
PREFERRED OPTION REPORT TO DISTRICT PLAN COMMITTEE

DATE: 20 September 2018

TOPIC NAME: Residential

SCOPE DESCRIPTION: Alpine Villages (RE012)

TOPIC LEAD: Jocelyn Lewes

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

<i>Issue(s)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Whether the Alpine Villages warrant specific management in the Proposed District Plan;2. Inconsistent drafting and clarity of the Alpine Village objectives and policies;3. The National Planning Standard spatial tools to be applied to the villages; and4. Whether the Bealey Spur Existing Development Area warrants specific management in the Proposed District Plan
<i>Preferred Option</i>	<i>Option 3: Retaining specific management provisions for the Alpine Villages with modifications</i>
<i>DPC Decision</i>	<i>That the Committee endorses the Preferred Option for 'Alpine Villages' for further development and engagement.</i>



1.0 Introduction

The *Alpine Village Character and Amenity Baseline Report* (Baseline Report RE012) has been prepared as part of the residential workstream to assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of the specific provisions in the Operative District Plan that apply to the villages of Arthur's Pass, Castle Hill and Lake Coleridge, collectively referred to as Alpine Villages. The intent of the provisions is to retain the special amenity and character of the villages and to manage their effects on the surrounding alpine and high country environment. Baseline Report RE012 is attached as **Appendix 1**.

To inform the Baseline Report RE012 an on-the-ground assessment of the character and amenity of the three villages was undertaken. The Baseline Report compared and contrasted the assessment findings for each village to identify whether an ongoing specific management approach was required for each of the villages.

The purpose of this Preferred Option Report is to provide a summary of the key issues identified in Baseline Report RE012 and to identify and recommend options and approaches for the management of Alpine Villages under the Proposed District Plan. The Preferred Options endorsed by the Council will form the basis of further engagement with stakeholders as part of the District Plan Review project.

Related to this topic is the future management of the Existing Development Areas (EDA) located in the High Country¹. These are Terrace Downs, Grasmere and Bealey Spur.

Figure 1 below shows the location of the villages of Arthur's Pass, Castle Hill and Lake Coleridge and three Existing Development Areas (EDA) located in the High Country.

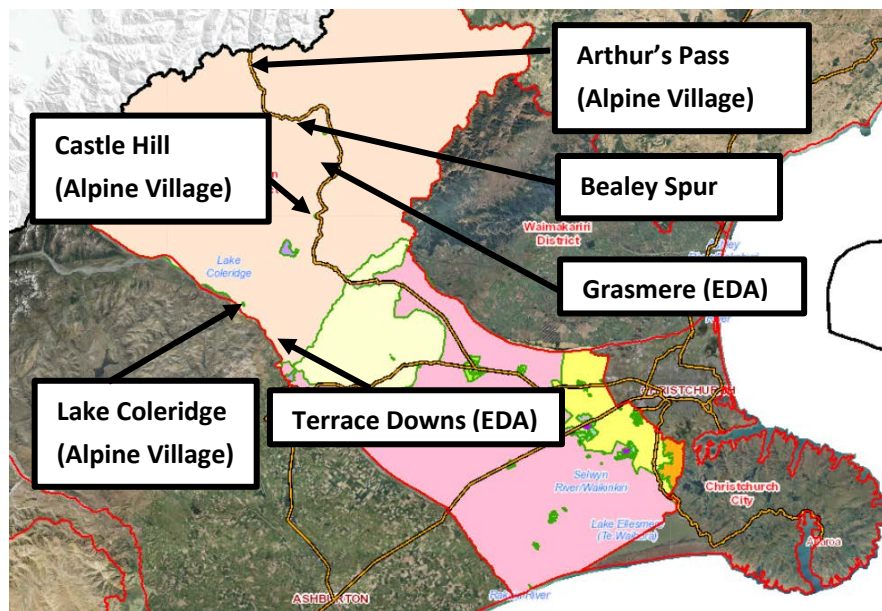


Figure 1: Location of the Alpine Villages and Existing Development Areas

Arthur's Pass Village is located two hours west of Christchurch on State Highway 73. At 740 m above sea level, the Village is surrounded by Arthur's Pass National Park. Castle Hill Village is located just over an hour west of Christchurch on State Highway 73, lying between the Torlesse and Craigieburn Ranges. The Village is an alpine settlement located at an altitude of 720 m above sea level. Lake Coleridge and the

¹ There are 13 EDA's in the Operative District Plan, with only three of these being located in the High Country.

small settlement linked to it are located approximately 90 minutes west of Christchurch, at an elevation of 380 m above sea level.

2.0 Statement of Operative District Plan approach

The Operative District Plan sets up a somewhat complicated approach to the management of the three villages. Provisions that specifically relate to the villages are included in B1 Outstanding Natural Features and Landscapes, B3 Health Safety and Values and B4 Growth of Townships. The villages are also subject to the various zoning provisions that apply to them.

The Operative District Plan does not include a specific definition for “Alpine Village”, instead objectives and policies make reference to ‘alpine chalets’ for Arthur’s Pass and Castle Hill or ‘alpine village character’ in Castle Hill. No similar reference is made in relation to Lake Coleridge.

Specific rules which apply to Arthur’s Pass and Castle Hill are contained within Section C11 and C23 (C23 applies to Castle Hill only). There are no specific rules that apply to Lake Coleridge Village and instead only objectives and policies apply. The specific rules apply in addition to the underlying residential (Living 1 or 1A for Castle Hill) and business zones (Business 1A for Castle Hill) for each village.

2.1 Objectives

Objectives B1.4.1, B1.4.2 and B4.3.1 apply generally across the villages and seek that expansion of the villages do not adversely affect the Outstanding Natural Landscape (ONL) and that the amenity values of the high-country surroundings are recognised and maintained. Objective B3.4.1 seeks that townships are pleasant places to live and work in.

Objective B1.4.3 recognises the special location of Arthur’s Pass Village within the National Park in terms of amenity values and protecting the ONL.

2.2 Policies

2.2.1 Arthur’s Pass

In terms of development, the policies require that large buildings, structures protruding above roof lines and reflective materials are to be avoided. Development is also required to reflect or complement the topography of the surrounding landscape and character and style of the old construction huts. This is to ensure that Arthur’s Pass maintains a mix of small workers cottages and ‘alpine chalet’ style buildings.

Fences within the Village are discouraged. The retention of existing indigenous vegetation is encouraged, and new landscaping is required to use indigenous species which are genetically sourced from the area. Exotic species that have the potential to create weed problems are to be avoided.

2.2.2 Castle Hill

The policies set out to ensure that development within Castle Hill maintains an ‘alpine chalet’ theme and an ‘alpine village’ character. This includes avoidance of large building/structures in general, as well as on small sites, and the use of reflective colours. Buildings and structures are required to be designed to reflect or complement the colours and topography of the surrounding landscape.

Use of existing zoned land is encouraged prior to any expansion of the village.

2.2.3 Lake Coleridge

The policies seek avoidance of large building/structures and reflective colours. Landscaping consisting of indigenous plants of the same species as in the area is encouraged and planting of exotic species which are prone to spreading is to be avoided.

2.3 Rules for Arthur's Pass and Castle Hill

The eight permitted activity rules in Section C11 control building materials, roof design, reflectivity, fences, signage, earthworks and landscaping within Arthur's Pass and Castle Hill. Section C23 Business Zones contains the same or similar rules with the exception of landscaping and these rules apply to the Business 1A zone at Castle Hill only, as there is no business zone at Arthur's Pass

2.4 Schedules

Parts of the High Country (such as Arthur's Pass National Park) are scheduled in the Operative District Plan as an ONL. Currently this ONL directly surrounds Arthur's Pass Village, adjoins Castle Hill Village and is located adjacent to Lake Coleridge to the north and south.

2.5 Existing Development Areas

The Terrace Downs and Grasmere EDA's are considered to have a 'tourism focus' and each have a set of specific provisions that apply which control land-use, development and subdivision². Bealey Spur does not have a tourism focus and the EDA provisions relate solely to subdivision and buildings and in all other instances the rules of the base Rural (High Country) Zone apply.

3.0 Summary of relevant statutory and/or policy context

The relevant higher order documents are the Canterbury Regional Policy Statement 2013 (CRPS), Malvern Area Plan Mahere-ā-Rohe and the draft National Planning Standards.

3.1 Canterbury Regional Policy Statement 2013

The key provisions which are relevant to the management of the Alpine Villages and the protection of the ONLs are included in chapters 5 and 12 of the CPRS. A key objective of Chapter 5 is that development is designed so that it maintains and where appropriate enhances the overall quality of the natural environment including outstanding natural landscapes (Objective 5.2.1). Substantial developments are to be designed and built to ensure amenity values, the quality of the environment, and the character of an area are maintained or appropriately enhanced (Policy 5.3.3).

² All 13 EDA's are subject to another workstream and Baseline Report DW020 Existing Development Areas recommends that the Terrace Downs and Grasmere EDA's are identified as Tourism Precincts. The recommendation of this report for Bealey Spur is that it could be zoned Alpine Village otherwise a rural zoning is appropriate.

Chapter 12 sets out a resource management framework for the protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use and development. The Alpine Villages are located directly adjoining areas identified by the CRPS as Outstanding Natural Landscapes (Appendix 4).

3.2 Malvern Area Plan Mahere-ā-Rohe 2031

The Malvern Area Plan Mahere-ā-Rohe 2031 was adopted by Council in September 2016. The purpose of the plan is to provide high-level planning direction to guide the growth and sustainable management of each township in the Malvern area through to the year 2031.

Across the three Alpine Villages, no new areas for residential or business (in the case of Castle Hill) purposes have been identified as being necessary to be proactively zoned by Council.

3.3 Draft National Planning Standards

As part of the 2017 amendments to the Resource Management Act (RMA) the Ministry for the Environment is developing National Planning Standards. The first set of draft standards were released for consultation on 6 June 2018. Once National Planning Standards are approved by the Minister for the Environment, Council will be required to prepare its district plan in accordance with the national planning standards and the district plan must give effect to the national planning standard.

The draft standards set out a structure for district and regional plans and includes a zone framework comprising zone names and purpose statements. The draft standards make reference to 'spatial planning tools', such as precincts which may allow Council to customise provisions for local circumstances.

The issues that will need to be resolved with implementing the National Planning Standards include the relevant zone to be applied to the Alpine Villages and the appropriate 'spatial planning tools' to be adopted to protect the alpine character and values of these areas.

4.0 Summary of issues

The Baseline Report RE012 report identified the following issues that will need to be addressed to ensure the effective and appropriate management of the Alpine Villages under the Proposed District Plan.

4.1 Specific provisions for the management of the Alpine Villages

The main issue to be resolved is whether all three Alpine Villages warrant specific provisions for their ongoing management in the Proposed District Plan. Based on the amenity and character assessments for each village an evaluation and comparison of the three villages was carried out in Baseline Report RE012. It concluded that:

- Castle Hill Village's 'specialness' is derived from its development as an 'alpine themed village' and this theme and style has continued to be reflected in ongoing new development. Specific provisions should continue to be applied to the Castle Hill Village to ensure the cohesiveness and consistency of the built form continues;
- In addition to its setting surrounded by a National Park, Arthur's Pass Village derives its distinct character and amenity from its historic past and in particular the original workers huts and cottages, many of which still exist in their original form. The Village justifies the continued inclusion of specific provisions to maintain the special character and amenity of the Village; and

- Lake Coleridge Village does not demonstrate clear and distinct special characteristics that require specific provisions for their maintenance or protection under the provisions of the Proposed District Plan.

It is also important to note that the Landscape Workstream is intending to extend the ONL overlay over the villages of Castle Hill and Arthur's Pass and closer to Lake Coleridge. This is an integration matter and changes to the ONL provisions will need to be considered in the context of the Alpine Villages.

4.2 Inconsistencies and ambiguities of objectives and policies

A number of issues were identified with the objectives and policies (not rules) following the evaluation of the Operative District Plan provisions for the Alpine Villages. These are predominantly to do with clarity of drafting and specifically include:

- the need for the objectives and policies to clearly distinguish whether they are addressing the effects of the villages on the surrounding environment outside the zone boundary or the effects of activities within the village zone boundary;
- a need for clarity and consistent use of language regarding the types of values (e.g. outstanding natural features and landscape values, unique historic and amenity values, alpine and historic values) referred to in the policies and whether these values should be protected, not adversely affected, retained, recognised, etc;
- references to views in a number of objectives and policies need to be revisited. They generally relate to views from within the villages to the surrounding environment (e.g. Policies B1.4.2, B1.4.6, B1.4.8, B3.4.28 and B1.4.11). However, consideration should be given to including policies relating to views of the villages from the surrounding environment, especially where the policies reference large flashing and reflective structures; and
- a number of the policies relating to views include the word 'avoid'. In light of the King Salmon decision the use of 'avoid' needs to be revisited in the context of these policies (e.g. Policies B1.4.2, B1.4.8 and B1.4.11).

4.3 Application of National Planning Standards

This issue relates to which National Planning Standard spatial planning tools should be applied to the Alpine Villages. Matters to be resolved include:

- which zones should be applied to the villages; and
- which other spatial planning tools such as precincts or specific controls are appropriate.

This issue cannot be resolved until the National Planning Standards are finalised in April 2019.

4.4 Ongoing management of Existing Development Areas

The recommendation of Baseline Report DW020 is that EDAs, in their current form, not be rolled over into the Proposed District Plan and that the preferred approach is to assume them into the Rural Zone, unless other provisions are applicable.

The issue is whether Bealey Spur requires a specific management approach and whether it should be considered an Alpine Village. To make an informed decision about the future management of Bealey Spur, it is recommended that a site visit and character and amenity assessment of the EDA be

undertaken. This is to confirm the characteristics of the settlement and to confirm whether a specific management approach is warranted.

5.0 Options to address issues

The following three options to address the issues identified in Section 4 are proposed.

5.1 Option 1: Retaining the status quo

This option involves rolling over the Alpine Village provisions for all three villages without amendments into the Proposed District Plan.

Effectiveness in Addressing Issue:

Retaining the status quo does not address the issues identified in Section 4 of this Report.

Risks:

Retaining the status quo is a lost opportunity to amend the provisions for the specific management of the Alpine Villages and to efficiently implement the National Planning Standards before the statutory timeframe of five years.

Budget or Time Implications:

None, as no work would be required.

Stakeholder and Community Interests:

Village residents, other land owners and developers, environmental interests and the wider community.

Recommendation:

That Option 1 Status quo should not be carried forward for further consideration.

5.2 Option 2: Removing specific management provisions for the Alpine Villages

This option involves removing all the specific management provisions for the three Alpine Villages and relying on the relevant zone provisions and the overlay provisions for the ONL.

Effectiveness in Addressing Issue:

The amenity and character assessments and evaluations identified that both Castle Hill and Arthur's Pass Villages have distinct and special characteristics that justify the inclusion of specific provisions for the ongoing management of the villages. Failure to include specific management provisions for the villages in the Proposed District Plan could result in the loss of these characteristics that make these villages special and different from other villages in the District.

The existing specific provisions are also intended to manage the effects of the villages on the surrounding alpine and high country environment and in particular the Arthur's Pass National Park. The loss of such provisions could result in future development in the villages having an adverse effect on the surrounding environment.

Risks:

The risk with this approach is the ability to maintain the 'special character' of the villages could be lost and future development in the villages could result in adverse effect on the surrounding high country and alpine environment.

Budget or Time Implications:

No budget or time implications as no additional drafting would be required.

Stakeholder and Community Interests:

Village residents, other land owners and developers, Department of Conservation, environmental interests and the wider community.

Recommendation:

That Option 2: Removing specific management provisions for the villages should not be carried forward for further consideration.

5.3 Option 3: Retaining specific management provisions for the Alpine Villages with modifications

This option involves including specific objectives, policies and rules in the Proposed District Plan to retain the special and distinct character of Arthur's Pass and Castle Hill Villages and to manage the effects of these villages on the surrounding alpine and high country environment and in particular the Arthur's Pass National Park.

As the Baseline Report RE012 identified that Lake Coleridge Village does not demonstrate clear and distinct special characteristics this option does not propose that specific management provisions be applied to this Village.

This option also includes amendments to the existing objectives and policies for the Alpine Villages to address issues of inconsistent drafting and to remove ambiguities. In particular this includes clearly distinguishing whether the objectives and policies are addressing the effects of the villages on the surrounding environment outside the zone boundary or the effects of activities within the village zone boundary.

It is anticipated that the specific objectives, policies and rules will be applied through the adoption of separate precincts for the Arthur's Pass and Castle Hill Villages. However, this will need to be confirmed once the final version of the National Planning Standards has been released.

It is difficult to make recommendations at this stage as to which zones should be applied to the Villages given the uncertainty regarding the final form of the National Planning Standards for zones and the revised residential and business zone frameworks that are being developed in other workstreams.

The precise drafting of the objectives and policies must be considered in conjunction with the ONL Overlay workstream to determine the extent to which the effects of the Villages on the surrounding environment and particularly the National Park need to be addressed through the specific management provisions for the Villages.

Effectiveness in Addressing Issue:

The amenity and character assessments and evaluations in the Baseline Report RE012 provide the evidential basis for recommending that Arthur's Pass and Castle Hill Villages have special and distinct characteristics that require special management provisions to be included in the Proposed District Plan. The assessments and evaluations also confirmed that Lake Coleridge Village does not exhibit characteristics that warrant specific management.

Risks:

Drafting of provisions in the zones and the ONL Overlay will need to be considered when developing the specific management provisions for Arthur's Pass and Castle Hill Villages to ensure there is no conflict between the provisions and that the effects of the Villages on the surrounding environment are appropriately managed.

Budget or Time Implications:

Budget and time will be required to restructure and amend the Alpine Village provisions.

Stakeholder and Community Interests:

Village residents, other land owners and developers, Department of Conservation, environmental interests and the wider community.

Recommendation:

That Option 3 Retaining specific management provisions for the Alpine Villages with modifications be carried forward for further consideration.

6.0 Matters requiring further consideration

The Baseline Report RE012 identified a number of matters that cannot at this stage be resolved mainly because of the uncertainty over the final form of the National Planning Standards or the outcomes from other workstreams. These matters include:

- Determining appropriate replacement National Planning Standard zones for the Living 1, Living 1A and Business 1A Zones that currently apply to the Alpine Villages.
- Determining the appropriate other National Planning Standard specific controls, e.g. precincts or overlays, for the management of Arthur's Pass and Castle Hill Villages.
- Integration with the ONL Overlay workstream to determine the extent to which the effects of the Villages on the surrounding environment and particularly the National Park need to be addressed through the specific management provisions for the Villages.
- Determining whether Bealey Spur requires a specific management approach and whether it should be considered an Alpine Village.

7.0 Preferred Option for further engagement

In summary the recommended option for further consideration and engagement is Option 3 Retaining specific management provisions for the Alpine Villages with modifications.

Appendix 1: Baseline Report RE012 – Alpine Villages Character and Amenity