

Landscape Memo

16 October 2023

RM220834 (QLDC) / RC220255 (CODC) / RM22.434 (ORC)
Cold Gold Clutha Ltd

To Hearings Panel
From Richard Denney, Landscape Architect, DLA.



The hearing's panel have requested a written reply to the following questions in regard to the councils' landscape peer review report.

What would your opinion be if there is no permitted baseline?

The permitted baseline sets a measuring point for assessment of landscape effects, without this the assessment would be based only on the receiving environment and consented context within the planning framework of identified landscape values.

In regard to sediment discharge plume, without a permitted baseline, the plume would be a new visible element not anticipated. As a new element rather than an addition to an anticipated 100m plume I consider the adverse effects of the introduction of sediment plume of up to 200m in length would have a greater adverse visual effect. Quantifying the magnitude of the effect is difficult as there is insufficient information to understand the plume at its 'worst' possible scenario, i.e., dredging finer silt or clay size sediments, when the water is at its clearest, flows are slower, and where elevated views are available. Based on the information in the application, it is apparent that the high volume and flow of water mixes the plume quickly, and the sediment being from the river is not of an 'unnatural' colour. There would however be association of the plume to the vessel and mining activity, with potential negative perceptions of such in a visual context of ONF values. I estimate that adverse effects would likely remain within the 'moderate' level of effects at around moderate-low to moderate at most (visual amenity remains evident but is changed), and this would be temporary in nature as discussed in my report.

In consideration to the larger scale of dredge and suction operation proposed compared to the permitted baseline, that effect would remain similar to that determined in my report without the permitted baseline in regard to 'scale'. The larger scale of dredge is some distance from that

anticipated by the permitted baseline, and this is recognised in the application. There is existing presence of recreational boat users on the river, albeit limited, in such that the dredge would not be a new element in terms of presence of vessels on the waterway. It would however be of a larger scale and differing character and as noted in my report is effectively a shed on a pontoon. It would occupy parts of the river for much longer duration than compared to the infrequent passing of recreational boaters. I consider the larger scale of dredge proposed in context of the permitted baseline, or not, would have similar adverse effects in terms of the larger scale proposed.

The condition recommended underneath Para 69 references a number of areas, could you please supply a plan showing the exclusion areas?

Attached, the areas shown are indicative to show the relative extent and location of areas. The exclusion areas within the application are not included on the plans, but taken as overriding any overlaps with the drawn restriction areas.

What is your opinion if the Applicant does not accept all your recommended conditions, particularly the exclusion area related the Mata Au Scientific Reserve ?

The application is not clear on land-based structures/buildings, and I have recommended they are painted recessive colouring to reduce their presence in the landscape. This is of greater relevance to buildings or structures that may be relocated within QLDC, with the rural standards within the PDP rural chapter setting recessive colour controls. Given the ONF values throughout, I recommend that recessive colours are used. There is also a regard to temporary effects as it is not clear how long they would be in place at a site.

Conditions ii and iii regarding reinstatement of the sites is covered within the volunteered conditions of consent and could be removed.

The condition regarding archaeological sites could have been addressed through a further information request, but in this instance, this opportunity was not available. There are several archaeological sites along the river, most of which relate to the river mining history and associated miner settlements and contribute to the landscape heritage character and values. The NZAA identifies a number of archaeological sites in the vicinity of the proposed slipway but these are not recognised in the application. The existence of riverside poplars at this site also indicates potential historical miner settlement. The condition is seeking clarification to ensure any relevant landscape heritage values are identified and measures in place to avoid adverse effects. This is in regard to effects on the landscape context, rather than heritage values which would be a matter for heritage experts and planner comment. If this condition was not accepted, I would not be comfortable that an adequate landscape analysis and assessment has been provided.

The lighting control is relevant to the ONF qualities of the river. This is to ensure that the natural qualities are maintained as much as possible, and on the water, lighting of the dredge is minimised as much as practicable to avoid highlighting the dredge in the context of the river's natural context. It is my understanding it is not intended to light the dredge up as such, but a condition of consent provides a level of measurable and monitorable assurance on containing and minimising adverse lighting effects.

Why did you not include the other reserve areas in para 21, bullet 2 in the exclusion areas outlined in your condition (why were those areas treated differently)?

Kane Scenic reserve is partly covered within the applicants proposed Devils Nook exclusion area. The part of the site within the Reko Point Conservation area is relatively more modified in nature with dominance of exotic conifers, an adjacent rural industrial sub zone and a noticeable increase in side activities such as trail biking, nearby residential areas etc. Landscape values are high but I consider that the context was less sensitive compared to the

Mata-au Reserve and the recommendation for an area for restriction of duration of the activity would be sufficient.

Autaiā Scenic Reserve has informal public access. At its northern end is the southern end of the Upper Clutha River trail where most river side users would depart the river landscape rather than proceed through Autaiā Reserve. It is however an additional area that could be considered in more detail if there was time available.

Sandy Point Conservation Area is largely a high river side terrace face which is dramatic and provides wide panoramic views of the river and Upper Clutha Basin from the public trail accessed of SH8a. As above it is also a potential additional candidate for further consideration, potentially similar to the Upper Clutha Trail restriction rather than exclusion.

Mata-au Scientific Reserve (photos right), based from my site visit and understanding of the reserve struck me as an obvious area of exclusion. It has several overlaying landscape values, with a strong sense of containment and seclusion at river level dominated by a natural elements in riverside views, and from the terrace flats the extent of the reserve out to the highway had strong natural character as a context for the river landscape. The switch backs in the river at this location are particularly pronounced and dramatic. In terms of natural values these appeared to most prevalent at this location and as there is public access to the area I consider to be the more sensitive location in regards to the proposed activity in this context



In regard to my recommended condition regarding duration of the dredge at any one location, I would like to amend the condition to ensure the 250m distancing is monitored as a measure of river length rather than river width: (condition 3)

*‘the dredge shall not occupy a single 250m **lineal** stretch **along the direction of the main river flow** for a duration longer than three months or relocate back within that 250m stretch within the ten year lifespan of the consent: within 1km of any visible rural dwelling from the river from Māori Point Road and associated side road (public and private), and River Ridge Road and associated side road (public and private).’*

Memo written by
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