

**BEFORE THE HEARINGS COMMISSIONERS
APPOINTED BY THE CENTRAL OTAGO DISTRICT COUNCIL**

UNDER the Resource Management Act 1991

IN THE MATTER of a submission on a Plan Change
under clause 6 of Schedule 1 of the Act

BY **ONE FIVE FIVE DEVELOPMENTS LP**
Submitter

STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF MIKE MOORE

Dated: 16 May 2023

Statement of evidence of Mike Moore

Introduction

- [1] My name is Michael William Moore. I am a landscape architect based in Dunedin.
- [2] I have a Bachelor of Science degree (BSc) in Geography from University of Canterbury (1983), a Post Graduate Diploma in Landscape Architecture (DipLA) from Lincoln University (1985), and a Master of Regional Resource Planning (MRRP) from University of Otago. I am a registered member of the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects (NZILA).
- [3] My work involves both landscape design and planning and has had a particular emphasis on landscape assessment since I started my own practice. I have prepared numerous natural character and landscape assessments on plan changes and on projects of various scales and character around New Zealand, including dwellings, subdivisions, port expansions, industrial zones, wind farms, cycle trails, mines, riverbank and coastal protection structures, and hydro-electric developments. I have also been involved in natural character and landscape assessment work for Councils to assist with the development of District and Regional planning provisions, in particular, Dunedin, Clutha and Gore District Plans, as well as a coastal natural character and landscape assessment study for the Otago Regional Council.

Code of conduct for expert witnesses

- [4] I confirm I have read the Code of Conduct for expert witnesses contained in the Environment Court of New Zealand Practice Note 2023 and that I have complied with it when preparing my evidence. Other than when I state I am relying on the advice of another person, this evidence is within my area of expertise. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions that I express.

Scope of evidence

- [5] I have been instructed by One Five Five Developments LP to give expert landscape architectural advice in respect of its submission on Plan Change 19 (PC19) by the Central Otago District Council.
- [6] One Five Five Developments LP's submission is that the PC19 proposed Low Density Residential zoning (LRZ) on the northeast side of Dunstan Road should extend further north-westward to include 131, 147, 149, 155 and 157 Dunstan Road along with a 1.0ha portion of land at 129 Gilligans Gully Road (subject site). This would be in place of the Large Lot Residential zoning (LLRZ) currently proposed for the subject site. The properties included are shown in **Figure 1** in the graphic supplement to my evidence.
- [7] My evidence addresses the appropriateness of the LRZ sought in terms of effects on landscape character and values, and is structured as follows:
- The landscape context.
 - The existing landscape character and values.
 - The effects of LLRZ proposed by Council on landscape character and values.
 - The effects of LRZ sought by One Five Five Developments LP on landscape character and values.
 - Assessment against the relevant statutory provisions.

The landscape context

- [8] The subject site is located near the current north-eastern edge of the urban area of Alexandra. Alexandra is sited on river terrace landforms at the southern end of the Manuherikia Valley, at the confluence of the Clutha / Mata-Au and the Manuherikia Rivers. Whilst residential development has 'jumped' the Clutha / Mata-Au at Bridge Hill, the urban area is essentially defined by the rivers to the south-east and south-west. To the north-east an approximately 60m high outwash terrace provides

containment but to the north-west there is no physical impediment to urban development and the town is expanding in this direction. The underlying geology is quaternary outwash gravels.

- [9] Alexandra has grown outward from its historic core near the Clutha River / Mata-Au bridge at the southeast corner, and this is where the commercial and civic centre remains. There are two nodes of industrial zoning, one in the Ngapara Street area at the north-east end of town, and the other in the north-west area in the vicinity of Boundary Road.
- [10] A belt designated for recreation, schools, and the cemetery runs alongside the north-eastern terrace face and cuts south-westward to include Molyneaux Park. Whilst this belt still forms the edge of the urban area to the north-east, residential development has occurred to the north-west of Molyneaux Park.
- [11] A further area designated for recreation and developed as the Alexandra Golf Course lies to the north-west of the current urban edge.
- [12] **Figure 2** broadly illustrates the existing land use structure and shows that the subject site is near the existing edge of the urban area, and opposite land already zoned residential.

The existing landscape character and values

- [13] The subject site is essentially flat and located between Dunstan Road and the base of the terrace landform to the north-east. The exception to this is the section within 129 Gilligans Gully Road, which is located on the toe slopes of the terrace face. The subject site is held in lots of between 1.0 and 4.10ha and developed for rural lifestyle purposes. Between this area and the existing residential zone is land designated reserve (town belt) and land developed for industrial uses (113, 119 and 127 & 129 Dunstan Road).
- [14] The subject site is characterised by small paddocks and, several rural lifestyle dwellings with associated sheds and amenity plantings. There are lineal exotic shelterbelts (typically pine) and the landscape scale is small in a rural context. A high voltage transmission line crosses the land across 147 and 149 Dunstan Road. On the lower terrace slopes to the

north-east, two houses are being developed on adjacent properties, contributing to the 'rural lifestyle' character. **Figures 3 – 6** illustrate the character of the subject site and its landscape context.

- [15] The land is accessed from Dunstan Road which has a 30m legal width. The Otago Central Rail trail corridor runs adjacent to this on the opposite side to the site, giving the roadway a particularly spacious, open character.
- [16] The area has no particular recognition for landscape values in the CODP, and in my assessment its rural amenity values are modest due to its relatively dense settlement pattern and the associated impact of a significant degree of built form and lineal exotic tree belts. These reduce the rural scale and openness and modify naturalness qualities.
- [17] The landscape feature of most significance within this area is the approximately 60m high terrace face to the north-east of the site. This is a natural landform feature that defines the north-eastward extent of the Alexandra (and Clyde) landscape. Whilst modified by exotic wilding trees, it has natural character values based on openness, largely natural landform and low impact of built form.

The effects of LLRZ proposed by Council on landscape character and values

- [18] Except for the land within the 129 Gilligans Gully Road property, PC19 provides for LLRZ over the subject site. The proposed LLRZ extends beyond the site along the north-east side of Dunstan Road, to encompass the flat land below the terrace as far as Waldron Road. This proposed zoning reflects the development pattern outlined in the Vincent Spatial Plan (VSP)¹. The VSP also provides for industrial zoning reflecting existing industrial land use at 113, 119 and 127 & 129 Dunstan Road and these properties are not included in PC19 (proposing residential zones).
- [19] The LLRZ provides for a minimum 2000m² site size and a low-density suburban character. This will significantly alter the character of the

¹ CODC, 2022, Vincent Spatial Plan.

landscape in this area which is currently zoned rural residential, has lot sizes typically in the 4 ha range, and a high density rural character. However, in my assessment whilst provision for LLRZ development in this area will change the existing character significantly, it does not conflict with any significant landscape values.

The effects of LRZ sought by One Five Five Developments LP on landscape character and values.

[20] In my assessment, extension of the LRZ on the subject site will not have any adverse effects on landscape values of any significance. The outcome would be that suburban density and character typical of that already predominant within Alexandra extends approximately 580m further north-westward on the north-east side of Dunstan Road than currently proposed. This would be in the context of the rural terrace slope to the north-east providing strong containment to the urban area, and the medium density residential area on the opposite side of Dunstan Road to the south-west.

[21] As currently proposed in PC19, industrial land use at the three rural residential zoned properties of 113, 119 and 127 & 129 Dunstan Road may appear to form a buffer between the proposed LRZ and LLRZ. In my assessment, there is no landscape related reason that LRZ should not extend beyond this area of currently industrial character, particularly when there is an area of MRZ across the road.

[22] The PC19 mapping shows only residential zoning and does not show how the open space and community facility provisions included in the VSP are to relate to this underlying zoning. I consider that some form of open space / recreational linkage is appropriate somewhere in this area to connect from Dunstan Road, the Otago Central Rail Trail and the public reserve areas to the south-west side of Dunstan Road with the terrace face 'amenity area' identified in the VSP.

129 Gilligans Gully Road

[23] As noted above, part of the subject site within 129 Gilligans Gully Road is located on the toe slopes of the terrace face. The terrace face slopes

rise more steeply above, but have gentle gradients in this area, and there are dwellings being developed on adjacent rural properties to the south-east at similar elevation. These slopes are not high enough to be visually prominent within the wider landscape. I consider that the land sought to be included as residential relates well to the change to steeper landform above. Nevertheless, it is my assessment that whilst residential development can be accommodated, a lower LLRZ density to reflect the change to sloping landform and minimise the need for extensive earthworks would be appropriate in this part of the site.

Assessment against the relevant statutory provisions

[24] I have identified the statutory provisions I consider to be of most relevance to the landscape effects of the proposed rezoning of this site² in **Appendix A**. My summary of the key issues arising from these provisions, along with brief comment is as follows:

Does the proposed rezoning maintain the open space, landscape, natural character and amenity values of the rural environment and the open natural character of the hills and ranges?

[25] PC19 involves urban expansion into the rural environment whether LLRZ or LRZ density is provided for on the submission site. The rezoning of the 129 Gilligans Gully Road portion of the subject site for residential purposes as sought, will result in extension of urban character onto the toe slopes of the terrace face. I consider that the adverse effects of this will be low / minor given the gentle slopes and low level of visual prominence within the area generally. It is my recommendation however, that LLRZ zoning is more appropriate than LRZ for this block to minimise the need for significant earthworks and to integrate with the character of adjacent land use on the lower terrace slopes.

² Central Otago Operative District Plan Objective 4.3.3, Policy 4.4.2, Objective 6.3.2 and Policy 6.4.2.

Is the proposed rezoning consistent with managing urban growth and development so as to promote the maintenance and enhancement of the environmental quality and amenity values of the particular environments found within the District's urban areas?

[26] The proposed LRZ will have a density similar to much of the existing residential area of Alexandra. In my assessment it will integrate well in this setting opposite the proposed MRZ across Dunstan Road.

Does the proposed rezoning enable the expansion of urban areas in a manner that avoids, remedies or mitigates adverse effects on adjoining rural areas, outstanding landscape values, and the natural character of water bodies and their margins?

[27] Like the LLRZ proposed in PC19, LRZ on the subject site as sought, will have an urban character that will contrast with the adjoining rural area. To buffer this contrast and respond to the change from flat to gently rising landform at the base of the terrace face, I recommend LLRZ zoning rather than LRZ in the part of the site within 129 Gilligans Gully Road. No waterbodies or areas of outstanding natural landscape are impacted by the proposed rezoning.

Conclusion

[28] I consider that the proposed LRZ on the One Five Five Developments LP submission site is supportable in terms of effects on landscape values. I recommend however, that on the part of the site within 129 Gilligans Gully Road, LLRZ is a better fit than LRZ on the sloping topography.

[29] Key reasons for these conclusions are:

- (a) The urban zoning proposed does not extend onto or inappropriately modify any natural landscape containment to Alexandra. It avoids the visually prominent terrace face land and urban development has already expanded beyond the parkland belt including Molyneux Park.

- (b) Whether LLRZ or LRZ, the character of the area will change from rural to urban. This rural – urban transition will be much more significant than the difference in character between LLRZ and LRZ. LRZ character will be similar to much of the urban area of Alexandra presently and will not appear at all incongruous or inappropriately dense opposite an area of MRZ across Dunstan Road.
- (c) The subject site is flat, contains no natural features of significance, is not visually prominent, and is in terms of landscape character, is suitable for LRZ development.
- (d) LLRZ on the 129 Gilligans Gully Road part of the site will integrate with the existing residential development occurring at the same elevation better than LRZ, and provide for less landform modification to the base of the terrace slopes than would be likely to occur under LRZ subdivision and development.

Mike Moore

16 May 2023

Appendix A: Assessment of the statutory provisions considered relevant to the landscape effects of the proposed re-zoning.

Operative Central Otago District Plan

4.3.3 Objective - Landscape and Amenity Values

To maintain and where practicable enhance rural amenity values created by the open space, landscape, natural character and built environment values of the District's rural environment, and to maintain the open natural character of the hills and ranges.

4.4.2 Policy – Landscape and Amenity Values

To manage the effects of land use activities and subdivision to ensure that adverse effects on the open space, landscape, natural character and amenity values of the rural environment are avoided, remedied or mitigated through:

- (a) The design and location of structures and works, particularly in respect of the open natural character of hills and ranges, skylines, prominent places and natural features,*
- (b) Development which is compatible with the surrounding environment including the amenity values of adjoining properties,*
- (c) The ability to adequately dispose of effluent on site,*
- (d) Controlling the generation of noise in back country areas,*
- (e) The location of tree planting, particularly in respect of landscape values, natural features and ecological values,*
- (f) Controlling the spread of wilding trees.*
- (g) Encouraging the location and design of buildings to maintain the open natural character of hills and ranges without compromising the landscape and amenity values of prominent hillsides and terraces.*

6.3.2 Objective - Amenity Values

To manage urban growth and development so as to promote the maintenance and enhancement of the environmental quality and amenity values of the particular environments found within the District's urban areas.

6.4.2 Policy - Expansion of Urban Areas

To enable the expansion of urban areas or urban infrastructure in a manner that avoids, remedies or mitigates adverse effects on:

- (a) Adjoining rural areas.*
- (b) Outstanding landscape values.*
- (c) The natural character of water bodies and their margins.*
- (d) Heritage values.*
- (e) Sites of cultural importance to Kai Tahu ki Otago.*
- (f) The integrity of existing network utilities and infrastructure, including their safe and efficient operation.*
- (g) The life supporting capacity of land resources.*
- (h) The intrinsic values of areas of significant indigenous vegetation and habitats of significant indigenous fauna.*



Figure 1: Submission Site Location Plan

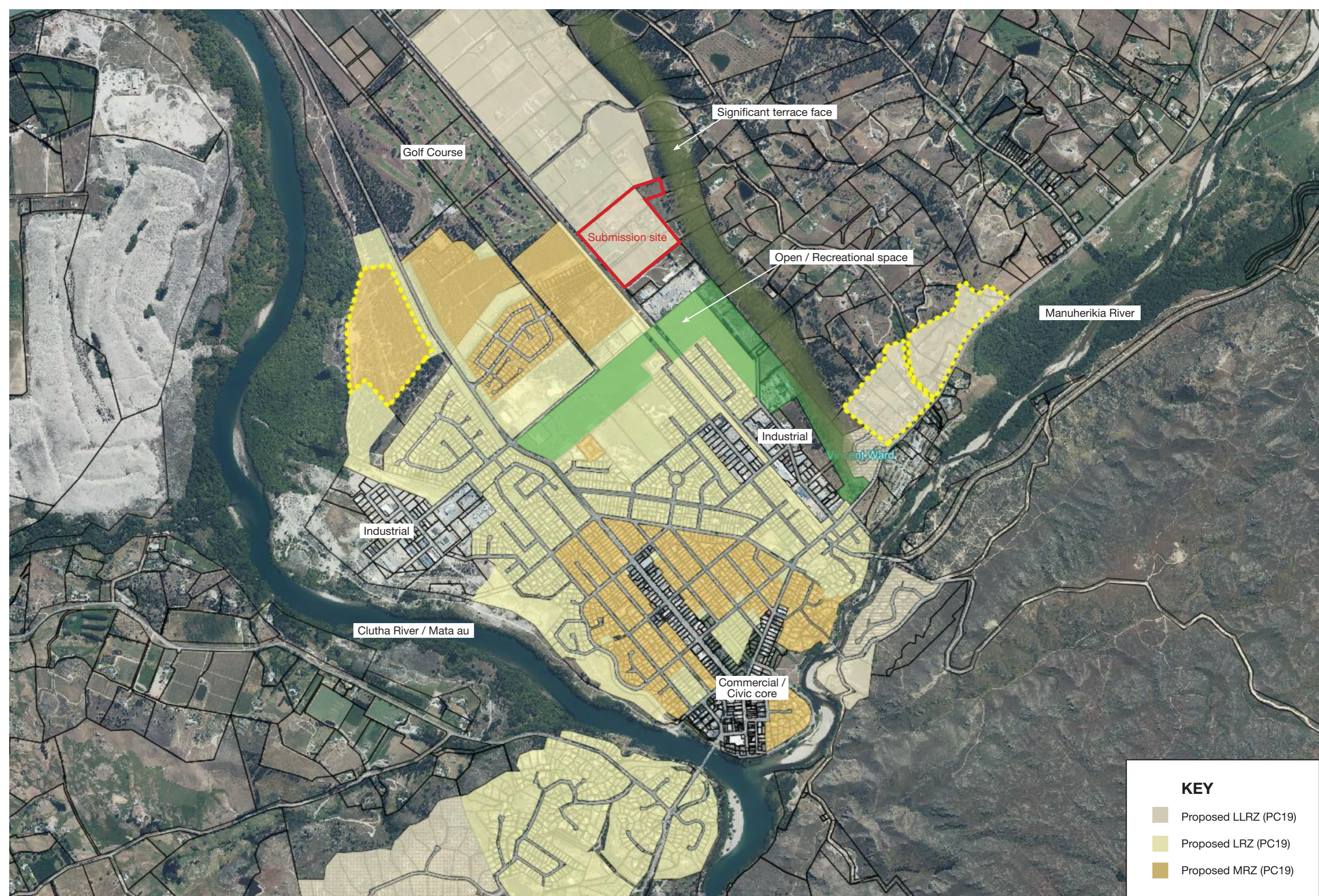


Figure 2: Submission Site Landscape Context Plan



Figure 3: View across Alexandra toward the submission site from near the Alexandra Lookout



Camera: Canon EOS 1000D Camera
Image: Stitched photographs – focal length 50mm

Figure 4: View toward the submission site from Dunstan Road, adjacent to 157 Dunstan Road



Camera: Canon EOS 1000D Camera
Image: Stitched photographs – focal length 50mm

Figure 5: View south-eastward toward the submission site from Dunstan Road near its intersection with Hillview Road.



Camera: Canon EOS 1000D Camera
Image: Stitched photographs – focal length 50mm

Figure 6: View toward the submission site from Dunstan Road, adjacent to 131 Dunstan Road