BEFORE AN INDEPENDENT HEARING PANEL
APPOINTED BY CENTRAL OTAGO DISTRICT COUNCIL

UNDER THE	Resource Management Act 1991
IN THE MATTER	Application to the Central Otago District Council (CODC) by D. J Jones Family Trust and N.R Searell Family Trust for subdivision and land use resource consents for residential subdivision and development at 88 Terrace Street, Bannockburn (RC230398)

SUPPLEMENTARY EVIDENCE OF ANNE STEVEN

ON BEHALF OF BANNOCKBURN RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT INCORPORATED

DATED: 21 February 2025

INTRODUCTION

1. Additional evidence in the way of visual simulations[1] of the visual effect of the proposed subdivision on Water Race Hill, Bannockburn from selected viewpoints has been provided by the Applicant. In accordance with Minute 6 of the Hearing Panel, I have reviewed these simulations and provide the following supplementary evidence on behalf of Bannockburn Responsible Development Inc. (BRD).

SCOPE

2. In the following evidence I will:

   (a) comment on the methodology and presentation of imagery

   (b) comment on selection of viewpoints

   (c) review my assessment in light of this imagery

METHODOLOGY

3. The visual simulations have been prepared by MethodVisual. A detailed description of the methodology by Jeremy London of MethodVisual has been set out on pp. 2-3 of the Visual Simulations document. The introduction states the imagery has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines set out in the NZILA Best Practice Guide for Visual Simulations BPG 10.2. I am satisfied based on the information provided the images have been prepared in accordance with best technical practice however I have comments to make, as follows:

Building Representation

4. It is noted that "*Hypothetical building forms modelled to maximum height and footprint permitted by proposed design controls. Buildings located in highest practical location except lots 8, 9 & 12 where visibility is maximised by locating buildings at lower elevations [sic] towards north boundaries, as seen in viewpoint 4."* Buildings have been shown as stepped down the terrain with each step similar in scale with 3-4 units comprising each dwelling. The external appearance of buildings has been modelled with a random application of the range of colours and materials specified in the application however each built form is homogenous in appearance. I also note that all windows are modelled in a moderately dark grey colour. In reality, curtains and blinds are often white when viewed from outside. I also note that the modelled

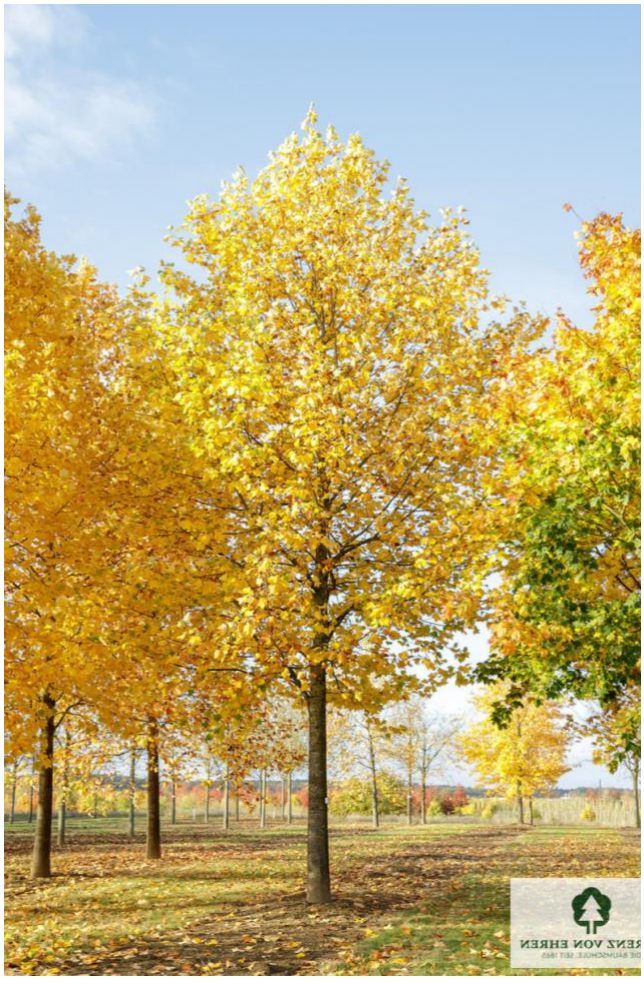
[1] 88 Terrace Street Bannockburn, Visual Simulations – MethodVisual February 2025

buildings do not appear to have been designed to reflect any historic heritage or local context.

Planting Representation

5. The tree foliage is modelled at late spring/early summer according to Mr Milne at paragraph 5 of his supplementary evidence.

6. Point 10 of the methodology statement states the primary street trees (about 20 trees relevantly along the eastern frontage) are modelled as Liquidambar "Worplesdon" at 8m tall, with one group of three secondary street trees modelled as Liriodendron tulipifera "Fastigiata" also at 8m tall. The Liquidambar trees are shown as a contrasting ochre colour which is neither summer (green) or autumn foliage colour. The Liquidambar has bright purple-red hued autumn colour and Liriodendron has gold autumn colour. These would stand out on clear autumn days. Quercus robur "Fastigiata" is also listed as a street tree in Appendix A - Proposed Plant List in Mr Milne's evidence in chief however these have not been modelled. Quercus robur "Fastigiata" has dull brown autumn/winter foliage.



Liquidambar Worplesdon (left) and Liriodendron tulipifera (right) in autumn foliage

Quercus robur "Fastigiata" in autumn/winter foliage

7. The reserve planting (in Lot 30) is not modelled according to the method description although it appears to be depicted on the imagery. The reserve planting includes Red Oak and Lombardy Poplar according to the plant lists in Appendix A. These are large trees which are not apparent in the imagery. They also have bright autumn colour (rich red for the red oak, gold for poplar). Kowhai, cabbage tree and Ribbonwood are the remaining medium size reserve tree species with more recessive evergreen colours. A large green clumped area of vegetation is shown representing the reserve shrub species (Coprosma spp., Corokia, Kanuka, Ozothamnus) although it appears as a homogenous vegetation mass. The trees visible in the imagery behind the clumped planting, in VP5 and VP8 for example, are the primary street trees (Liquidambar).

8. Mitigation planting of *Kunzea serotina* (Kanuka) at 6m *Leptospermum scoparium* (Manuka) (3m) and *Coprosma propinqua* (2m) is modelled as homogenous massed planting over the mitigation planting areas at 1.5m planting centres. These are, relevantly, the green clumped planting areas between/within Lots 4 and 5, and 15-20 shown on the Proposed Subdivision Landscape Plan at p5 of the Graphic Attachment to the evidence in chief of Mr Milne dated September 2024.

9. Some internal lot planting is shown drawn from the lot planting list in Appendix A. It is noted that all planting within the lots is proposed to be limited to the species listed. This condition would be difficult to monitor and enforce over time. In my opinion it is likely lot owners will plant other trees over time which may include brightly coloured species such as blue-grey conifers, smoke bush, flowering cherries etc. The homogeneity depicted is unlikely to be the reality.

10. It is noted the vegetation on the images is modelled at 10 years of age with an estimation of height, foliage volume and density. This has been informed by ecologist Simon Beale[2]. The estimated heights may be achieved with gold standard care especially adequate watering. It is noted it is assumed all plants would uniformly reach this height. In reality plant health and thus height and volume is likely to be variable.

11. There would be greater visibility of built form and domestic activity in Years 1-10, as well as traffic lights and movement on the street. Visibility would be High through most of this period, given the nature of the proposed mitigation planting.

12. I also note that there has been a minor change to the proposed planting with additional mitigation planting proposed along the east boundary of Lot 14. It is assumed this additional planting is included on the imagery.

13. It is assumed that the mitigation planting shown on the imagery is "best case" planting based on expected normal healthy growth and that the mitigating effect is also therefore "best case".

Viewing Instructions

14. The viewing instructions advise that the A3 RD 500 images which are representative of the actual fixed human view "*may appear to place greater emphasis on the visual impact of the depicted proposal than one would normally experience on site, due to being cropped and focused on the proposal site."* Whilst this may be the case, the images are also 2D which tends to flatten the view and underrepresent what is actually seen in reality in 3D which would be in sharper focus with depth of field.

15. In Additional Notes, the issues with editing out elements that would be obscured are explained. The imagery shows existing vegetative elements that are situated between the viewer and the proposal elements depicted (VP5, VP8). Notwithstanding that the imagery is based on summer foliage conditions (as opposed to winter conditions with loss of foliage) any vegetation that obscures any part of the proposal should be

[2] Paragraph 6 Supplementary Evidence of Tony Milne

disregarded if it is not on the proposal site or if it is on the site but is not proposed to be retained and protected.

SELECTIONS OF MODELLED VIEWPOINTS

16. The imagery is based on the same viewpoints 3-8 identified in Mr Milne's evidence in chief of September 2024. Whilst this selection of viewpoints provides a good understanding of the range of visual experiences it omits views from further east along Cairnmuir Road from which there are clearer unobstructed views of the entire site in a wider context (refer my Photo 2); wider views of the east face of the Site from Cairnmuir Road between RMM VP5 and 6 (for example, see my Photo 6 and also RMM VP2); and from Richards Beach (my Photo 8). In my opinion, modelling of the visual effect from these views would be helpful and assist an understanding of visual effect in the broader landscape, where the purpose of the Building Line Restriction area can be better understood.

ASSESSMENT OF VISUAL EFFECT

17. I have reviewed the imagery and reconsidered my assessment of visual effect in my evidence-in-chief paragraphs 89 to 93. The imagery provided largely affirms my analysis of visual effect. In the following paragraphs I update my visual effect analysis based on the depiction of the development as a whole in VP3-VP8. I include Mr Milne's visual effect rate from his Appendix A to his evidence-in-chief, for easy reference.

    (a) VP3 - Mr Milne rated the visual effect as Low-Moderate. I rate the visual effect as Moderate-High with respect to the appearance of the hills in the mid-ground. On reflection the effect is more likely to be Moderate than Moderate-High due to viewing distance and wider context. The Moderate degree of effect is due to the novel appearance of residential built form and associated linear planting bands spilling over on to the open hill face, transforming natural landform and visually simple naturalised vegetation to a more complex arrangement of modified landform, planted vegetation, built form and other cultural elements including night lighting. Development on Lots 13-14 from this perspective would have a Low visual effect due to being set back somewhat behind the main eastern rim and due to the screening effect of the planting. There is an unnatural looking band of vegetation along the skyline. The colourful autumn foliage of the exotic deciduous trees would contrast. Gold foliage would be more in keeping with the existing poplars, willow and sweet brier in the scene.

(b) VP4 - Mr Milne rated the visual effect as Low-Moderate. I rate the visual effect as Moderate-High with respect to the appearance of the hills in the mid-ground due to the novel appearance of residential built form and associated linear planting bands spilling over on to the open hill face, transforming transforming natural landform and visually simple naturalised vegetation to a more complex arrangement of modified landform, planted vegetation, built form and other cultural elements including night lighting. This is largely due to the development on Lots 15 -17 and to the streetscape effect on the rim. This effect is stronger in views in the vicinity of this viewpoint (such as at my Photo 4 located on the trail just below VP4) as the existing houses up on the basin rim further southwest become less visible (I reiterate these dwellings sit outside the BLR area). The unnatural looking band of vegetation is prominent along the skyline. The colourful autumn foliage of the exotic deciduous trees would contrast. Gold foliage would be more in keeping with the existing poplars, willow and sweet brier in the scene. Development on Lots 13-14 from this perspective would have a lesser visual effect due to being set back behind the main eastern rim and appearing more closely associated with existing and future built form that is/would be visible in the non-BLR area behind.

(c) VP5 – Mr Milne rated the visual effect as Low-Moderate. The visual effect from this viewpoint would be High for the reasons set out above. The viewer is now closer so the scale of the development is greater occupying more of the view and the ridgeline effect (verging on skyline effect) of the planting band is stronger and more obvious. This view is partly obscured by the foreground willows (which cannot be relied upon). If the viewer moves to the right or is out on the water just a short distance away, more of the proposed development would be visible and there would be skyline effects. In these closer views development on Lots 13-14 would have negligible visual effect.

(d) VP6 – Mr Milne rated the visual effect as Moderate. The visual effect of the proposed development would be High due to the novel intrusion of built form, proximity and skyline effects in particular. The Site is part of the more immediate backdrop and setting to the Inlet. New housing would have the effect of overlooking the Inlet area and Cairnmuir Road.

(e) VP7 – Mr Milne rated the visual effect as Low-Moderate. I confirm that the visual effect from this viewpoint would be Low.

(f) VP8 – Mr Milne rated the visual effect as Low-Moderate. I maintain the visual effect would be of Moderate magnitude in this view.

18. Overall, I maintain my view that the magnitude of visual effect from these viewpoints is more likely to be in the Moderate to High range rather than the Low-Moderate to Moderate range. The strongest effects are from viewpoints in the vicinity of the south and east of the Inlet and on the Inlet itself, due to proximity and relative scale of effect, less of the existing built area being visible as context, more prominent ridgeline/skyline effects, and expectations of more natural open character of the margin of the Inlet.

19. These specific and static views provide a limited understanding however of the actual visual effect that would be experienced by people moving around in the landscape, on the Trail, on the water and on Cairnmuir Road. The images also depict the visual effect at 10 years planting growth. The visual effect would be stronger in the interim and during construction which may be drawn out over several years. Other perceptual effects such as sun glint on windows, night lighting and vehicle headlights, movement and noise are not depicted and must be envisaged.

ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

20. As my analysis of the degree and nature of visual effect has been affirmed by the imagery, my assessment of effect on landscape character and landscape values including visual amenity stands.

21. Lots 13 and 14 are within the BLR and constitute development spilling over the rim of the basin. The visual effect of development on Lots 13 and 14 however is somewhat less in the imagery as they are tucked into one of the side gullies. The planting along the east boundary of Lot 13 and Lot 14 would substantially screen out future dwellings and curtilage, if it can grow tall and dense enough as depicted. The consequential adverse character effect of urban development spilling over the rim of the Bannockburn basin and on the open natural character of the margins of the Inlet appears to be less in the imagery.

22. Lots 13 and 14 are located on the more prominent higher part of the hill slope facing the Inlet however, as shown clearly in my Photos 3-5. From the perspectives in these Photos, until the proposed planting matures built form would be seen on a ridgeline set against open pastoral background of the Carrick Range, with possible skyline effects in closer views. Providing the planting depicted is achieved, and has a more naturalistic form, the potential adverse effect on the open and natural character of the Inlet margin is likely to be Low in relation to Lots 13-14. The short term effect however is likely to be Moderate-High if built form is visible on ridgeline/skyline.

23. I have not assessed the potential effect of development on Lots 13-14 on the open natural character and the visual coherence of the BLR itself particularly within the gully landscape as this would require field work within the Site. Any development within the BLR however that weakens its open and more natural character alters the context for any future development, as further incursions would be assessed against that new altered context. Incremental changes in the character of the BLR area as a result of incursions would undermine its integrity and function.

24. Regarding appearance of vegetation, the contrasting colour of the street trees and the unnatural bands of planting as depicted in the imagery would have an adverse effect on natural character and the overall visual coherence. The visual character of the existing open slope with naturalised vegetation contrasts markedly with the character of the area covered by the modelled residential development.

25. With respect to time required for vegetation to reach sufficient height and density to screen development or whether it can grow tall enough at all, after the 10 years growth depicted in the imagery the dwellings are still moderately to highly visible on Lots 15-18. In spite of and in part due to the nature of the mitigation planting, the imagery demonstrates a residential character would be evident across a large part of the eastern slope. This is antithetical to maintaining open and more natural character.

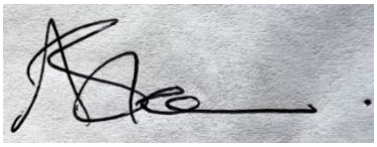
26. The imagery affirms there would be notable change in the natural character of the Shepherds Creek margin at its mouth.

27. The imagery confirms my opinion that overall there would be a notable loss of open more natural character across the eastern slopes in particular the open natural ridgelines/skyline; and within the BLR area generally. There would also be a loss of visual coherence and the integrity of Bannockburn as a distinctive compact urban area with residential development spilling over the containing rim. I maintain this would be an adverse visual amenity effect that is moderate to high in degree, depending on viewpoint.

CONCLUSION

28. In conclusion, the imagery provided confirms my analysis of the likely visual effect of the proposed subdivision and my assessment of effects on landscape character and visual amenity.

29. The imagery is helpful to understand the likely visual effect however the limitations of just five selected viewpoints representing one point in time as a basis for assessment must be recognised.



Anne Steven

Registered Landscape Architect, Wanaka

21 February 2025