

BEFORE THE COMMISSIONERS APPOINTED BY THE CENTRAL OTAGO DISTRICT COUNCIL

**UNDER:** of the Resource Management Act 1991

**IN THE MATTER** of RC230179 an application for a 33-lot subdivision at Rocky Point on Tarras-Cromwell Road (SH8)

**BY** **TKO Properties Limited**

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SUMMARY STATEMENT OF LANDSCAPE EVIDENCE OF PADDY BAXTER  
31 October 2024

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1. To assist the commissioners, I have set out below a summary of my primary landscape evidence prepared for TKO Properties Ltd, regarding a 33-lot subdivision proposed east of SH8 on 18.2ha (the site) at Rocky Point, Cromwell and my role in the project.
2. I have described the proposal in detail in my primary evidence and shall not repeat that in full detail. I have been involved with this project since November 2021 and my role has been assisting in the masterplanning of the proposal, the development of appropriate design controls and working with the consultant team, amending and developing the masterplan as the input of the consultant team progressed and the preparation of landscape evidence including site work and site visits.
3. I have described the landscape of the site and the wider surrounding landscape in detail in my evidence. In general, the landscape character of the site is highly complex and displays a mix of rocky outcrops, steep escarpments, steep gullies, rock fields, plateaus and valleys, all with a mix of vegetative cover that is generally consistent over the site, defined by a limited selection of species.
4. **My role:** My role has been working closely with the applicant advising and designing a bespoke design solution to the site including the siting of dwellings and structures on areas where potential effects on the existing vegetative cover is minimised. As part of that process, in the capacity of masterplanning the site, I have been aware of the potential adverse effects on the wider landscape character of the surrounding landscape that may arise from this proposal, ensuring that those potential adverse effects are minimised and, critically, advising on design controls that aim to assist in the visual absorption of structures into this landscape.
5. I am aware of, and have worked on, the consent process involved regarding the location of several existing dwellings south of the site, above SH8, established dwellings that look west across Lake Dunstan. Those dwellings are consistent in their low architectural forms, their dark recessive colours and are relatively difficult to perceive visually from distant views. Those dwellings are of similar elevations, albeit in the absence of the established Kanuka cover found on the site of the proposal.
6. **The Proposed Design Controls:** The design controls are attached in **Appendix A** of my primary evidence. The design controls are extensive and fundamental to the conclusions that I have reached in my primary evidence, particularly regarding the scale of potential effects arising from the development. The detail in the design controls far exceed the standard scope, detail and scale of controls attached to most rural developments in this District. I have written extensive design controls for developments throughout New Zealand, from Millbrook Resort to developments in Taupo, Hawkes Bay, Auckland district and many others by way of example. The level of design control details included in this application are a reflection of the complexity and sensitivity of the landscape of the site and are certainly some of the more complex and site responsive controls that I have advised on and constructed.
7. The key components of the Design controls can be summarised as follows:
  - In general, the dwellings potentially visible from further afield will be low (3.8m) in form, dark coloured and with mono pitched roofs, that pitch dropping towards the viewpoints.
  - Site coverage (building footprint) size is restrictive in scale, tailored to each site.
  - Cladding controls are definitive, chosen to promote a contiguous amenity, avoiding any notion of suburbia.

- The landscape controls are contained within specified curtilage areas. Planting is in Kanuka only or a short list of native dryland species as set in the controls. A very small area 30m<sup>2</sup> (6x5m) of non-specified planting is allowed – herbs etc.

8. In summary, the design controls are extensive, restrictive and relevant to the setting.

**Effects on Landscape Character:**

9. I agree with the comments of the planning officer in his statement that *'the bar gets higher in terms of the reduction and mitigation of those buildings.'*<sup>1</sup>, especially those proposed dwellings that are (a) within the development area and are potentially visible from Lake Dunstan and (b) those outside the development area and potentially visible from northern viewpoints looking in to the site.
10. Landscape Character is the distinctive combination of landscape attributes that give an area its identity. I have discussed the components of the landscape of the site in my evidence
11. The proposed development introduces a low level of change into the landscape character at the wider macro scale acknowledging that, at the micro scale there will be pockets of substantial change such as in the locale of proposed Lots 1-10, however this is somewhat anticipated as it is within the Rocky Point Recreation Zone. The bulk, location, and scale of the development in combination with the proposed design controls will avoid and mitigate any adverse effects on the overall macro landscape character, being that visible panorama. The proposal changes portions of the environment but will not degrade the quality of the surrounding environment, with the scale of the development appearing as a logical extension of existing residential development to the south, which is successfully visually absorbed into the landscape. From those wider viewpoints, especially from the surface of Lake Dunstan and from wider views I consider that the scale of any potential adverse effects on the Landscape Character will be Low.
12. I also come to the same conclusion on dwellings on the proposed lots 24.25 and 26.

**Effects On Landscape Amenity**

13. Landscape amenity is the natural and physical quality and character of an area (landscape) that contributes to people's appreciation of its pleasantness, aesthetic coherence, and cultural and recreational attributes.
14. I acknowledge that the site has a significant level of amenity providing a natural landscape backdrop to Lake Dunstan and the landscapes of the Clutha Valley and environs.
15. Although the site has a high level of amenity when viewed from Lake Dunstan and the flats of Bendigo, the proposed development will complement the character and quality of the application site and surroundings and will be difficult to perceive from wider views and will not adversely affect the aesthetic coherence of the landscape both within the site and the wider context of the site. Overall, the proposal will be perceived as a low level of change on landscape amenity with low adverse effects.

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<sup>1</sup> Central Otago District Council – report of Planning Officer Paras 6.27

16. Where development is visible along Bendigo Loop Road, this development occurs within a tight cluster of existing development adjacent to the Bendigo Station Homestead and other existing established residential properties and does not occur on an area of the site which displays the natural characteristics of the wider site.
17. I have addressed the relevant Objectives and policies pertaining to Landscape and Rural Amenity Values contained on the District Plan in my evidence.
18. The proposed development will generate a low level of change on the landscape character and amenity of the site. The proposed bulk and location of building platforms and prescriptive design controls will avoid and mitigate any potential adverse effects development would have on the natural character and amenity values. With regard to the ONL, the extent of effects to the outstanding natural landscape character is assessed to be very low. The overall level of change is seen to be very low and the proposed development will create less than minor effects on the values of the ONL, and those values will be protected.
19. The existing Rocky Point Recreation Zone boundary appears to loosely follow the valleys and terraces in the upper elevations of the site without specifically following topography. The bulk of the proposed development is located within the Rocky Point Recreation Zone and some components of the proposed development fall outside of that zone boundary. However, there are parts of the landscape within the zone that would be appropriate for development where development is not proposed. It is considered that, taking the overall landscape character into account, within and outside the Rocky Point Recreation Zone, the ONL values of the site will still be retained and protected.
20. In summary, the proposed development occupies a site that is still largely a 'natural' landscape, between a highly modified landscape to the east (Chinaman's Terrace viticulture) and the modified landscape south of the site, parallel to Lake Dunstan. The proposed development acknowledges the inherent naturalness of the site and has been crafted to retain this overriding natural character, preserving the existing pivotable location of the site.









- Mass planted dryland species mix (1840m<sup>2</sup>):
- Cortkia cotoneaster* Korokia
- Olearia lineata*
- Olearia odorata*
- Coprosma propinqua*
- Coprosma crassifolia*
- Coprosma virescens*
- Corydalis australis*
- Griselinia littoralis*
- Curtilage Area
- Building Platform





