providing a useful baseline study and background to the Plan Change that was later developed. It is important to note that the purpose of the report was not to consider a suite of District Plan provisions or to assess a fully designed development proposal (as is currently being considered) but to explore a broad height proposition. I also note that there has

been considerable additional development within central Queenstown since that report was prepared changing the existing environment and limiting its relevance.

- 1.5 The request for further information specifically relates to the significant vantage points identified in the Melsop Karlovsky report (shown in Figure 3) and an assessment of the Proposal's consistency with the outcomes visualised.
- 1.6 I note that no visual simulations were provided in the Melsop Karlovsky report. Rather, a general assessment was provided using a number of photographs of the existing environment (at that time).
- 1.7 Isthmus has prepared a reference plan that identifies the location of the visual simulations included in the application documentation relative to the 'significant vantage points' identified in the Melsop Karlovsky report. I understand that the viewpoint locations selected are the same as those contained in Appendix 1 of the lodged PC request 'Urban Design Peer Review' by Clinton Bird (27<sup>th</sup> August 2014).
- 1.8 I have reviewed the location of the application visual simulation viewpoints relative to the significant vantage points identified in the Melsop Karlovsky report. In my opinion, they suitably capture the locations that are relevant to the Proposal being considered (relating to only the western portion of the study area being considered in the Melsop Karlovsky report). The only additional viewpoint location that I consider requires further consideration is the identified viewpoint from the entry to Queenstown town centre from Glenorchy (Viewpoint 3). I note that the Melsop Karlovsky report didn't include a photograph from this location and since the report was prepared the QT hotel has been constructed between the Rydges Hotel and the Site.
- 1.9 As noted in the Melsop Karlovsky report, when approaching Queenstown from Glenorchy via the One Mile roundabout, the Lake and St Omer Park are the dominant components of the view. When travelling along Lake Esplanade, on the other side of the road, the series of large hotels that step up the slope from the Lake edge become apparent and prominent. The tops of the proposed buildings will be visible against the sky behind and above these buildings from oblique views further back along the street. However, they will be visually contained by the rising landform of Ben Lomond. The dark colour finish and stepped profile of the building forms will visually recede behind the lightly coloured, somewhat bulky, foreground building forms. In my opinion, the scale, form and visual appearance of the proposed buildings will sit comfortably in their context and will not diminish the arrival experience when travelling along Lake Esplanade from the direction of Glenorchy or an appreciation of the Lake and St Omer Park.
- 1.10 In my opinion, the Proposal has been suitably considered in the context of the operative District Plan framework (which I consider is the key document for the assessment of urban design considerations, landscape and visual effects). I reiterate my concluding comment set out in the Landscape + Urban Amenity+ Visual Effects Assessment peer

review that, while the proposed building forms differ in some respects from the District Plan framework, particularly in relation to the verticality of the collection of built elements, I consider this design response has been developed from a thorough analysis of the qualities and characteristics of the Site and its surrounding context. I agree with the analysis provided in the Isthmus report that the Proposal will sit comfortably in its landscape setting. The accompanying visual simulations depict how the Proposal will contribute positively to the evolving built character of the town centre, while the majestic Ben Lomond will continue to provide a spectacular containment to the urban edge.

## Item 6

- 1.11 Given the recommendation made in my Urban Design Assessment report regarding the importance of the material and colour palette as proposed in the resource consent application being carried through to the detailed design phase and implementation, a query was raised of whether I have seen the proposed conditions and consider these address my recommendations.
- 1.12 I confirm that I have reviewed the proposed conditions contained in Appendix 3 of the application. In my opinion, Condition 4 suitably addresses the recommendation I have made in relation to the proposed buildings. Condition 5 addresses requirements for detailed landscape drawings and supporting documentation to be submitted to the Council for certification, including 'an annotated pavement plan and related specifications, detailing proposed site levels strategy and the materiality and colour of all proposed hard surfacing.



**Rebecca Skidmore**

Urban Designer/Landscape Architect

15 July 2022