

Te Anau Scenic Zones



FINAL
Visibility/ Visual Landscape Assessment



Te Anau Basin Scenic Zones

VISIBILITY/ VISUAL LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

Prepared for

Southland District Council

by

Boffa Miskell Limited



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1.0 BACKGROUND

Environment Southland (ES) and Southland District Council (SDC) previously commissioned Boffa Miskell Limited (BML) in 2005 to carry out an investigation of landscape character and value for the entire Te Anau Basin. This Te Anau Basin Landscape Capacity Study (Boffa Miskell, 2006) formed part of the Te Anau Integrated Planning Project (TAIPP) undertaken by SDC and ES. The purpose of the TAIPP was to consider the options for pro-actively managing the extensive growth occurring in the Te Anau Basin. In the study the capability of the landscape to accommodate further housing growth and development was identified. The landscape assessment report was accompanied by maps showing areas with low/moderate/ high capacity to absorb change.

Currently, SDC is in the process of preparing a plan change in relation to its Scenic Resource Areas (see Appendix 1 for draft discussion document). For consultation purposes the Council has used the Te Anau Basin Landscape Capacity Study (prepared by Boffa Miskell in 2006) as a basis for discussion of Scenic Resource Area boundary outlines. The Council indicated that there was general community support for the landscape protection mechanisms proposed within the Scenic Resource Areas, while their spatial extent has been questioned by the public.

This document is part of a package of information that has been prepared to assist with the development of a proposed plan change. This report should be read in conjunction with the earlier Landscape Capacity Study, which covered landscape sensitivities and values in more detail.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

SDC has engaged the BML landscape planning team to assist with refining the outlines of the Scenic Resource Areas for the proposed plan change, based on visibility. SDC provided BML with a detailed brief (see Appendix 2) which explains that the Te Anau Landscape Capacity Study has been used to inform the Council about the visual sensitivity of landscape character areas, which have been identified in the study. However, public consultation showed that the boundaries of these landscape character areas were unsuitable to reflect the extent of visibility and their visual prominence from the main public viewpoints along the shores of Lake Te Anau, State Highways 94 and 95.

The study brief and section 4.5 of the Southland District Plan (see Appendix 3) highlight that visibility of areas from main public viewpoints within the Te Anau Basin, such as highways and the lakeshore, is considered a key factor for the definition of Scenic Resource Area boundaries. The Te Anau Landscape Capacity Study (BML, 2006) was distinct from a visibility based analysis, and as such, it was based on criteria relating to landscape character and meant that visibility outcomes within the Study area would vary. Therefore, the council engaged BML to conduct a visibility analysis in addition to the previously prepared character assessment, which could be overlaid or be used alongside the Capacity Study to address matters relating to both visibility and visual sensitivity of the Scenic Resource Areas. The aim of this current study was not to review the findings of the Capacity Study in detail. As requested in the brief, this report focuses the review on areas visible from State Highways 94 and 95 and the key ridgelines/skylines when viewed from the lake itself at the southern end of Te Anau Basin and areas in north (character areas numbers 35-37 and 42 as questioned in

submissions). The review of the findings of the Capacity Study for these character areas was done with particular regard to the landscape assessment criteria applied in the study (landscape character sensitivity, visual sensitivity and landscape value¹). The review of the findings forms part of the recommendations for revised draft Scenic Resource Area boundaries in this report (section 8).

The budget and timeframes for this study were very limited and therefore alternative methods to time-consuming on-site visibility assessments were explored for this project. Digital modelling (see section 3 for methodology) was considered an efficient and cost-effective way to undertake the proposed visibility analysis within such a large area with on-site investigation required only to confirm the extent of theoretical zones of visual influence.

¹ In the Landscape Capacity Study the landscape has been assessed and categorised by defining the sensitivity and value of each distinct area.

Analysis of Landscape Character Sensitivity: The character of the landscape units is one of the two factors that determine their ability to absorb change, visibility being the second one. The analysis is based on judgments about sensitivity of aspects most likely to be affected. Namely, these aspects cover Natural Factors, Cultural Factors, Quality/Condition and Aesthetic Factors.

Analysis of Visual Sensitivity: The visual sensitivity covers the visibility of a landscape unit as well as the population likely to visually experience the area. The assessment of visibility of each landscape unit is based on findings from the onsite investigations and the photographic records.

Analysis of Landscape Values: The value assessment is based on findings from the landscape analysis described above and findings from existing planning documents. The criteria to assess significance and value of each landscape character unit consider designations on both a national and local level as well as other criteria indicating value, such as tranquillity, remoteness, wilderness and conservation interests. Units with similar characteristics have been categorised according to their value as the basis for an indicative assessment of their suitability for future development.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Summary

The following five steps have been undertaken to confine the proposed Scenic Resource Areas to land that is visually prominent from identified key scenic routes and viewpoints in the Te Anau Basin (State Highways 94 and 95, Hillside – Manapouri Road and Lakes Te Anau and Manapouri):

1. Theoretical Zone of Visual Influence (TZVI) modelling to define the view sheds (extent of visibility) from key viewpoints
2. Preparation of interactive K2Vi 3D terrain model with aerial photo overlay for more detailed assessment). This model allows the user to fly around and can be used for public consultation.
3. Use of existing photographic record of the area (both land and oblique aerial photography), which has been prepared for the Landscape Capacity Study
4. On-site investigation for verification of digital modelling and results of desktop visibility analysis (January 2009). No investigations from a boat were conducted to assess visibility from viewpoints on the lake.
5. GIS mapping of Recommended Draft Scenic Resource Areas. Maps showing the proposed extent of these areas were prepared in GIS on a scale of 1:25,000.

These tools were used in an integrated way and draft results were refined by comparing results of these steps.

3.2 Theoretical Zone of Visual Influence

To assist the analysis and evaluation of visibility, a computer generated map of the Theoretical Zone of Visual Influence (TZVI) was generated for a number of viewpoints along State Highways 94 and 95 and the Lake Te Anau shoreline. Along the four road segments (Te Anau – Mossburn Highway, Te Anau – Milford Highway, Hillside Manapouri Road, Manapouri –Te Anau Highway) viewpoints were created every 500 metres within the analysis area (total of 202 viewpoints). In addition 10 representative viewpoints on the lake were chosen, located along tourist boat routes and within the most popular bays. Radial lines displayed on the TZVI map indicate the areas which are visible from these viewpoints based only on landform. The colour coding used on TZVI maps (see section 4) provides an indication of the number of viewpoints from where an area can be seen (red: high visibility, yellow: moderate visibility, blue: low visibility). The colours do not take the visual prominence of the area from the roads and lake or viewing distance into account. Areas shown without colour coding on these maps are not visible from any of the viewpoints, as they are hidden by landform.

The accuracy of the maps is dependent upon the data used to construct the underlying contour model. Twenty metre contour information was used for the majority of the analysis area, which is approximately 583 km² in size (approximately 60km long and 10 km wide). For the area around Te Anau 1 m contour information was provided by SDC. The TZVI map does not take account of intervening vegetation, as no existing vegetation was modelled. Consequently very careful interpretation of the results is required. The results of the TZVI were checked against the photographic record

(February 2006) and through on-site investigations. Screening vegetation was described in section 7 (description of landscape experience). However, outlines for the Recommended Draft Scenic Resource Areas were mainly based on the landform derived visibility analysis, since vegetation could be removed. Vegetation removal would leave currently screened areas visually exposed to views from the highways.

Flat areas with subtle terrain undulations of less than 20 metres, which could in reality lead to low visibility of confined areas (eg between hummocks), might appear as visible from a variety of viewpoints. These sorts of inaccuracies are to be expected for a terrain model of that scale. Viewsheds for observer points were run using ArcGIS with an observer height of 1.5m and with earth curvature factored into the output.

Key:

red areas: visible from 31-37 viewpoints, orange: 16-30, yellow: 6-10, blue: 1-5

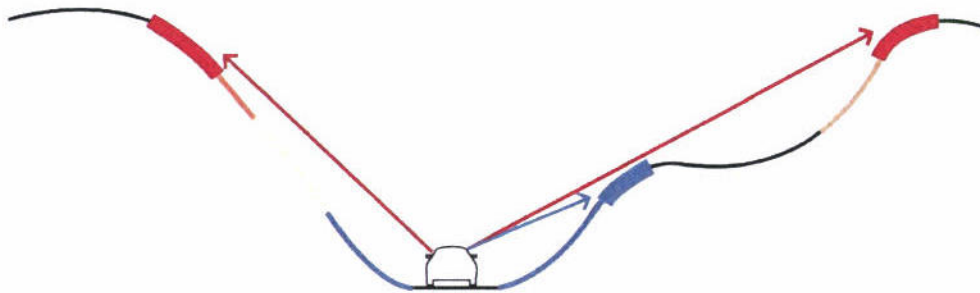


Figure 1: The figure illustrates the colour coding used on the TZVI maps. High lying areas are generally visible from a number of viewpoints, whereas areas in confined valleys are only visible from a short section of road. Areas in low lying dips cannot be seen from the road due to landform and viewing angles. These areas are left blank in the TZVI maps.

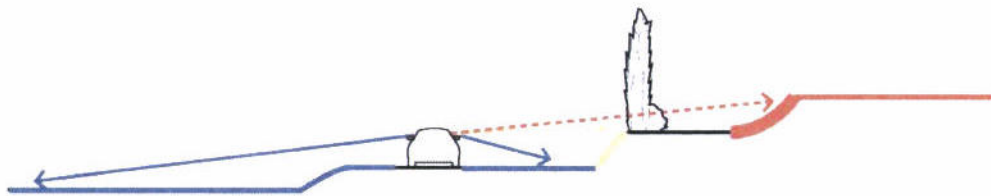


Figure 2: Existing screening vegetation has not been taken into account for the TZVI modelling. Hence areas that may currently be screened eg by shelterbelts are shown as visible in the maps. This has been considered appropriate, since vegetation/ land cover could change in the future.

3.3 K2Vi interactive digital terrain model

In addition to the TZVI imaging an interactive 3D computer-model was prepared, employing the K2Vi software². This software provides the opportunity to fly around the virtual site and view areas from any viewpoint within the model. Interactive 3D models prepared with K2Vi are extremely useful due to their flexibility and can appear very realistic. However, they are only as accurate as the data used to construct the model. The model was constructed using the same contour intervals as for the TZVI analysis and overlaid with aerial photos, which have been supplied by the Council for the Landscape Capacity Study. Existing screening vegetation has not been modelled and images are considered indicative only and not visual simulations. The terrain texture can only be used to give an approximation of reality (see section 6 for graphic illustrations).

The model was used to assess views to areas, which were identified as highly visible in the TZVI, in more detail and to define boundaries for the Recommended Draft Scenic Resource Areas. It is anticipated that this 3D model will be a useful resource for public consultation and subsequently the Plan Change hearing, since it provides the opportunity to assess of the extent of visual catchments from any viewpoint. The model can display 3 dimensional digital information, which is generally easier to read for 'lay people' than 2 dimensional maps.

The Digital Elevation Model (DEM) prepared for this project covers an area of approx 40km by 60km (2400km²). The DEM resolution is 5m (derived from LINZ 20m contours and 1m contours around Te Anau). The K2vi model is constructed of 70 individual tiles with approximate dimensions of 6km by 6km and a xy resolution of approximately 6m. Each tile has its own settings that can be individually managed to determine how densely the underlying DEM is sampled. The more densely the DEM is sampled the better the visual model represents the underlying DEM. A balance had to be found between displaying the DEM in as much detail as possible and the real time performance of the interactive 3d model. Therefore, 2 sampling settings were standardised for the K2Vi viewing tool based on smooth flying/ rendering performance. Within the TZVI area the Z value was standardised within $\pm 2\text{m}$ (for 95% of the values) and $\pm 5\text{m}$ (for 100% of the values). For the fringe areas of the model, which were only used to assess long distance views from the roads, the Z value of the underlying DEM were kept within ± 10 (95%) m and $\pm 20\text{m}$ (99.9%) to enhance general performance of the model.

3.4 Photographic record desktop analysis

Following the preparation of the TZVI visibility analysis and the 3D model, extensive use was made of existing information and data prior to undertaking field investigations. Recent vertical aerial photos (Terralink, 2002-2008) of the majority of the Te Anau basin were provided by SDC. In addition oblique aerial photography and an extensive photographic record of the basin were available from the Landscape Capacity

² The K2Vi software is provided by Data Interface Technologies Limited (DIT), a New Zealand company which develops and supports the software. K2Vi is a software tool which allows the viewer to see a three-dimensional model of a landscape on a computer screen. K2Vi is a form of computer landscape modelling and is the latest technique in a continuum of technology development. The main advancement of this technique is the integration of information from different sources into a three-dimensional model. In this case the results of the TZVI analysis were overlaid onto the model (see maps in section 4)

Study. Preliminary Draft Scenic Resource Area boundaries were identified using GIS and forwarded to SDC for comment.

3.5 On – site investigations

The preliminary desktop analysis was used to focus the on-site investigations to verification of boundaries. Site investigations were conducted over a 2 day period in early January 2009, when all roads were driven in both directions by a member of the BML landscape planning team. A photographic record established and descriptions of the landscape experience gained on these journeys, were prepared for this report (see section 7).

3.6 GIS mapping

For the Landscape Capacity Study Geographic information systems (GIS) were used for capturing, storing, analyzing and managing data and associated attributes which were spatially referenced to the study area. GIS was also used as a tool for this current study to outline the Recommended Draft Scenic Resource Areas and to present the results of all these operations in the form of maps. SDC provided GIS data, including planning/zoning data and parcel boundaries, to BML for use in this project.

All BML maps have been prepared using the software package Arc GIS 9.2 (most current ESRI product) in New Zealand map grid projection. GIS has been employed for visualisation of the data in pdf and hard copy format in this report.

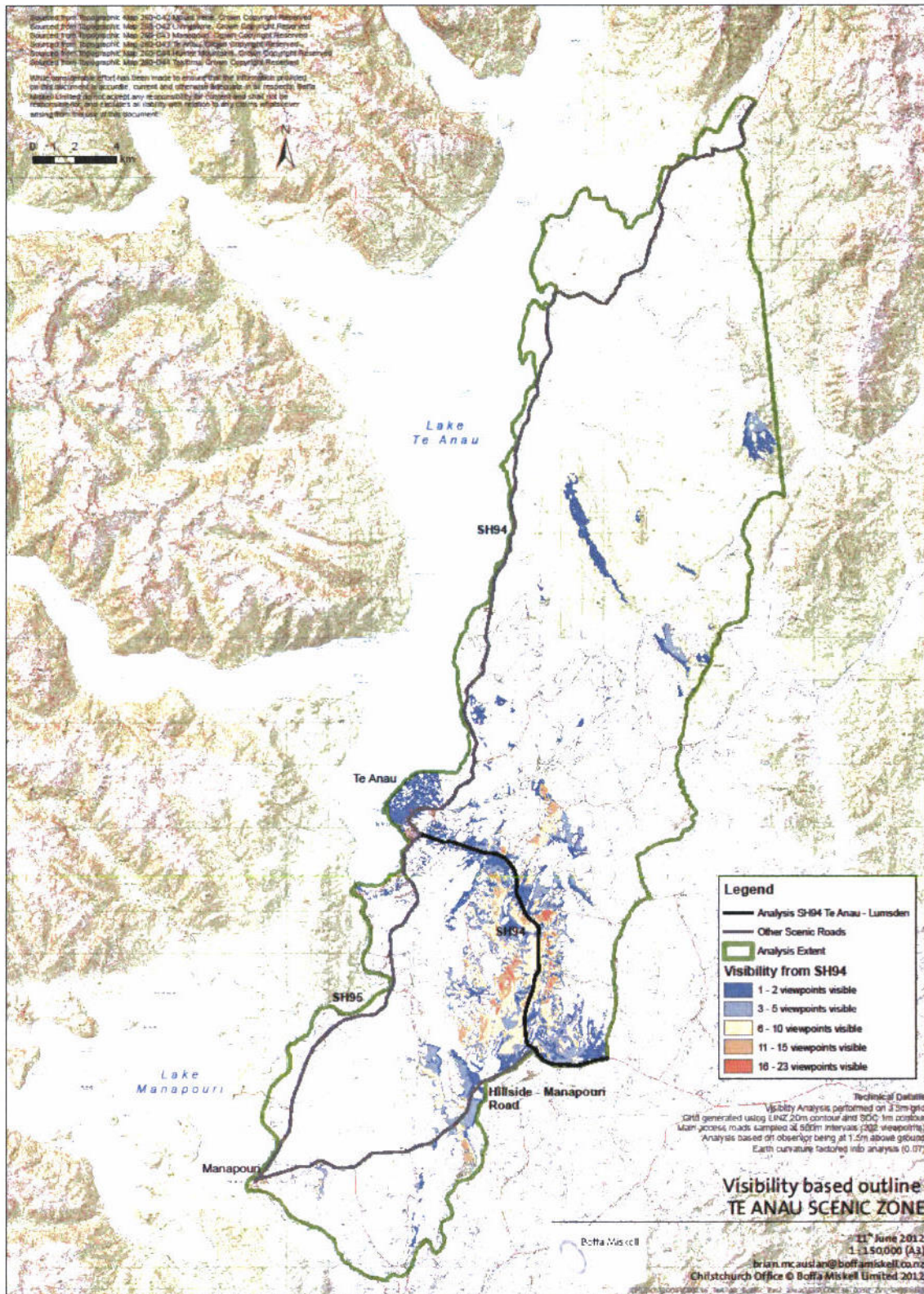
Preliminary Scenic Resource Areas were mapped digitally at 1:25,000 in GIS, based on the results from the TZVI modelling. The boundaries were chosen to reflect visible elements in the landscape, such as landform/ land cover change, shelterbelts, fence lines or parcel boundaries. These landscape elements were sourced from aerial photos, existing planning documents, and topographical maps (260 series, 1:50,000). The Recommended Draft Scenic Resource Areas only cover areas zoned rural (i.e. urban, transitional and industrial resource areas have been excluded).

As explained earlier (see section 3.2), not all the land included in the Scenic Resource Areas is actually visible from the state highways and lake. Generally highly visible areas (in particular elevated landforms shown in red) were included, while some areas that are only visible from very few viewpoints (shown in blue) were excluded, in particular if they were spatially confined, isolated areas at long viewing distances from the road. The preliminary mapping was reviewed on-site and amended accordingly.

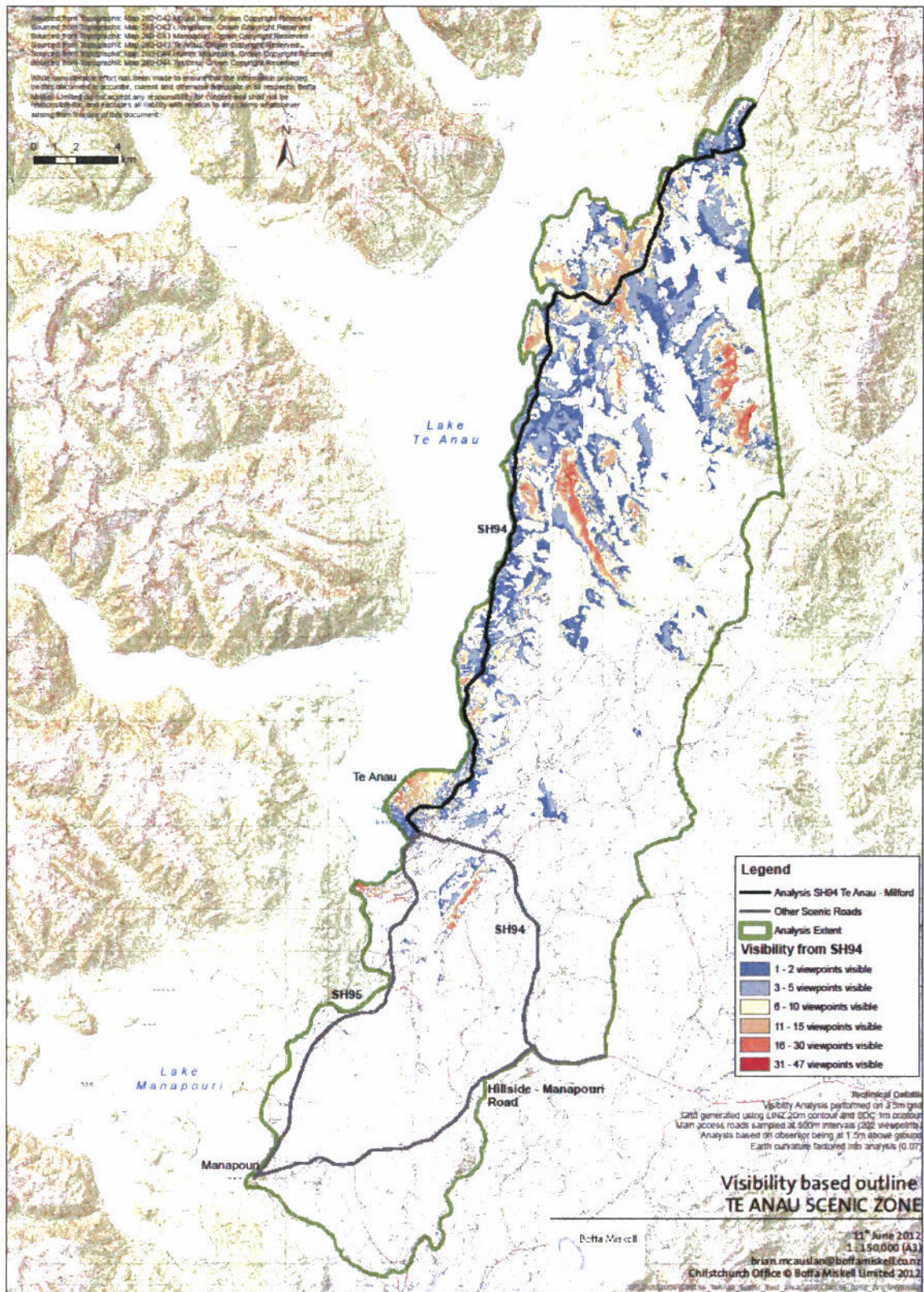
Landscape value, visual sensitivity and current land use were not taken into account for outlining the Recommended Draft Scenic Resource Areas in this report. This means that land with high landscape value and sensitivity (eg large wetlands managed by the Department of Conservation) was excluded, if not visible from the roads/ lake, while farmed areas with lesser natural character or landscape value were included based on their visibility. As outlined in the brief provided by SDC (see Appendix 3) this report will be used alongside the original Landscape Capacity Study.

4.0 RESULTS OF THEORETICAL ZONE OF VISUAL INFLUENCE ANALYSIS

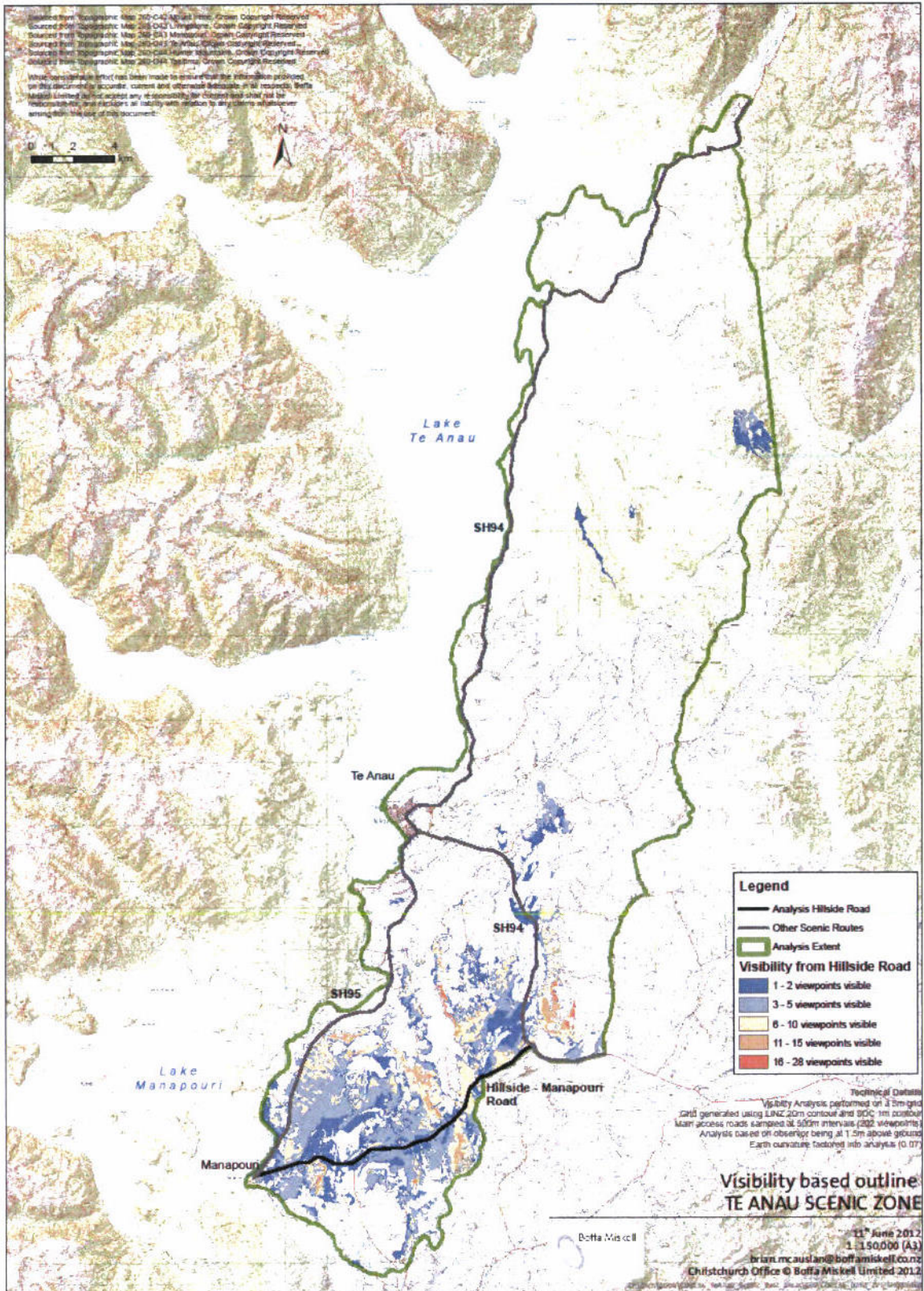
4.1 Visibility (TZVI) from Te Anau - Mossburn Highway (State Highway 94)



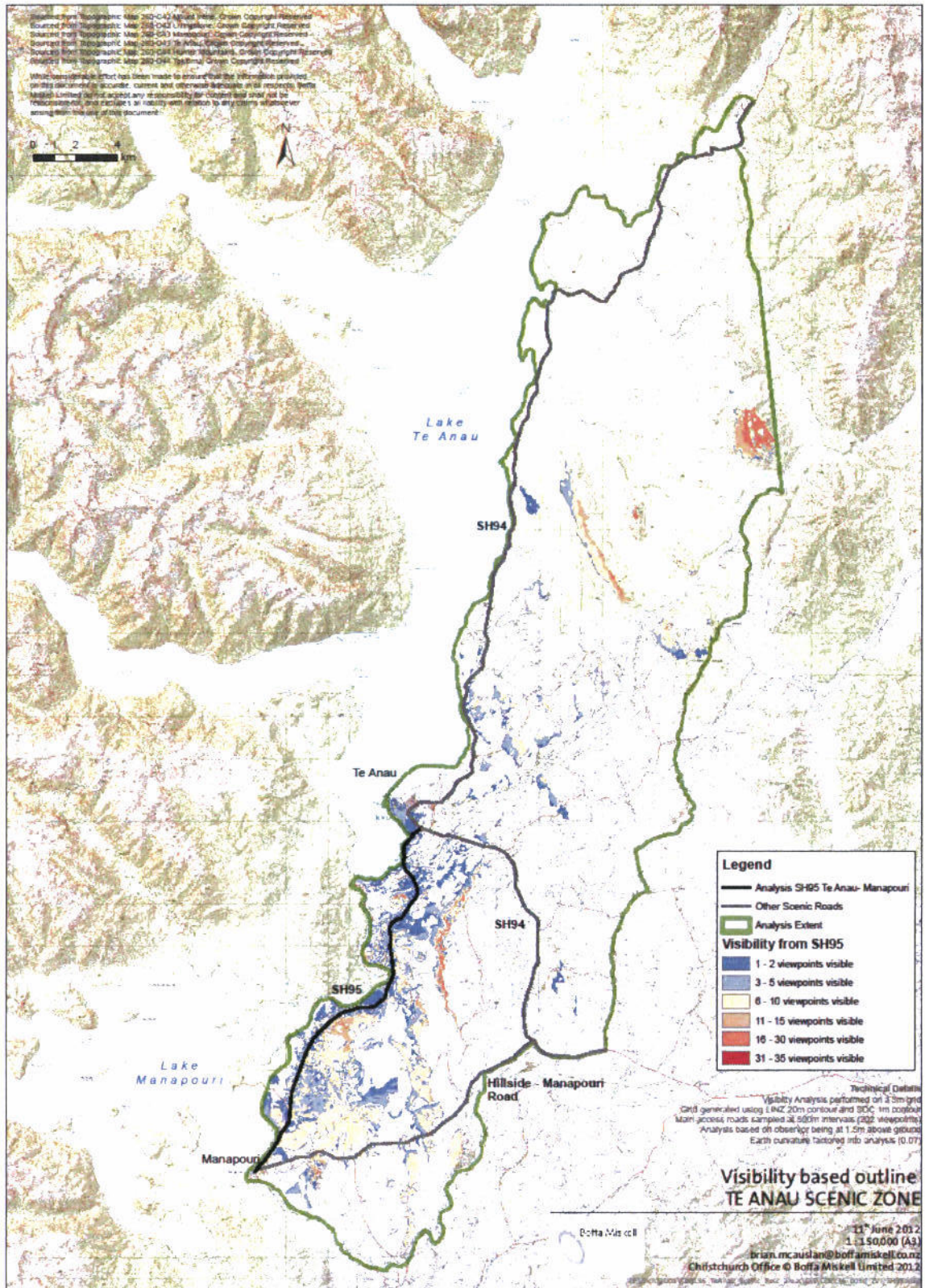
4.2 Visibility (TZVI) from Te Anau - Milford Highway (State Highway 94)



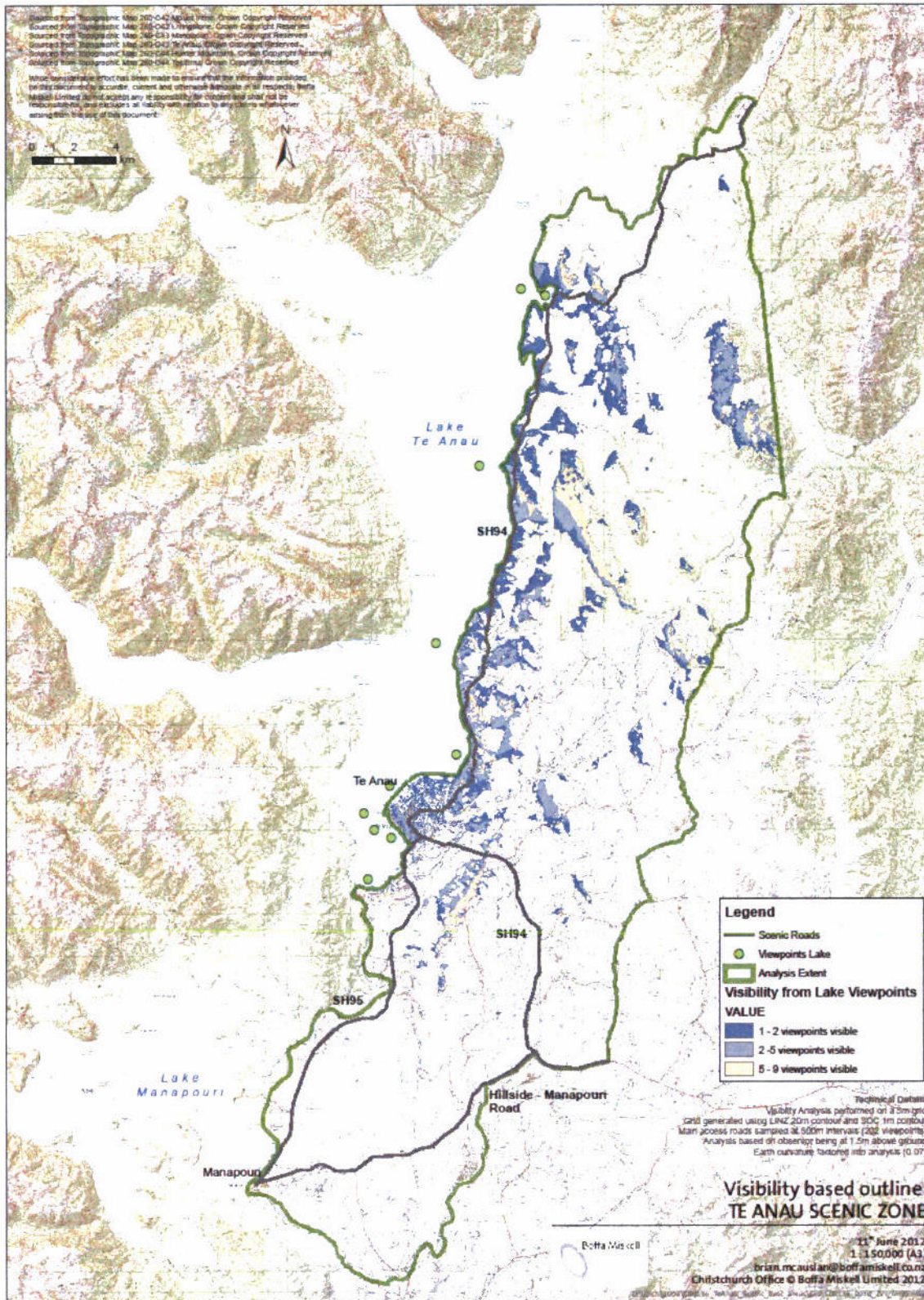
4.3 Visibility (TZVI) from Hillside Manapouri Road



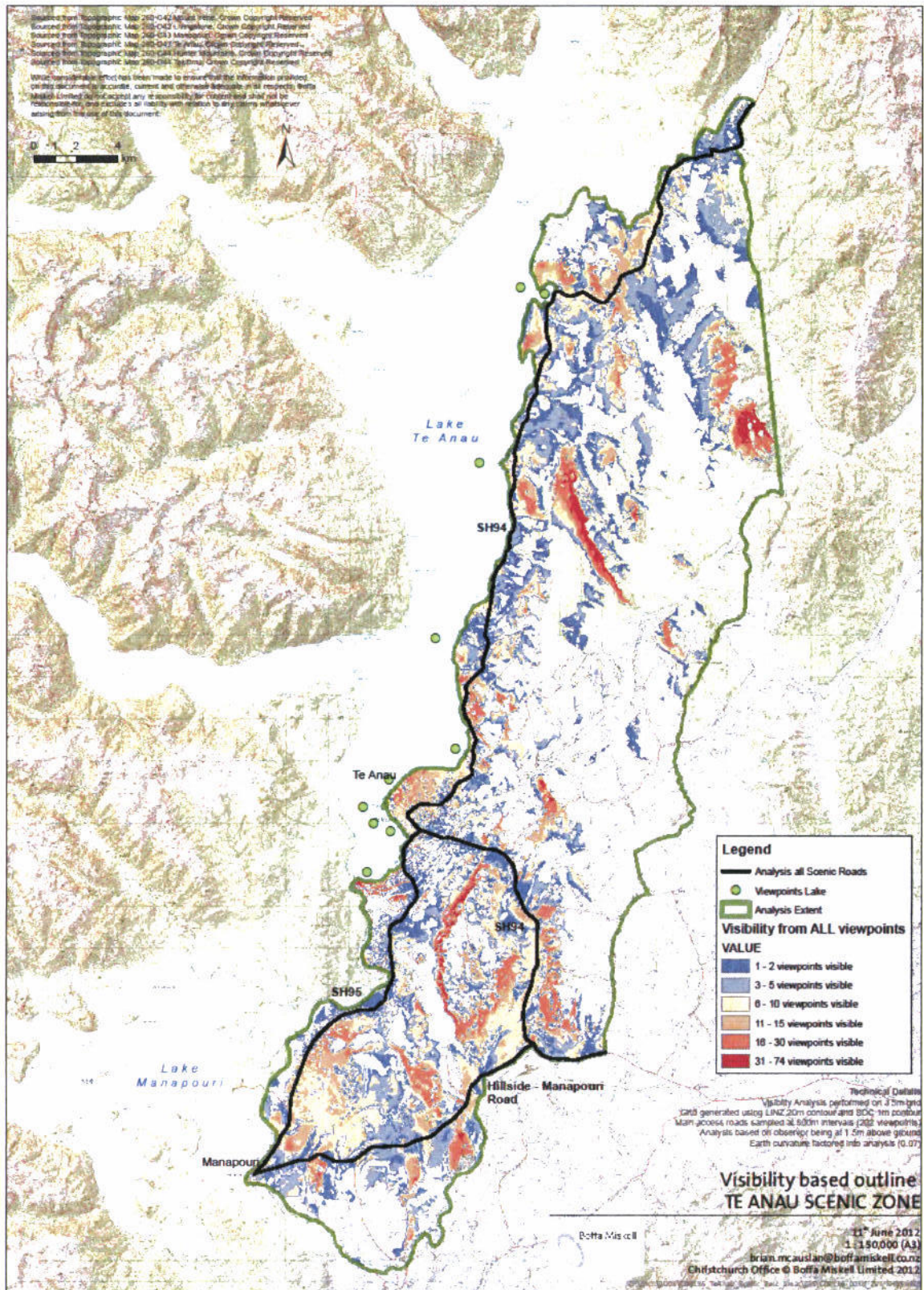
4.4 Visibility (TZVI) from Manapouri -Te Anau Highway (State Highway 95)



4.5 Visibility (TZVI) from lake viewpoints

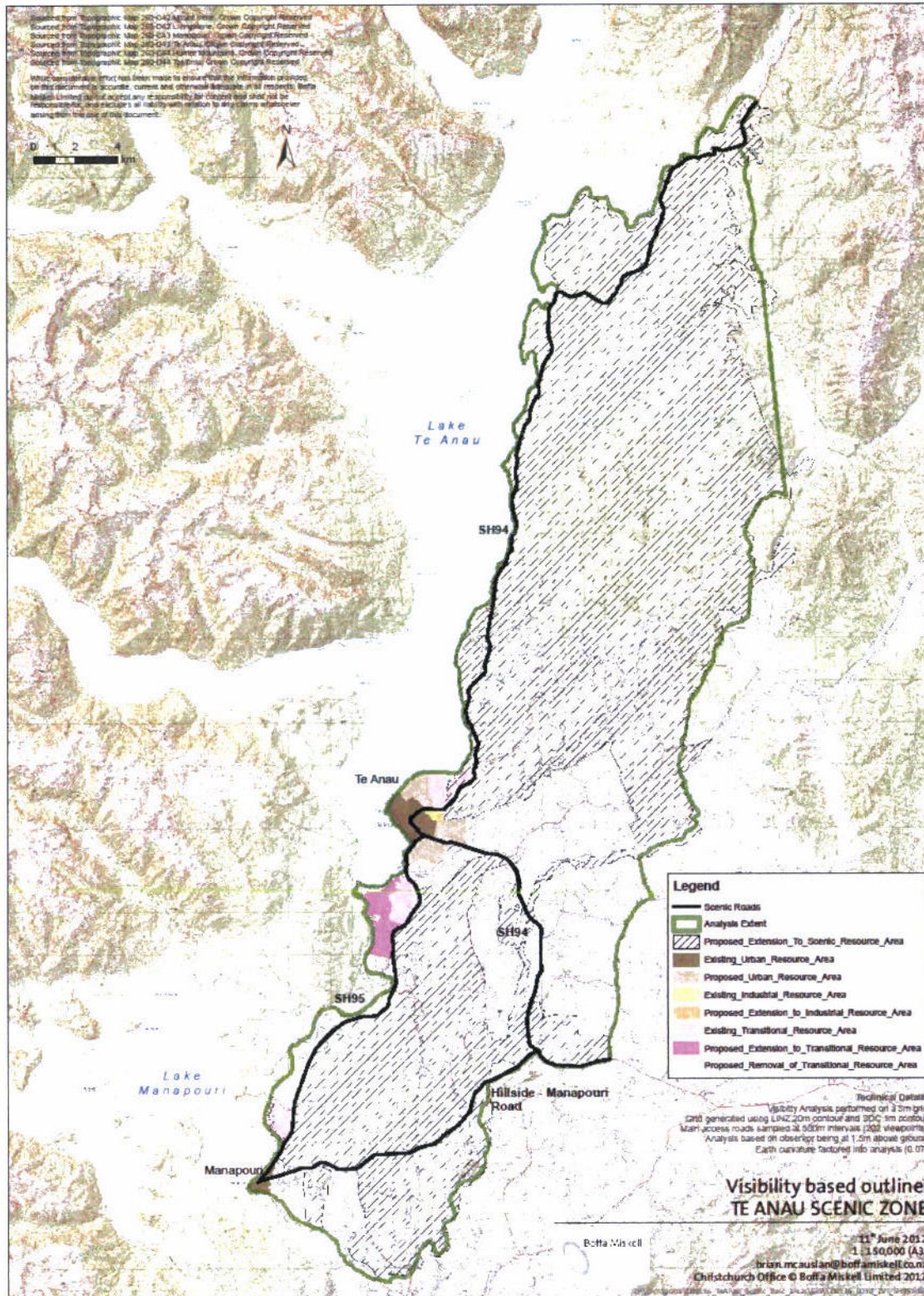


4.6 Visibility (TZVI) from all viewpoints

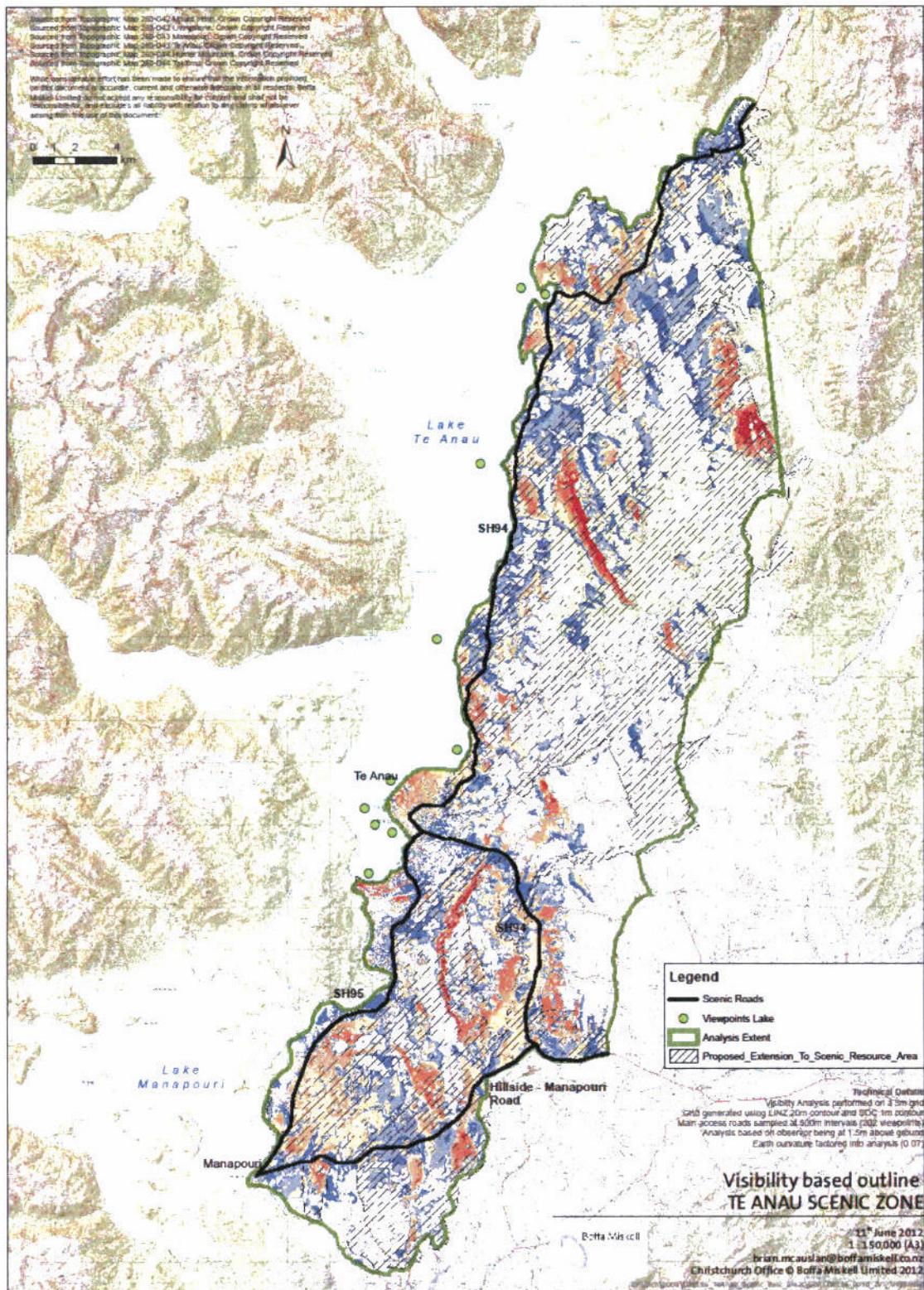


5.0 COMPARATIVE GIS MAPS OF SCENIC RESOURCE AREAS

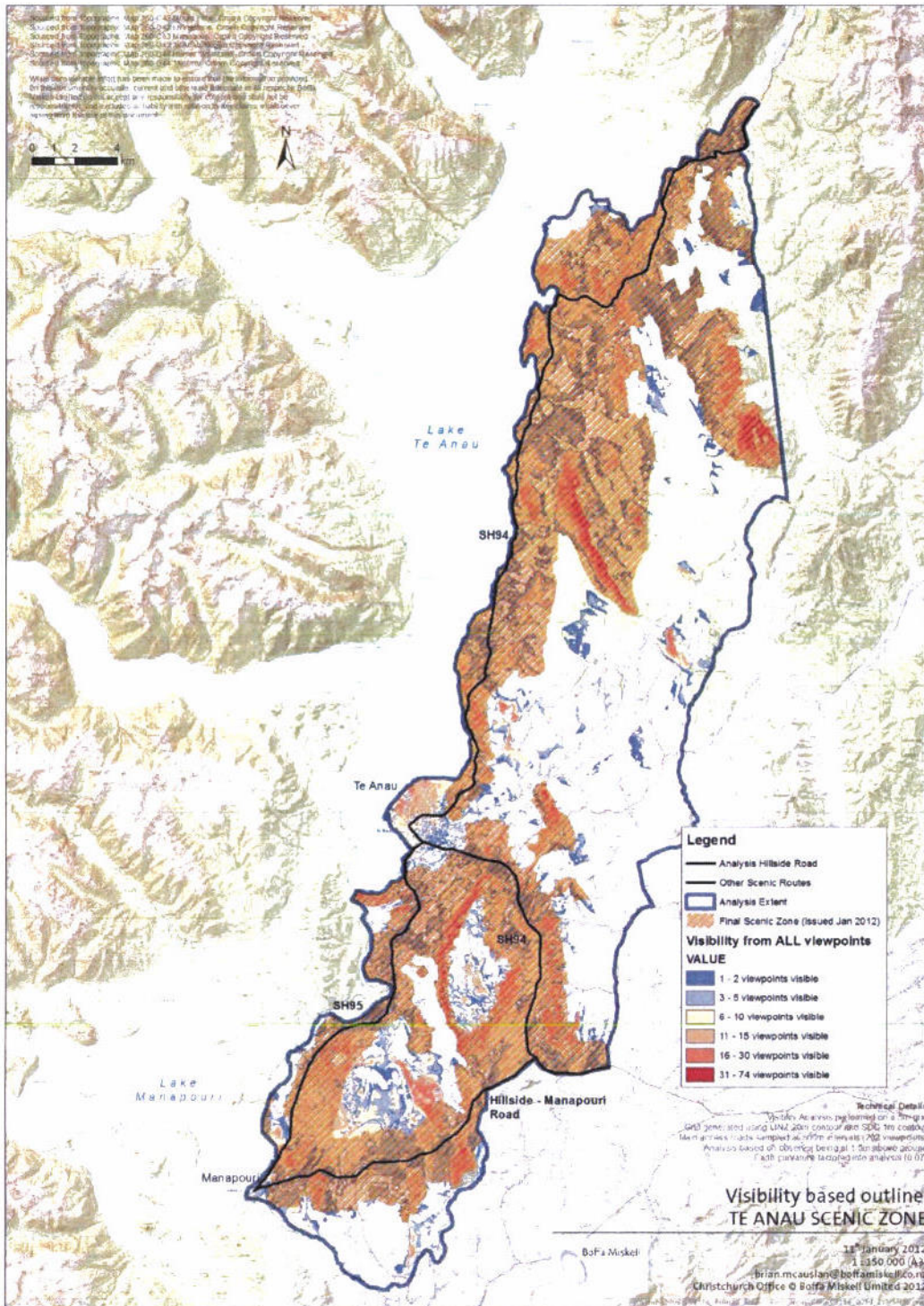
5.1 Scenic Resource Areas proposed by SDC in draft document



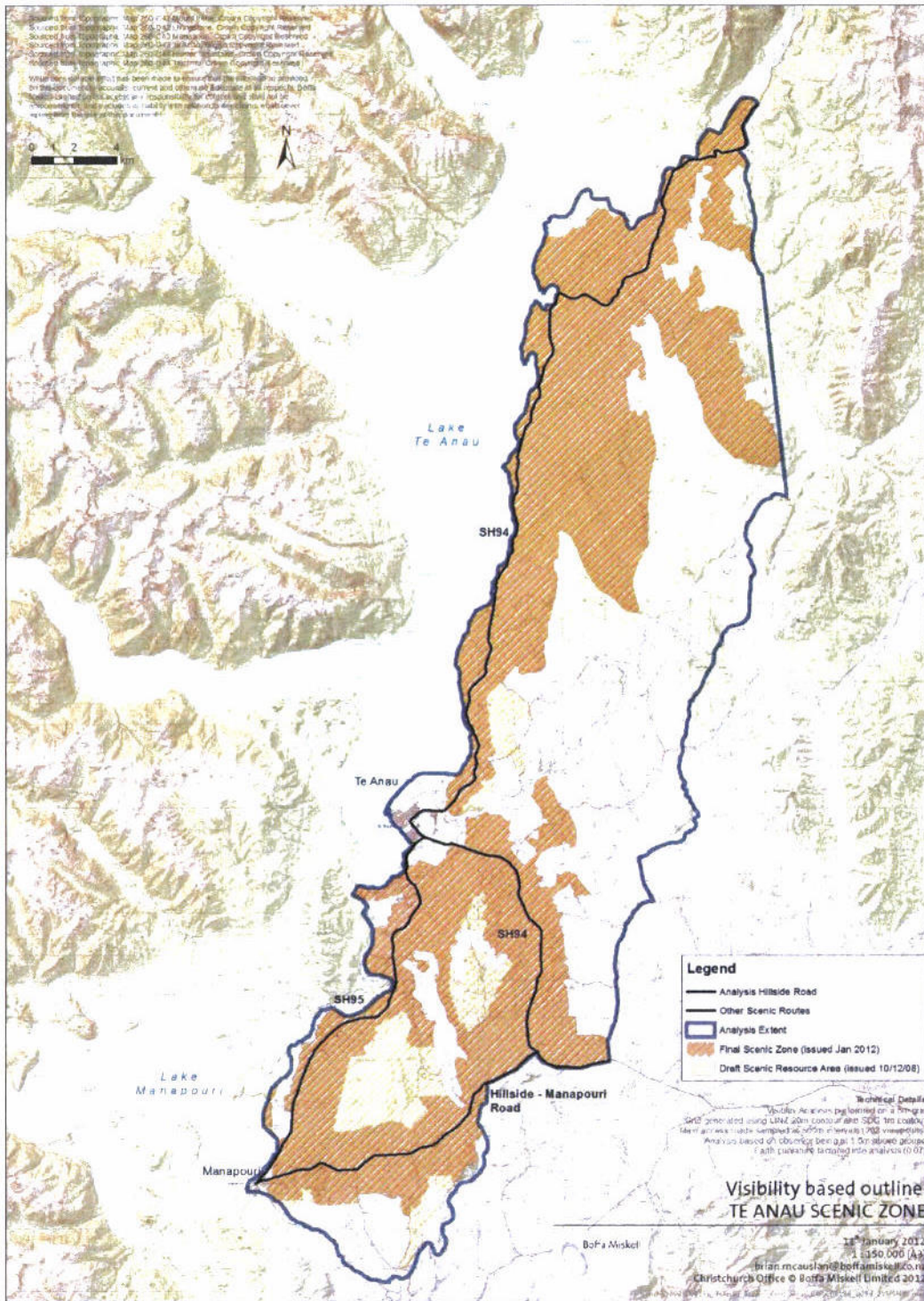
5.2 Scenic Resource Area as proposed by SDC overlaid with TZVI



5.3 Recommended Draft Scenic Resource Area overlaid with TZVI



5.4 Recommended Draft Scenic Resource Area



Amendments to the area following the on-site investigations are shown

6.0 GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS

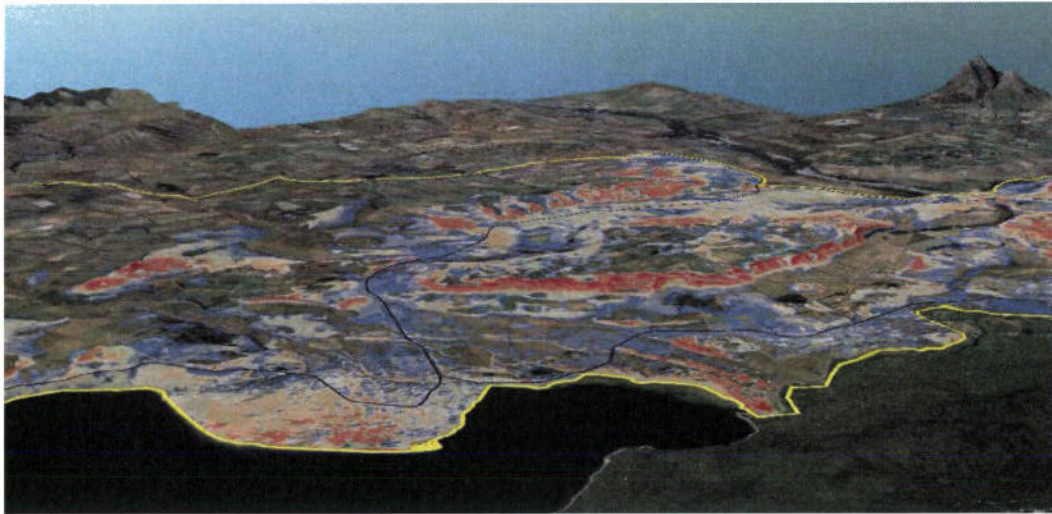


Figure 3: The screen shot illustrates the visual characteristics of the K2Vi- 3D model (overlaid with the results of the TZVI). Red areas are visible from a high number of viewpoints, while blue areas are only visible from a limited number of viewpoints. Areas left uncoloured are not visible from the highway and lakes. The black lines show the roads and yellow lines define the study area boundary.



Figure 4: This oblique aerial photo allows a comparison of views from a plane to the 3D model shown in Figure 3.

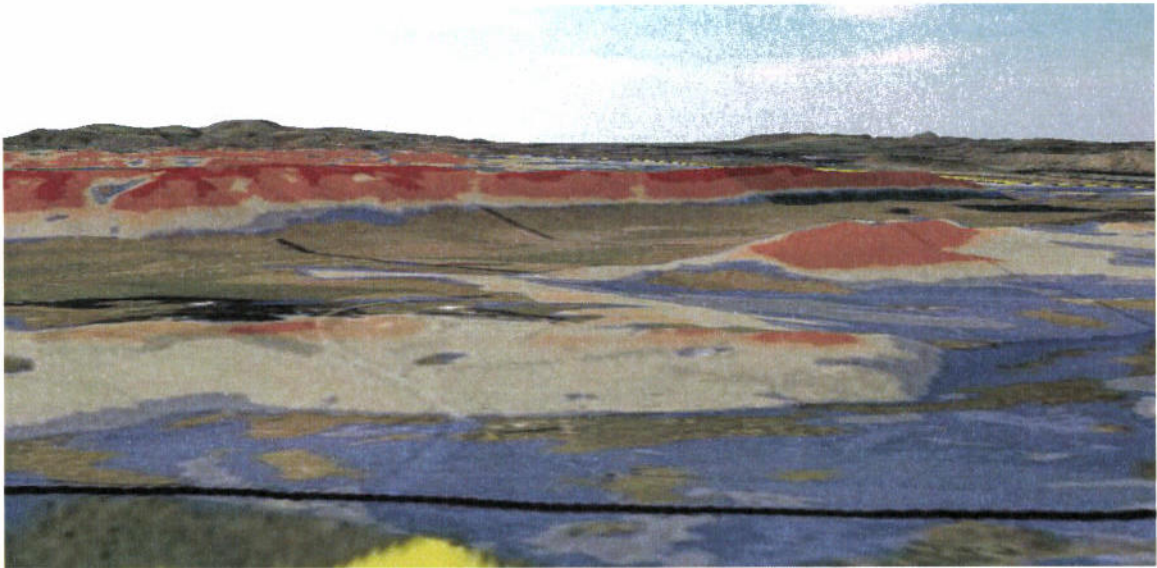


Figure 5: This screenshot of the 3D model is taken at a lower viewpoint elevation than Figure 3. At this viewing angle the lack of vegetation, which has not been modelled, becomes more obvious. Nevertheless, the 3D computer model was very helpful for the study team to understand visibility in relation to landform from a variety of viewing angles and elevations.

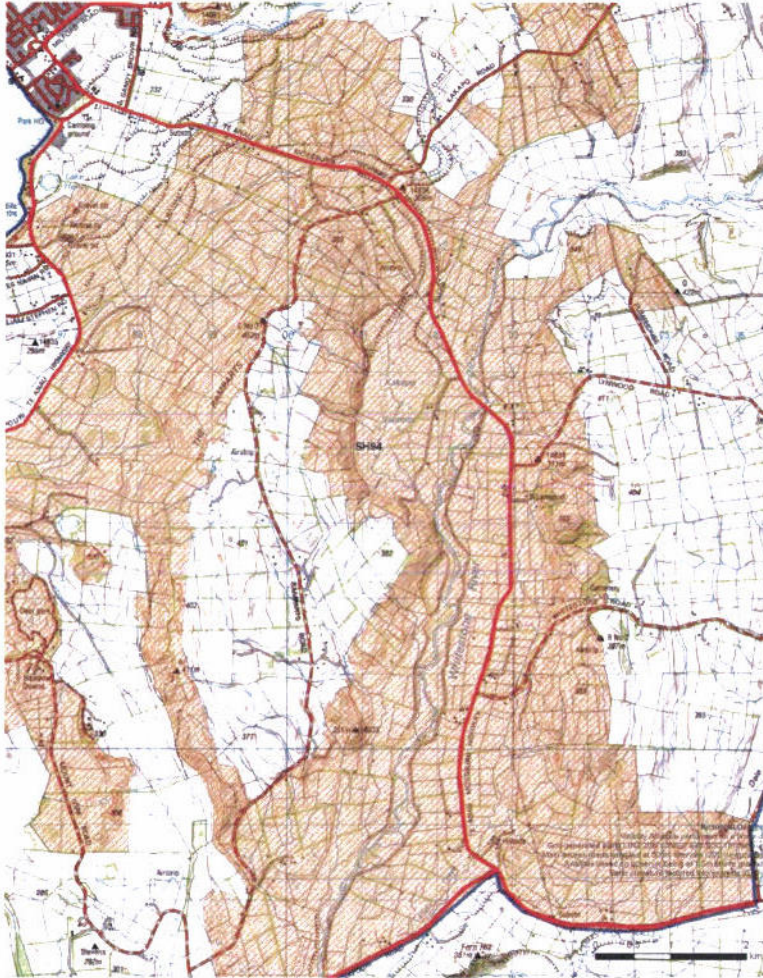


Figure 6: The photograph of the Ramparts and undulating landform in the foreground serves as an example to illustrate the differences in visibility depending on viewing angle and viewpoint elevation. From the road the shelterbelt adjacent to the highway forms a visual barrier and the undulating landform would block the views to the flats and Ramparts in the backdrop.

7.0 LANDSCAPE EXPERIENCE FROM KEY ROADS IN TE ANAU BASIN

7.1 Te Anau - Mossburn Highway (State Highway 94)

Topographical Map



Landscape description

This road is the main access route to the Te Anau basin and serves as an entrance to the Milford Road beyond the township. The viewing corridor is confined by two major landscape features, namely the Ramparts to the west and an equally high range of hills to the east. When travelling south views open up to the Takatimu mountains in the distance south of the Whitestone Road turn-off. Views to the Whitestone River are limited from the road due to the screening effect of the river terraces and farmland vegetation, such as shelterbelts. North of the Whitestone Road turn-off the faces of the Ramparts and confining hills are close to the road and appear visually prominent. The visual catchment is defined by the ridgelines of these landforms and there are no significant long-distance views to the mountains along this section of road. Dwellings are located at a very low density along the valley flats and on the rising landforms, which creates a rural character. Kakapo Swamp adds visual diversity to the landscape that is otherwise dominated by pastoral farming. Views to the low-lying swamp area

are more significant when travelling south. As the road rises out of the Whitestone Valley with its distinct terraces, the landscape character changes and views open up to Lake Te Anau and the mountains beyond soon after the Kakapo Road turn-off. From the highpoint the road gently drops towards Te Anau Township and signs of development, such as a substation and several new subdivisions, become more frequent as the township is approached.

Key views and visual sensitivities

- Views along Whitestone Valley are framed by Ramparts to the east and hills/terraces to the west. The faces and ridgelines of these landforms are visually prominent from the highway and sensitive to landscape change.
- Views to Lake Te Anau and the mountains beyond open up as the road rises onto the western Whitestone terrace (north of Kakapo Road turn-off)
- Kakapo Swamp is low-lying and the area is not visually prominent. However, the landscape has high character sensitivity.

Photographs of key landscape features



Figure 7: The Ramparts are a distinctive linear landform forming the foreground to long-distance views along this section of SH94.



Figure 8: The hills to the east of SH94 confine the visual catchment and the ridgeline forms the skyline along most of the Whitestone Valley.



Figure 9: North of the Whitestone Bridge the road rises onto the river terraces and after a distinctive road bend north of Kakapo Road views to Lake Te Anau and the mountains open up.

7.2 Hillside Manapouri Road

Topographical Map



Landscape description

The Hillside Manapouri Road is part of the Southern Scenic Route and provides access to Manapouri Township for travellers arriving from the south. The southern face of the Ramparts is less distinctive than its eastern and western sides. Fern Hill and the high terraces on the southern side of the Mararoa River, which are both located outside the study area, are visually prominent near the turn-off from SH 94. After crossing the Whitestone River the road climbs to the east, up to a higher-lying river terrace of the Mararoa River. Generally views to the high ridges of the Ramparts are intermittent from Hillside Manapouri Road and often blocked by gently undulating landforms close to the road. Mt York and Freestone Hill are distinctive landforms to the south of the road and form landmarks along the drive. Extensive wetlands to the north are only visible from short sections of the road due to intervening exotic vegetation and long viewing distances (Kepler Mire at more than 1 km). The relatively open flats in the triangular shaped area between Hillside Road, SH 95 and Manapouri allow for visual connections to the mountains to the east. Expanding subdivisions along the eastern edge of Manapouri Township have changed the landscape character west of Freestone Hill and mark the entrance to the settlement.

Key views and visual sensitivities

- ❑ Key landscape features to the south of Hillside Road are Mt York and Freestone Hill
- ❑ Fern Hill and Mararoa River terraces are prominent features south of the study area
- ❑ The Ramparts are partially obscured by undulating landform in the foreground and are visible at long viewing distances when travelling east
- ❑ Extensive wetlands (Home Creek and Kepler Mire) are low-lying and visually not very prominent. Views to Kepler Mire are very limited due to long viewing distances.

Photographs of key landscape features



Figure 10: Freestone Hill is a distinctive landform adjacent to the south of Hillside Manapouri Road. It is also visible from SH95 across the open flats to the east of Manapouri Township.



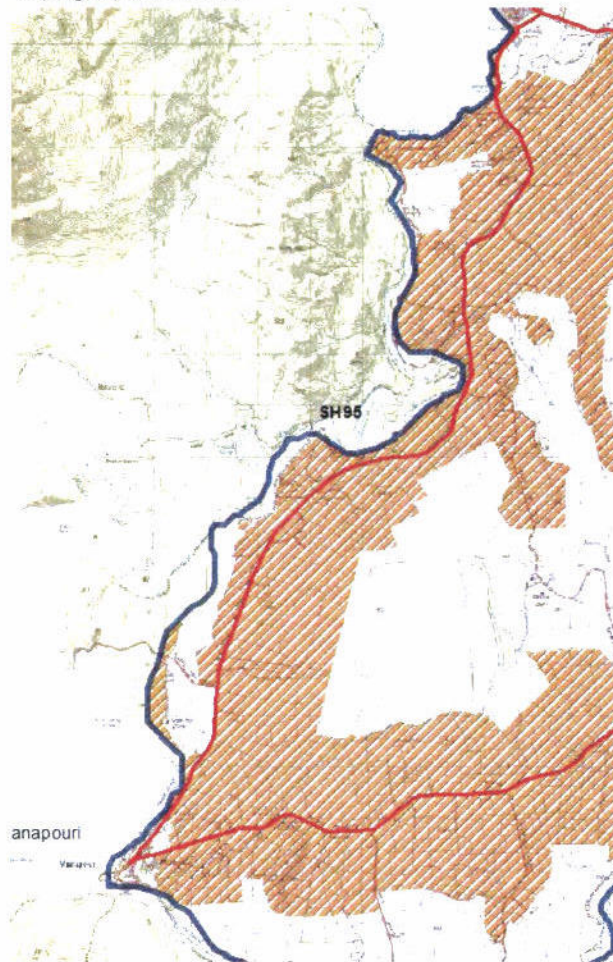
Figure 11: Several wetlands are located north of the road. While home Creek wetland is close to the road, Kepler Mire is situated at a distance of about one kilometre and difficult to see.



Figure 12: The Ramparts form the visual backdrop when travelling east on Hillside Manapouri Road. Due to undulating terrain in the foreground views are intermittent and at a viewing distance of 2 to 10 kilometres the landform is less dominant than from SH94.

7.3 Manapouri -Te Anau Highway (State Highway 95)

Topographical Map



Landscape description

State Highway 95 connects Te Anau and Manapouri Townships as part of the Scenic Tourist Route. It provides access to the Kepler Track and the Waiou River. The boundary of Fiordland National Park with its densely forested hills is less than a kilometre to the east along the northern section of the road. The grassed flats around Te Anau airport have previously been included in the Scenic Resource Area, since their open character currently allows for unobstructed views to the national park. A lower lying terrace extends in a north-south direction between the Ramparts and Kepler Mire. This terrace is visually prominent near Rainbow Downs in close proximity to the highway, where its ridge forms the skyline and blocks views to the east. From William Stephen road the land adjacent to the east of the highway flattens out and the Ramparts become visible in the distance, forming the skyline. Further south viewing distances to the lower – lying terrace east of the Ramparts are more than four kilometres and the Ramparts form the visual backdrop of the terrace when viewed from the SH 95. This means that the southern part of the terrace cannot be easily seen from the highway and does not appear prominent, even though the desktop analysis identified it as visible from a number of viewpoints. Around the Manapouri Aerodrome the flats east of SH 95 appear to extend to the base of the face of the Ramparts at a distance of more than

seven kilometres. The lower lying Kepler Mire is not visible from the highway and open paddocks with characteristic long mature shelterbelts create an open landscape character. When travelling south the open flats around the Aerodrome allow for views to Freestone Hill in the distance. Along its northern extent Manapouri Township has a distinct edge and the character changes from rural to urban in the vicinity of Fraser Beach. Direct views to Lake Manapouri open up just before the arrival in the settlement.

Key views and visual sensitivities

- Open flats around Te Anau Airport allow for unobstructed views to forested hills of Fiordland National Park
- Terrace around Rainbow Downs forms boundary of visual catchment to the east
- Views to Ramparts open up to the east around the Manapouri Aerodrome, flat open areas in vicinity to the highway are visually sensitive to change
- Freestone Hill is visible as a landmark across the flat areas east of Manapouri Township

Photographs of key landscape features



Figure 13: The Ramparts are located at a distance of about 8 kilometres from SH95 at Manapouri Aerodrome. They form the backdrop to the flats in the foreground.



Figure 14: Views to the mountains of Fiordland National Park across the currently identified Scenic Resource Area around Te Anau Airport.



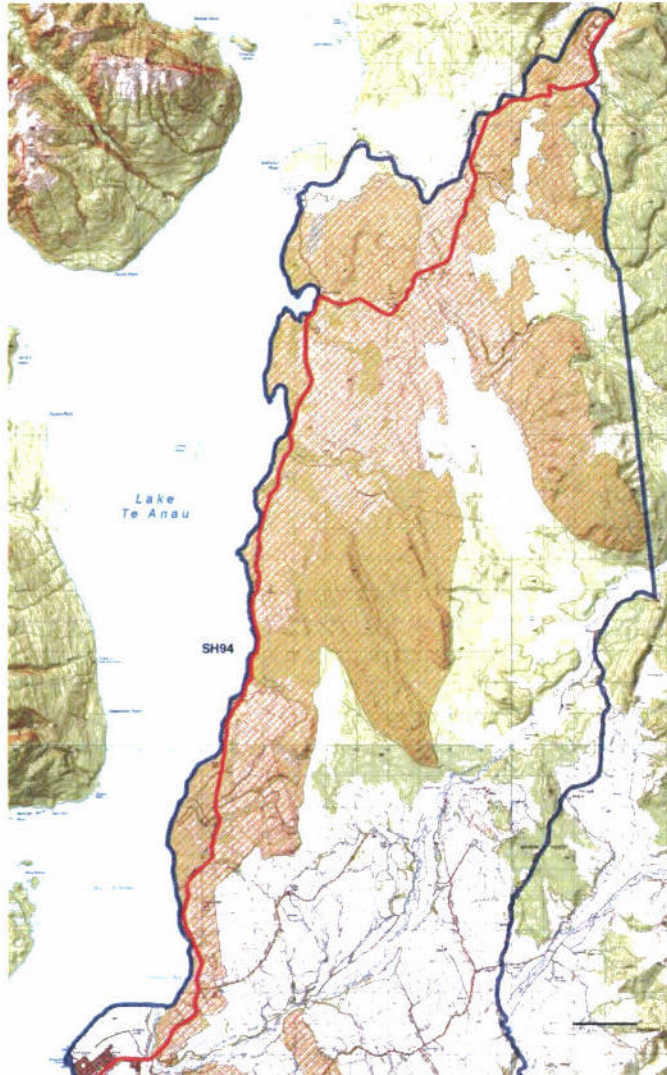
Figure 15: The terrace close to SH95 forms the skyline to the east near Rainbow Downs. Visitor accommodation has been developed along the face of the terrace.



Figure 16: At the Kepler Track turn-off impressive views of the Ramparts in the distance can be gained when travelling north along SH95.

7.4 Te Anau - Milford Highway (State Highway 94)

Topographical Map



Landscape description

The highway to Milford Sound is a major tourist route and tour buses travel regularly along this road. The highway follows the eastern shores of Lake Te Anau and the landscape character along the route changes dramatically from a rural to a more natural environment. Te Anau township extends north onto both sides of the Upukerora Delta. Views to the west onto the lake are intermittent and limited by intervening, predominantly native shrubland vegetation. After crossing Upukerora River, terraces confine views to the east and along a section of highway (around Sinclair Road turn-off) the ridgeline of these terraces forms the skyline. Several private dwellings and visitor accommodation have developed on the terraces in this area. Lookout Hill is located in proximity to the highway and blocks views to the east, but north of this landform views extend across open farmed flats with shelterbelts and clusters of exotic vegetation. This rural character extends as far north as Ewe Burn, where road side vegetation changes to native shrubland on rolling hills, which only allow intermittent views to the mountains beyond. North of Boundary Creek mature

stands of beech forest completely block views to the surrounding land, which creates a distinctive landscape experience. A section of open grassland and wetlands extends to Te Anau Downs, a tourist hub along the route, where tour boats and buses stop. From here the highway turns towards the west, where it runs parallel to the Eglinton River. The river itself is incised and views from the highway are limited. The Livingstone Mountains come into view and form an impressive backdrop, while views to the south vary between grassed farmland in the broader valleys and scrubland on the intervening hills. As Fiordland National Park (northern boundary of the study area) is approached beech forest becomes the dominant feature of the densely vegetated mountain slopes.

Key views and visual sensitivities

- Upukerora Delta shows signs of recent residential development activity
- Views to Lake Te Anau are intermittent, as native shrubland vegetation is intervening
- Terraces along Sinclair Road and Lookout Hill block views to the east
- Native shrubland and stands of beech forest screen views along extended sections of the highway
- Open grassland and wetland areas allow for views to the Livingstone Mountains in the west
- The northern part of the study area has high landscape character sensitivity

Photographs of key landscape features



Figure 17: Views to the lake and mountains of Fiordland National Park are intermittent. In particular along the northern section of the road native shrubland often blocks views to the west.



Figure 18: Extensive wetland areas are located to the east of the Milford highway, which are sensitive in terms of their landscape character and visibility.

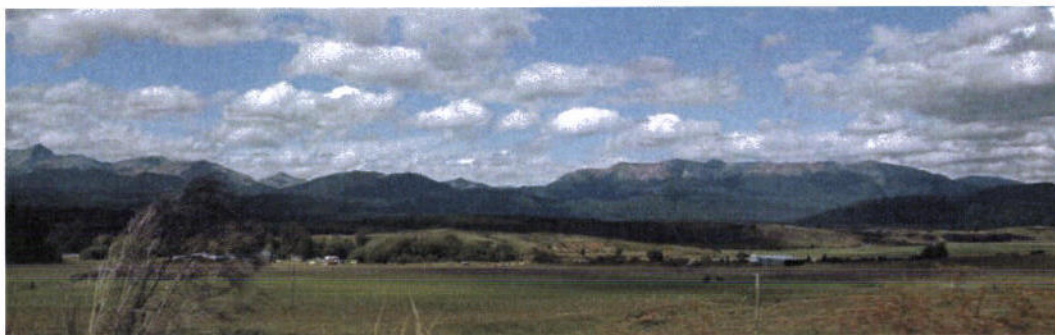


Figure 19: The open valleys floor of Retford Stream in the northern part of the study area offers impressive views to the mountains and has high visual amenity.

8.0 SCENIC RESOURCE AREA OBSERVATIONS

8.1 Review of findings of Te Anau Landscape Capacity Report

The Te Anau Landscape Capacity Study (2006) comprised in depth landscape character, value and sensitivity assessments and should be read in conjunction with this report. The aim of the Capacity Study was to identify areas that are suitable for development and where housing could be accommodated without compromising the landscape values of the area. This current report focuses only on an assessment of the landscape's visibility and visual prominence from the main tourist routes.

Areas identified as having high landscape character sensitivity, visual sensitivity and landscape value in the Landscape Capacity Study, have a low capacity to absorb new housing development. In these areas the type and extent of a proposal would have to be evaluated carefully against the existing landscape sensitivities, in order to avoid inappropriate levels of landscape change. The Landscape Capacity Report highlights that areas in the wilder parts of the Te Anau Basin, such as adjacent to Fiordland National Park and around rivers and wetlands, were considered as unsuitable for extensive future development. These areas are often not visible from the main highways or the lake, and hence unlikely to be experienced by large numbers of people. However, people attracted to those areas, such as backcountry recreationists, are likely to consider the prospect of some types of residential development out of context. In the Landscape Capacity Study areas that have already experienced some level of modification were generally identified as most suitable for future growth. Rural areas with intensive agricultural use, particularly to the south of the study area, were generally considered as having moderate capacity for future growth in landscape terms. While human modification has led to a largely cultural landscape character, their open, flat character makes them visually sensitive to change. These findings should be considered in the decision making process about appropriateness of future housing development.

It is more likely that large-scale future development in highly visible/ visually prominent locations will be considered inappropriate by the viewing populations experiencing the landscape from the main highways. This is not to say that well designed development proposals may not be suitable in some circumstances. In particular carefully situated and designed dwellings, which are in character with current housing densities, have the potential to be absorbed in the landscape. Since a basin wide study cannot address local, place specific landscape attributes, individual proposals may have to be assessed on their own merits.

8.2 Discussion

When comparing the Scenic Resource Area boundaries currently proposed by SDC with the results of the desktop visibility analysis (TZVI) and findings from the on-site investigations, it could be confirmed that large parts of the areas originally proposed by SDC are not visible from the lake or state highways. Our visibility analysis of the Draft Scenic Resource Areas in the Te Anau Basin has identified an extent of 288 km² as visually accessible from the main highway and the lake. The area is considerably smaller than the 455 km² originally proposed Scenic Resource Area extension.

Two types of areas have been included in the Recommend Draft Scenic Resource Areas:

1. Visually prominent (generally elevated) areas, such as faces of landforms (eg Ramparts), which can be seen from a high number of viewpoints.

2. Flat, low-lying areas adjacent to the highway. While these areas are only visible from a limited number of viewpoints, the openness of views to mountains or lakes surrounding the Te Anau Basin could be compromised by development. Distance of structures from the highway and their siting in relation to key view shafts are criteria that need to be considered in this context.

There are areas with high landscape/ visual amenity value and/or high landscape character sensitivity. These areas have been identified in the Landscape Capacity Study. Since they may not be visible from the viewpoints identified in this study, these have not been included in the Draft Recommended Scenic Resource Areas as requested in the brief for this project. These matters would have to be considered separately in addition to this study. These areas include large wetlands and protected areas (DOC land), such as Kepler Mire and land in the northern part of the study area, which are highly sensitive to modification.

As described in section 3.6, the boundaries were generally related to distinctive elements in the landscape, such as landform changes, land cover/ uses (eg roads, shelterbelts), and property boundaries/ fence lines. First draft areas were based on the desktop analysis and confirmed on site. While a number of areas are currently screened by vegetation, only parts screened by landform (eg undulating terrain) were excluded from the visibility based Scenic Resource Areas. In the following 4 parts of the study area reductions of the draft areas were considered appropriate based on terrain variation and/ or viewing distances from the highways/ lake:

1. Flats north west of Manapouri Township (east of the Ramparts), as viewing distances are very long and the face of the Ramparts is the visually dominant feature as a backdrop
2. Lower lying area on the inside of the Ramparts (along Ramparts Road), as views are actually confined to the faces
3. High lying area along the southern extent of study area, as hill in the foreground blocks most views and the viewing distance is very long from Hillside Road
4. Terraces along Milford Road north of Te Anau, as views north and south of Sinclair Road are confined to the ridge of the first terrace when travelling along SH94

While existing screening vegetation has not been taken into account, it was considered appropriate to primarily base the analysis on landform, since vegetation could change over time. In section 7 of this report the general land uses/cover and visual landscape experience that people get during their journey along the highways is described. These descriptions highlight that some areas are more significant in terms of their visual prominence and landscape sensitivity than others.

Visual prominence of landforms does not necessarily mean that dwellings would appear visually dominant, in particular at long viewing distances (e.g. Ramparts viewed from SH95 close to Manapouri Township). Whereas, buildings close to the highways have a higher potential to block views out to these landforms, the lake and mountains in the distance. In some occasions the faces of landforms do not only form the boundary of the visual catchment of the highway, which makes their ridgelines more vulnerable to change, but they also contribute to the visual amenity and diversity of the landscape (eg Freestone Hill).

In this visibility based identification of Scenic Resource Areas, there is a tendency for inaccessible, remote, more natural areas to be under-represented and for open, flat rural areas adjacent to the highways to be over-represented. In this context it has to be noted that the SDC Plan specifically addresses the protection of the "high visual amenity providing uninterrupted views from State Highway 95 across open farm land to Lake Manapouri and the Fiordland National Park beyond". While farming activities are considered to be in character and appropriate for these areas, the "effects of buildings and vegetation have the potential to alter the high scenic values of the area".

8.3 Conclusion

The conclusions relate to the points raised in the discussion above, in particular to the different types of landscapes, which may warrant inclusion in the Scenic Resource Areas:

1. Visually prominent landforms that are highly visible from a high number of viewpoints

The landscape effects of structures on faces and ridges of visually prominent landforms have the potential to be adverse, if they are and out of character with the landscape and affect the landscape character. These effects are highly dependent on viewing distances, and siting and design of structures in relation to landform and vegetation.

2. Flat areas adjacent to the highways and lake that provide openness and allow for views along key viewshafts

In proximity to the highway the retention of rural character and amenity, openness and viewshafts is an important issue. Large-scale structures in proximity to these major viewing corridors have the potential to block long-distance views to the mountains and lakes. Terrain variation and natural elements, such as vegetation, can help to contain the visual effects of structures. The effects of structures on broadly visible, open landscapes are highly dependent on their location and distance from the viewpoints. Site specific visibility analysis of some development proposals and an assessment of their potential effects on openness and rural amenity may be appropriate for these types of flat landscapes.

3. Areas sensitive to landscape change, which may not be visible from the main viewing corridors. These areas have not been included in this report.

We recommend that the findings of both the Te Anau Landscape Capacity Study (2006) and this landscape visibility assessment should be taken into account for the identification of extensions to the Scenic Resource Area as part of the plan change process. The Capacity Study could also be used to assist the Council in assessing effects of proposals through a resource consent process, in particular in assessing effects on natural character, and landscape character and values.

The Council could consider developing assessment matters (for resource consent processing) and/ or design guidelines (for applicants) based on the findings of both reports. The Landscape Capacity Study provides criteria for assessment of effects on landscape character sensitivity, visual sensitivity and landscape values. This study highlights the importance of the retention of openness in relation to the visibility and visual prominence of development proposals. In addition, cumulative effects would have to be considered for all types of landscapes. The Council would need to define the thresholds and triggers (eg activity status) for resource consent processes according to their objectives for the Scenic Resource Areas.

APPENDIX 1 DISCUSSION DOCUMENT POSSIBLE TE ANAU PLAN CHANGES

Prepared by SDC, June 2008

Discussion Document Possible Te Anau Plan Changes

JUNE 2008



Purpose

The purpose of this discussion document is to explain **possible** changes being considered by the Southland District Council to the provisions of the Operative Southland District Plan 2001 which relate to the Te Anau township and Basin area, and to provide a further opportunity for public feedback on these possible changes.

It is important to emphasise that this discussion document outlines **possible changes only, with none being "cast in stone" at this stage.**

Some preliminary consultation meetings have already occurred, and the purpose of this discussion document is to ensure that any persons who have been unable to participate in the consultation meetings to date have a further opportunity to provide input.

Background to Possible Changes

The Te Anau township and Basin area has experienced substantial community growth in recent years, particularly in the period from 2000 – 2007, where over 1000 new allotments have been created. Also, population has increased from 1785 to 1902 usual residents in Te Anau, and increased from 216 to 306 usual residents in Manapouri.

Coupled with increases in permanent residents have been increases in tourist activity. This means that at peak times during the summer season, the Te Anau population can swell to some 9,000 plus persons.

The Southland District Council is still experiencing considerable development interest in the Te Anau basin. This development pressure has led to concerns being expressed to the Council and the Te Anau Community Board that current and future developments could adversely affect the unique environmental values of the area if not managed more proactively and that consent applications are being considered on an ad-hoc basis without sufficient consideration of the "big picture".

Accordingly, the Te Anau Community Board has moved proactively to seek to manage growth pressures for the sustainable management of the natural and physical resources of the area.

In 2003 a series of "non-regulatory developer guidelines" were created in consultation with the Community Board, and although not legally binding, these have been quite successful as several developers have taken on board the concepts outlined in these guidelines and factored them into their developments.

In 2005/2006 a series of workshops were held between the Te Anau Community Board, Council staff, and staff of Environment Southland relating to possible responses to growth issues, and further meetings have progressed from there.

In May 2007 and September 2007, public meetings were held to outline possible changes being considered to the Southland District Plan in relation to growth management issues, and feedback was sought from these meetings. This feedback has been considered and some of the possible changes have been modified accordingly, or not proceeded with at all.

The purpose of this document is to explain **possible** changes still being considered, and to provide a further opportunity to obtain feedback for any party who has been unable to participate in the meetings held to date.

This "discussion document" approach is often used by local authorities prior to deciding whether or not to proceed with the extensive formal process of a District Plan change provided for under the Resource Management Act 1991.

The attached maps illustrate the possible changes being contemplated, and it is suggested that you refer to these when reading this document.

Please rest assured that if the Council proceeds with any or all of these possible changes, you would still have further opportunities to formally submit in support of or in opposition to, such changes, and to be heard by Council in relation to your submission.

Possible Changes

1. Industrial Resource Area Expansion

The current Te Anau Industrial Resource Area (in the Caswell Street/Captain Roberts Road area) is relatively small, and is largely "full" of existing established industrial premises.

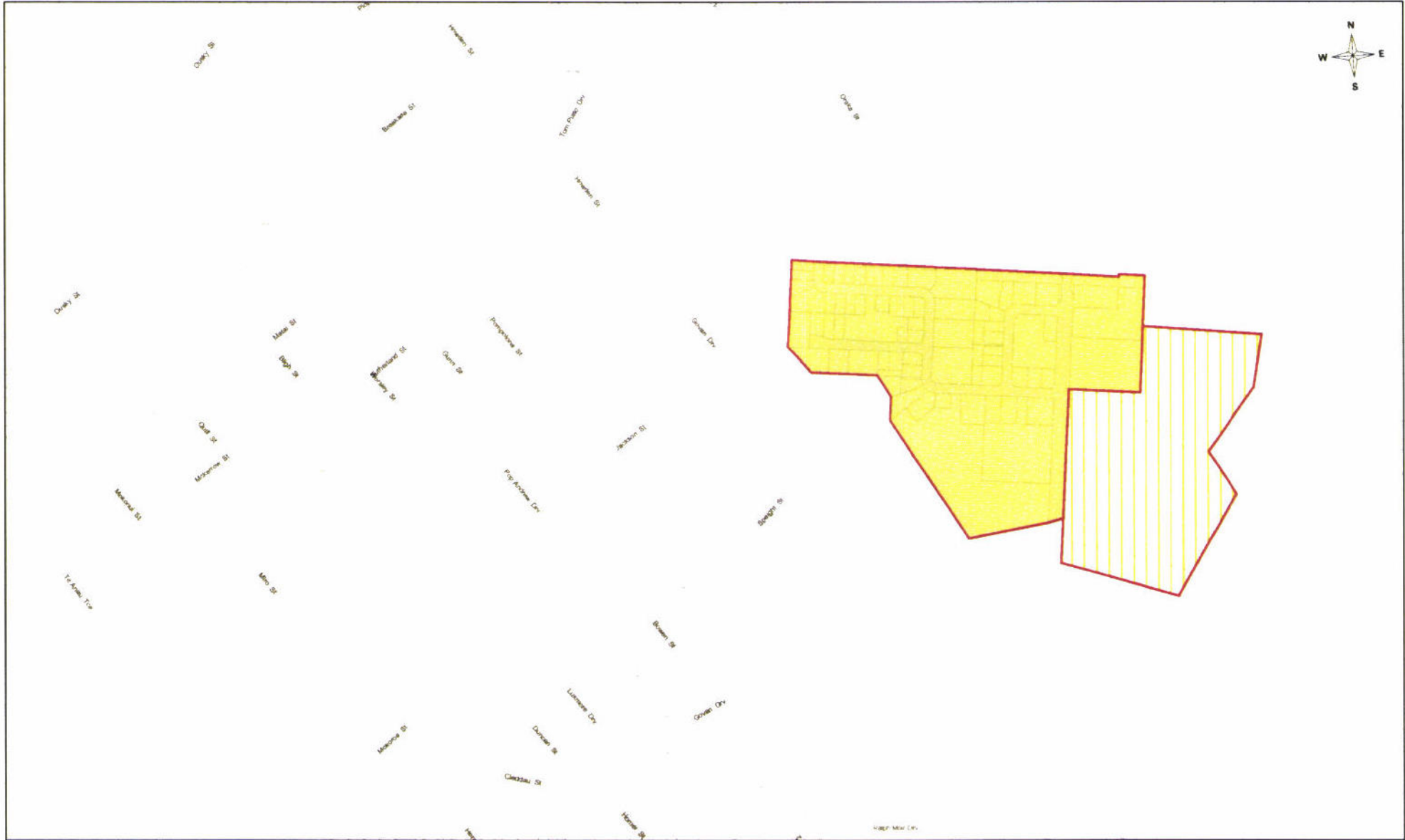
Some concern has been expressed that the lack of suitable industrially-zoned land could unduly constrain future industrial growth in the area.

Accordingly, it is proposed to expand the scope of the existing Te Anau Industrial Resource Area, by inclusion of a further area to the east of Sandy Brown Road. This area has been the subject of a recent resource consent application, which was approved by the Council, and which provides for such activities in this locality. Hence, this zoning change would recognise this recent resource consent decision.

In consultation undertaken to date, some concern has been expressed that part of this area could be potentially flood-prone. However, in the processing of the recent resource consent application referred to above, expert feedback was obtained from Environment Southland and the flood hazard was considered prior to granting this resource consent. Environment Southland considers that the allotments within the approved development have very little likelihood of being subject to future inundation.



KEY FEEDBACK POINT:

Do you concur with the expansion of the Industrial Resource Area in this locality?



INDUSTRIAL Possible Te Anau Plan Change



- Legend**
-  Existing Industrial Resource Area
 -  Possible Extension to Industrial Resource Area

2. Urban Resource Area Expansion

There has been considerable residential development on the periphery of the existing Urban Resource Area (which is the area currently zoned for urban development) of Te Anau, so that some of the large residential developments approved in recent years (eg. the 180-lot "Heritage" development and the 240-lot "Delta" development) are currently located outside of the existing zoned Urban Resource Area.

Hence, it is proposed to expand the Urban Resource Area to include these existing consented developments, and it is also proposed to rezone additional land currently zoned Rural Resource Area for urban development (being the red area as shown on the attached map) so as to provide further scope for future urban growth.

The areas identified for future urban growth in the expanded Urban Resource Area have been selected because they have been identified in a recent expert landscape study undertaken by Boffa Miskell Landscape Architects for Southland District Council and Environment Southland, as being less visually sensitive than some other lands which could

potentially be developed for urban purposes in this locality.

The aim of this expansion of the Urban Resource Area zoning is also to encourage planned urban expansion from the existing urban core of Te Anau, rather than potentially having a number of "satellite urban developments" occurring further from the township.

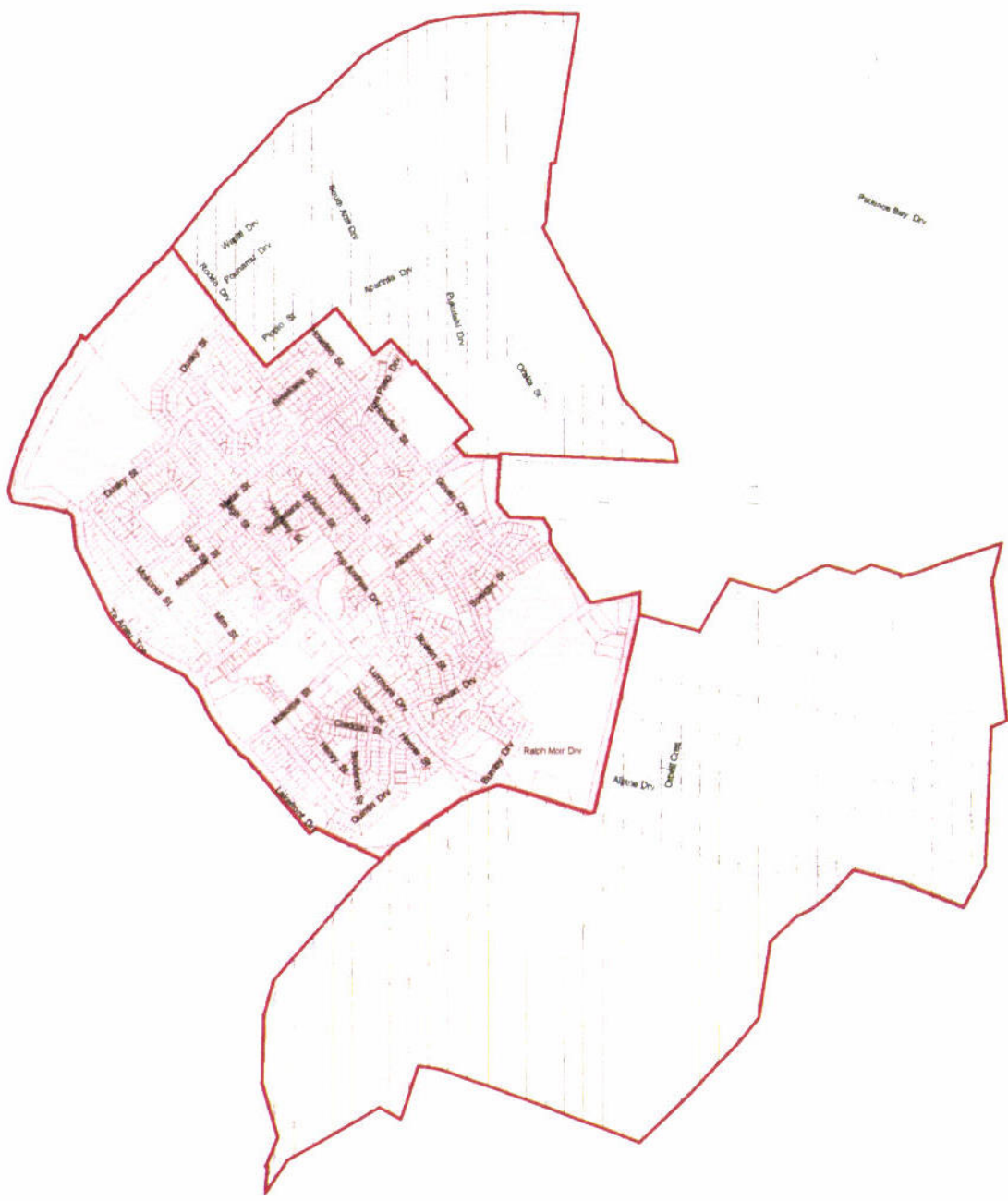
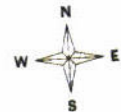
This also makes for more logical and cost-efficient provision of reticulated services, as well as minimising effects on the landscape and natural character of the area.

KEY FEEDBACK POINT:

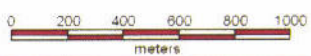
Do you support the expansion of the existing Urban Resource Area as shown on the map?

If not, where would you wish to see future urban expansion occur?





URBAN
Possible Te Anau Plan Change



Legend

- Existing Urban Resource Area
- Possible Extension to Urban Resource Area



3. Expanded Scenic Resource Area

There is already an existing zoned area in the Operative Southland District Plan to the south-west of Te Anau, most of which is located west of State Highway 95 (the Te Anau - Manapouri highway), between Te Anau and Manapouri, which is known as the "Scenic Resource Area".

This Scenic Resource Area was created in the early 1990s to reflect the scenic values applicable to this area, and in particular the vistas when looking west from State Highway 95 towards the Fiordland National Park.

In the Scenic Resource Area there are tighter controls on development than exist in other rural areas, including:

- all new subdivision is a "discretionary activity". What this means is that no subdivision is permitted as of right, and the Council has discretion to grant or decline any subdivision application,
- any new dwellings must be 6m or less in height, and if not the Council has discretion to decline resource consent, and
- there are controls on tree plantings which do not exist in other rural areas, in order to mitigate the potential for such plantings to adversely affect the identified scenic values of the area.

A possible change proposes that, reflecting the content of the Boffa Miskell landscape study referred to earlier, the Scenic Resource Area be expanded to cover a wider area of the Basin, including some of the more visually prominent, elevated landscape features, such as the "Ramparts" area to the south east of the township and the terraces on the east side of State Highway 94 north of Te Anau when heading towards Milford Sound. This possible change would also build on the "gateway to

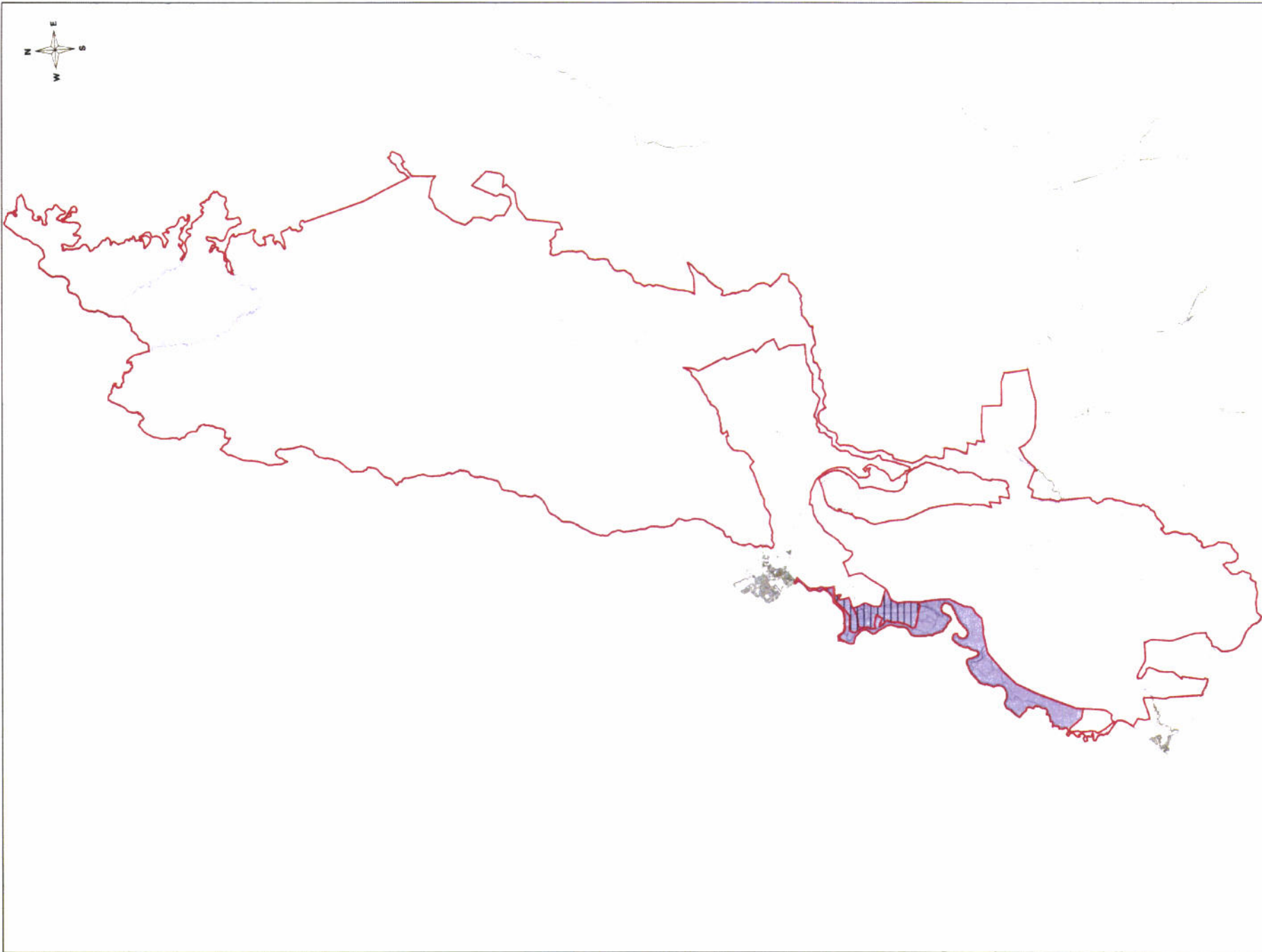
Milford" concept that came through strongly in previous workshops associated with the Fiordland Concept Plan, where participants indicated that they would wish to see new development between Te Anau and Milford sensitively located and at relatively low densities. This possible expanded Scenic Resource Area is identified in blue on the attached maps.

It is important to note that this does not alter the rights of existing landowners in these identified areas to continue their existing lawfully established activities, such as farming. All lawfully established activities within these areas have what is called "existing use rights" under section 10 of the Resource Management Act 1991 and can therefore continue in the future provided that they are at the same character, intensity and scale as the originally-established activity.

KEY FEEDBACK POINT:




Do you support the inclusion of wider areas of the Te Anau Basin in the "Scenic Resource Area"? If not, why not?

If so, are the areas identified on the attached maps appropriate, or do you think they should be increased or reduced, and if so in what locations?



SCENIC
Possible Te Anau Plan Change



- Legend
-  Existing Scenic Reserve Area
 -  Possible Extension To Scenic Reserve Area
 -  Possible Extension To Scenic Reserve Area

4. Lakeside Protection Area

As outlined above, a key driver for the possible changes being considered to the District Plan in the Te Anau Basin area has been to seek to mitigate the potential for future developments to adversely affect the unique environment of Te Anau.

One of the key features of the Te Anau Township when compared to many other lakeside communities in New Zealand and other parts of the world is its current relatively open and low-level lakeside environment, with existing developments on the land directly east of the lake being 12 metres in height or less currently.

Consultation undertaken to date has indicated that the bulk of the participants in this consultation supported endeavours to retain this low-level development, rather than seeing a number of high rise developments occur along the Te Anau lakefront in the future.

Accordingly, in response to this issue, it is proposed that a possible new "Lakeside Protection Area" zoning be established in the District Plan, in the area identified on the Te Anau lakefront on the attached maps.

The effect of this identifier would be as follows:

- currently the maximum height in this area is 12m, or else a discretionary resource consent is required.
- this proposed change would keep the maximum height at 12m, so therefore would not reduce the maximum permitted height for landowners within this identified area, but would change the status of any development proposal which

proposed to exceed the 12m maximum from a "discretionary activity" to a "non-complying activity" under the Resource Management Act 1991. What this would mean in practice is that any development that wished to exceed the 12m height maximum, would be subject to a significantly tougher legal test to obtain resource consent than that which currently applies under the current discretionary activity status.

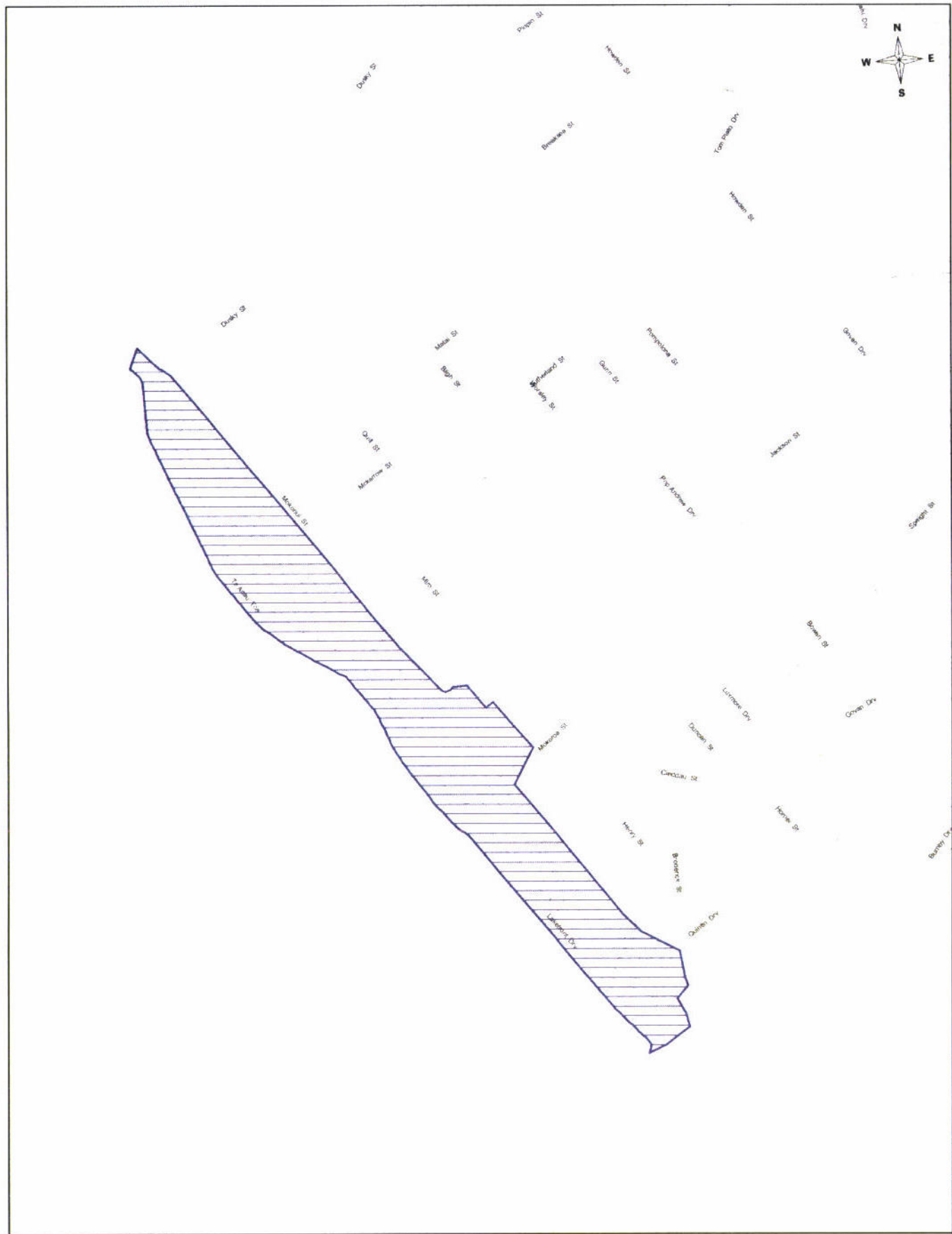
KEY FEEDBACK POINT:

Do you support the creation of this Lakeside Protection Area?

If so, do you consider that the area identified is appropriate and that the 12m height maximum is appropriate?

If not, please outline your alternative suggestions.






BUILDING HEIGHT RESTRICTION - LAKESIDE PROTECTION AREA
Possible Te Anau Plan Change



Legend

-  Possible Lakeside Protection Area With Building Height Restriction

5. New Commercial Resource Area

Currently there is no commercial zone in the Te Anau Township (or in any other town within the Southland District, for that matter), with all urban areas of Southland District townships being located in the same zoning, being "Urban Resource Area" under the District Plan.

Therefore, at present residential and non-residential activities can establish side-by-side, provided that the non-residential activities can meet the relevant performance standards, such as provision of parking, setbacks from boundaries, maximum height, hours of operation etc.

This possible change proposes to create a new "Commercial Resource Area" in the Te Anau town centre, incorporating the existing commercial developments in the town centre, and also providing scope for future expansion to the north and north-east of the existing commercial area, including the existing primary school site.

Within this zone, new commercial developments would be permitted as of right, provided that they met the relevant standards relating to matters such as off-street parking provision, maximum noise levels, maximum height, maximum lightspill levels etc.

It is important to clarify that the inclusion of the school site in this possible Commercial Resource Area is not designed to "push out" the school. The school is designated for school purposes and has been lawfully established, so could continue on this site indefinitely if it chose to do so. However, by including this school area in the Commercial Resource Area, should the school at some stage choose to relocate, the fact that the land is zoned for commercial development may enable the school to recover a greater revenue from the sale of the site, thereby assisting it with its potential costs of relocation. It is also noted that this school site is in a position which is in close proximity to

other existing commercial activity.

The intended effect of the possible Commercial Resource Area would be to make it more attractive for any new commercial development to establish in this Commercial Resource Area, as it would be less likely to require resource consent to establish in this area.



Some concerns have been expressed by existing residents in the Urban Resource Area to the north of the existing town centre that this could result in them having commercial, rather than residential, neighbours in the future. However, it is important to recognise that this could occur

already under the current regime, which provides for a mixed-use of commercial and non-commercial activities in the Urban Resource Area, as outlined above.

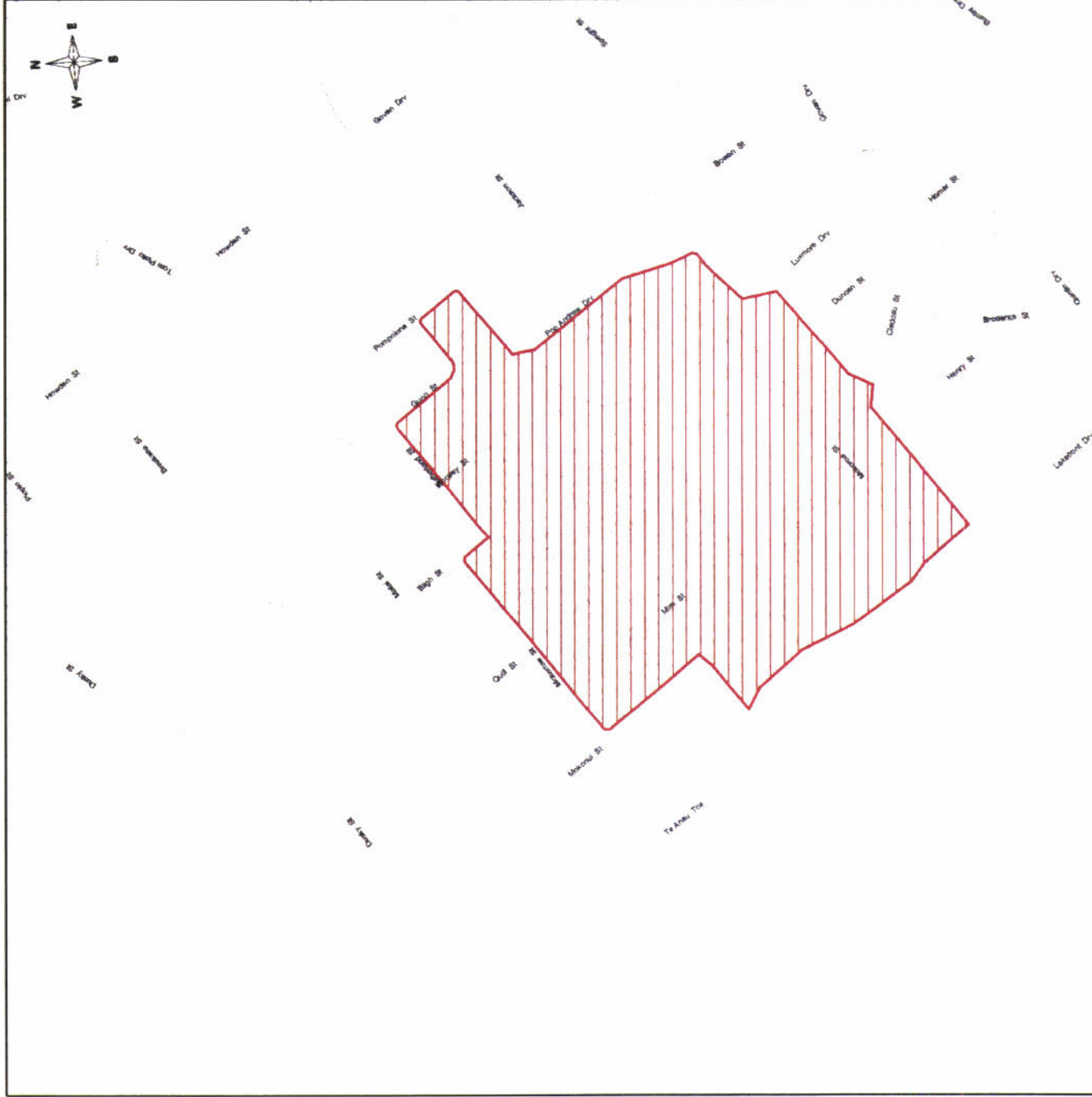
To further explain the reasons for this possible change being considered, the Te Anau Community Board has sought to be proactive in seeking to retain the existing Te Anau Town Centre as the key commercial core for the town, rather than having piecemeal commercial development occurring all over the periphery of the town.

The Te Anau Community Board hopes that by providing further suitably zoned commercial land adjacent to the existing commercial centre of the town, it will encourage future commercial development to locate in this area, rather than elsewhere; although it is recognised that there may still be resource consent applications in the future for commercial developments outside of this area, which would then need to be considered on their merits.

KEY FEEDBACK POINT:


Do you consider it is appropriate to create a Commercial Resource Area, or do you think that the market should dictate where commercial development goes?

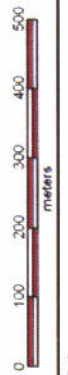
If you agree with the establishment of a Commercial Resource Area, do you consider that the identified location is appropriate? If not, why not?



COMMERCIAL
Possible Te Anau Plan Change

Legend

 Possible Commercial Resource Area



6. Expanded Transitional Resource Area

This possible change proposes to expand the land available in the Transitional Resource Area (which provides for rural-residential allotments of 1 hectare minimum/2 hectare average) to the south of the William Stephen Road/ Chas Nairn Road area (the current Waiau airstrip site), by rezoning some of this land from "Scenic Resource Area" to "Transitional Resource Area".

Therefore, this would create a more permissive subdivision regime in this area than exists at present under the current Scenic Resource Area zoning.

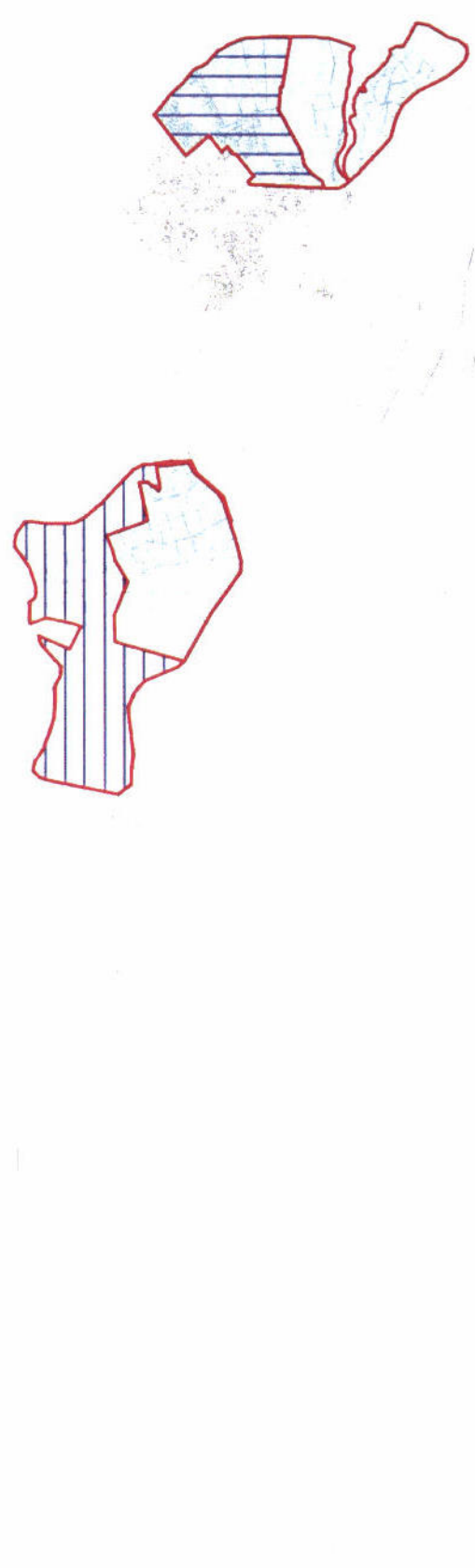
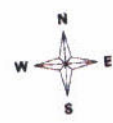
At the public workshops, some concern has been expressed that this area may be too large, and could negatively impact on the values of adjoining existing residents and the adjacent Fiordland National Park. Hence, further feedback on this point would be welcomed.

KEY FEEDBACK POINT:

Do you support the expansion of the Transitional Resource Area in this location?




If not, what do you consider to be a more appropriate location for this type of rural-residential development?

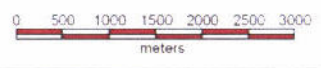


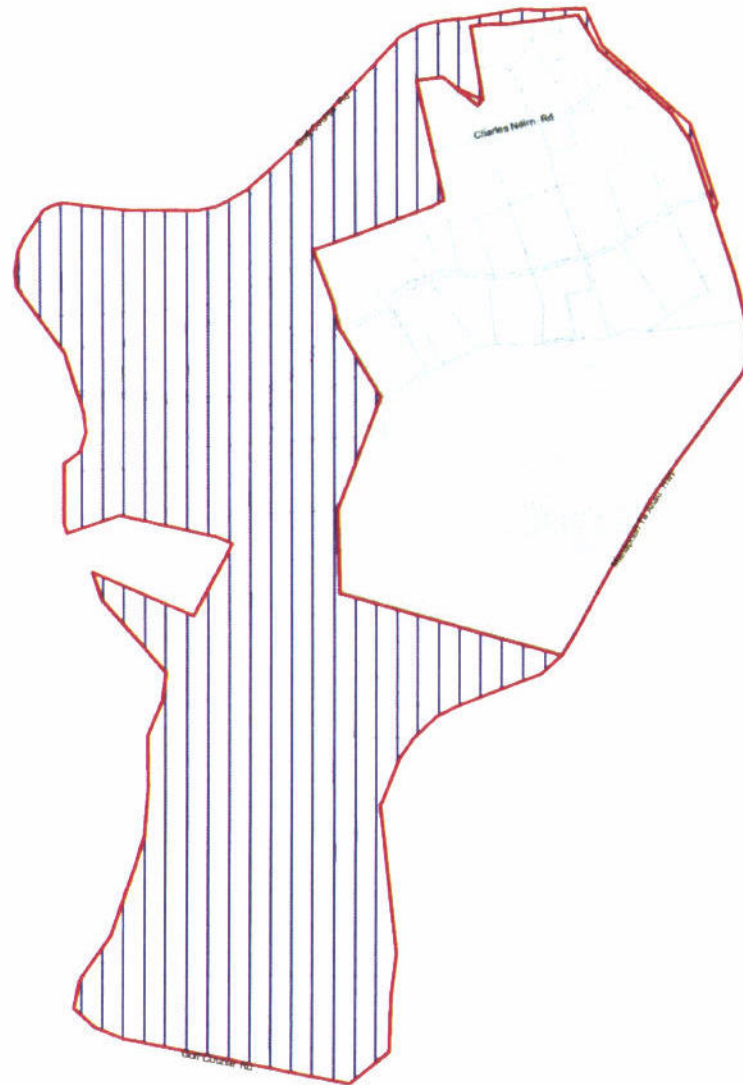


TRANSITIONAL
Possible Te Anau Plan Change

Legend

-  Existing Transitional Resource Area
-  Possible Removal of Transitional Resource Area
-  Possible Extension to Transitional Resource Area





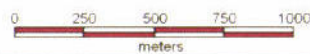
**TRANSITIONAL
Possible Te Anau Plan Change**

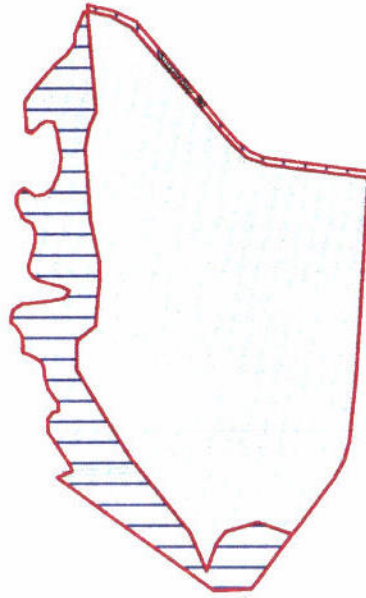
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Existing Transitional Resource Area

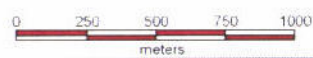
Possible Extension to Transitional Resource Area





Manapouri Te Anau Hwy

TRANSITIONAL
Possible Te Anau Plan Change

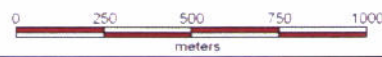




Legend

-  Existing Transitional Resource Area
-  Possible Removal of Transitional Resource Area



TRANSITIONAL Possible Te Anau Plan Change



- Legend
-  Existing Transitional Resource Area
 -  Possible Removal of Transitional Resource Area - To Become Urban

Summary:

The above discussion document provides an overview of the **possible** changes to the Operative Southland District Plan being considered by the Te Anau Community Board and the Southland District Council, following preliminary work undertaken and recent public workshops.

Feedback:

Your feedback is welcomed on these possible changes, and it is important to re-emphasise again that **NONE OF THESE POSSIBLE CHANGES ARE CAST IN STONE**, and that this feedback will be closely considered before deciding which, if any, of these changes to progress to a formal Plan Change under the Resource Management Act 1991.

Please complete the feedback form attached and return it to the Southland District Council, at the freepost address provided, by Friday, 18 July 2008 or by delivery to the SDC Te Anau or Invercargill Offices.

Where to from here:

The Council and the Community Board will consider all feedback received on this discussion document and then decide which of these possible changes will proceed forward to the formal District Plan change process under the Resource Management Act 1991.

The formal Plan Change process provides rights of submission and further submission for any party, and hence you will have an opportunity to lodge a formal submission and a formal further submission in relation to any changes that progress to that stage, and would have a right to be heard by Council in relation to your submission.

A Tentative timetable for progress is as follows:

June 2008 – Discussion document distributed.

18 July 2008 – Comments on Discussion document close.

August 2008 – Te Anau Community Board and Council consider feedback and decide which possible changes will progress further, if any

September 2008 - January 2009 – Preparation of formal changes to the District Plan and associated Sector 32 analysis for public notification.

February 2009 – Plan changes publicly notified and submissions called for

March 2009 – Preparation of summary of submissions

April 2009 – Summary of submissions notified, further submissions called for

May - September 2009 – Receipt of further submissions, preparation of planning reports

October 2009 – Hearing of submissions

December 2009 – Issue of decisions on submissions and further submissions, right of appeal to Environment Court.

It is hoped that this document has assisted in explaining these possible changes, but if you require any further information or clarification please do not hesitate to contact the **Council's Resource Management department on 0800 732 732**

APPENDIX 2 PROJECT BRIEF
Prepared by SDC, October 2008

PROJECT BRIEF

To: Yvonne Pfluger, Boffa Miskell New Zealand Limited
Cc: David Adamson, Lindsay McKenzie, Bruce Halligan, David Falconer,
Dianne Williams

Te Anau Landscape Capacity Report / Te Anau Plan Change Project - Further examination of landscape issues in the Te Anau Basin

1. Background:

The Southland District Council has undertaken preliminary consultation with the Te Anau Basin community regarding the possibility of expanding the existing Scenic Resource Area of the Southland District Plan (2001). The existing Scenic Resource Area is centred land situated between Lake Te Anau - Manapouri Road, the Waiau River and between the Lake Te Anau outlet and Supply Bay Road.

The discussion document that was sent out to the local community proposed an expanded Scenic Resource Area with a much larger area covered than at present. This expanded area was primarily based on the "Visual Sensitivity" mapping that was included at the rear of the Boffa Miskell Te Anau Landscape Capacity Report.

The proposed extension to the existing Scenic Resource Area drew strong opposition from landowners in the area with the main concerns expressed centring on there being a more restrictive planning regime than exists at present. Many respondents to preliminary consultation indicated that while they were not opposed in principle to a greater level of landscape protection, they considered the areas identified were too broad and included land inland from the lake as well as areas of land that were not visually prominent.

The Te Anau Community Board met recently with Council Resource Management staff and have asked if the areas identified for the possible expansion of the Scenic Resource Area could be refined significantly. The Southland District Council would therefore like to engage Boffa Miskell Limited to undertake a further examination of the landscape issues within the Te Anau Basin.

2. Key Landscape Issues to be Examined

The Council would like to focus on those areas that were identified as having a high or moderately high visual sensitivity in the original study.

These areas have been evaluated as having; very open, highly visible character, a relatively high population likely to visually experience them and are seen as areas where potentially a significant development would be likely to be seen as out of 'context' by most viewers.

The extent of some of the high and moderately high visually sensitive areas identified in the original study at the Northern end of the basin (specifically numbers 35-37 and 42) was queried by a number of respondents.

Feedback suggested that there are parts of these areas that should be included in an expanded Scenic Resource Area but that these areas should be refined or reduced to include only those that are visually prominent from State Highways 94 and 95.

In addition it was desired that a particular emphasis be placed on areas that are visually prominent when viewed from the Te Anau Lakefront area and the main tourist thoroughfares of State Highways 94 and 95 at the southern end of the Te Anau Basin, and also the key ridgelines/skylines when viewed from the lake itself.

3. Boffa Miskell Action / Timeframes / Costs:

Confirmation of timeframes and costs from Boffa Miskell by the end of October 2008.

Report completed and received by Southland District Council by the end of January 2009.

4. Southland District Council Contacts:

- Primary - Luke McSoriley - Senior Resource Management Planner.
- Bruce Halligan - Manager Resource Management
- David Falconer - Resource Management Planner.
- Administration Officers - Rachel Murray / Dianne Williams.

Luke McSoriley
SENIOR RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLANNER - POLICY

APPENDIX 3 SOUTHLAND DISTRICT PLAN – SCENIC RESOURCE AREA

Southland District Plan: Section 4 Resource Areas, 4.5 Scenic Resource Area, p. 167-168

27 June 2001

4.5 SCENIC RESOURCE AREA

4.5.1 - OVERVIEW

The Scenic Resource Area has been identified as that land situated between Te Anau - Manapouri Road, the Waiau River and between Lake Te Anau outlet and Supply Bay Road.

This area has a high visual amenity providing uninterrupted views from State Highway 95 across open farm land to Lake Manapouri and the Fiordland National Park beyond. Council considers this area to be an outstanding landscape and significant natural resource of the District in terms of Section 6 of the Act.

The area predominantly supports farming activities and it is envisaged that this will continue. However the effects of buildings and vegetation have the potential to alter the high scenic values of the area.

In general, the provisions of the Rural Resource Area will also apply to this area however specific issues, objectives, policies and methods have been identified.

4.5.2 - THE ISSUES

The following are seen as the significant Resource Management Issues specific to the Scenic Resource Area

- **Inappropriately located buildings and vegetation adversely affects the outstanding visual amenity provided by this area.**

Reason

Inappropriately located buildings and poorly designed plantings can adversely affect the visual coherence of these particular areas.

4.5.3 - OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Objective SRA.1

To maintain the outstanding visual amenity provided by these areas.

Policy SRA.1

To mitigate or avoid the adverse visual effects of buildings and structures in these areas.

Explanation

As previously mentioned inappropriate location of dwellings can have a significant adverse effect in these areas. Density of buildings and structures can also have a significant adverse effect.

Policy SRA.2

To mitigate or avoid the adverse visual effects of vegetation in these areas.

Explanation

The planting of trees for shelter, commercial purposes or even ornamental purposes can significantly effect the visual coherence of these environments.

Policy SRA.3

To mitigate the adverse effects of intensive development in these areas.

Explanation

As with the effects of buildings and vegetation, intensive development can also have a significant adverse visual effect in these areas.

4.5.4 - METHODS AND RULES

Rule SRA.1 - Buildings and Structures

Buildings and structures to be erected in these areas are controlled activities in respect of:

- The effect that a structure or building may have on the landscape, any skyline or view
- The extent to which screening or landscaping is required
- The extent to which earthworks or vegetation clearance is required
- The types of materials used in construction.

provided that they

- (a) do not exceed 6 metres in height
- (b) conform with the relevant rules and performance standards of Section 4.1.4 (unless otherwise provided for in this Section), and
- (c) that dwellings/residential units are restricted to one unit per property in separate ownership.

Any proposal to exceed these limitations shall be considered as a discretionary activity and shall be assessed in terms of its impact on the visual amenity of this area including the potential cumulative effect. EXCEPT THAT: Buildings and structures in the Lakeside Protection Area (shown on the district planning maps 59 - 61) that are proposed to be higher than 12 metres are prohibited activities in accordance with Rule LPA.1.

Reason

The effects of buildings on the visual amenity of an area can generally be mitigated by appropriate conditions relating to design, location and screening. Restricting Dwellings to one per property also has the effect of avoiding intensive urban development while it can also significantly effect visual amenity. Rule URB.5(2) buildings over 12 metres refer to LPA.1.

Rule SRA.2 - Trees

The planting of trees for shelter and or commercial purposes, or mass plantings of ornamental trees is a controlled activity in respect of

- location of planting and its effects on the visual amenity
- design of the planting layout.

Reason

Appropriately designed planting layout can enhance visual amenity while poorly designed plantings can significantly affect visual amenity. Conditions of consent will minimise any adverse effects.

Rule SRA.3 - Subdivision

Subdivision within these areas is a discretionary activity and shall be assessed in accordance with the objectives and policies of this Section and the relevant provisions of Section 3.2 Transportation, Section 3.6 Subdivision and Section 3.7 Financial and Reserve Requirements.

Reason

Subdivision is generally the forerunner to intensive development. Discretionary status gives Council a more flexible control over the effects of further development.

4.5.5 - ANTICIPATED ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS

- (a) Preservation of the outstanding visual amenity provided by these areas.
- (b) Low density residential development.