

Before the Independent Hearings Panel
At Central Otago District Council

Under the	Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA or Act)
In the matter of	an application for subdivision and land use consent to establish another 44 residential allotments in the rural resource area at 112 & 144 Ripponvale Road, Cromwell (RC250155)
And	New Zealand Cherry Corp (Leyser) LP Applicant

Evidence Summary of Tony Douglas Milne (Landscape)

7 August 2026

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Introduction

- 1 My name is Tony Douglas Milne.
- 2 I prepared a brief of evidence dated 23 July 2026 addressing landscape and visual effects in relation to the Application.
- 3 Starting in 2018, my involvement with Shannon Farm has included leading the initial masterplan process, followed by the preparation and presentation of evidence on behalf of the applicant that related to PC 14, which enabled the rural lifestyle development that is Shannon Farm and realignment of the ONL and SAL boundaries. Since then I have been involved in the design and detailing of Stages One and Two of the Shannon Farm development. I have visited the Site on numerous occasions, most recently on 19 February 2025. During this time I have gained a thorough understanding of the Site and its surrounding environment.
- 4 My qualifications and experience are set out in that statement of evidence.

Key issues and conclusions

- 5 The Application seeks subdivision and land use consent for 44 additional residential allotments at Shannon Farm, increasing the total from 160 to 204. Six additional lots are proposed in Rural Lifestyle Area 3 (**RLA 3**), 22 in RLA 4, and 16 additional residential lots in RLA 6. No development is proposed within the Outstanding Natural Landscape (**ONL**) or the Structure Plan No Build Area, and approximately 36 hectares of RLA 6 will remain open pasture.
- 6 There is substantial agreement between Council's landscape architect, **Ms Harshey**, and me. She accepts that RMM's methodology is appropriate, that the Landscape Assessment Report comprehensively describes the receiving environment and relevant landscape values, and that the RLA 3 and RLA 4 lots are largely internalised within the consented Shannon Farm development. We agree that their adverse landscape and visual effects will be **none** to very **low**.
- 7 The principal disagreement concerns RLA 6. I acknowledge that the 17 residential lots will shift the domestic edge and increase domestication. However, I do not consider that change fundamental or unacceptable. The edge will shift by no more than approximately 45 metres and from the selected viewpoints, will be seen as a coherent extension of Shannon Farm beside Road 001, rather than as a separate or discordant band of development.

- 8 The RLA 6 lots are confined to the lower, less sensitive slopes. They avoid the ONL, the upper slopes of the Significant Amenity Landscape (**SAL**), the No Build Area in its entirety and historic water races. These proposed lots are separated from the Pisa Range ONL by the northern ridge of the Site. The balance lot retains the open upper slopes and provides separation from the most sensitive and legible parts of the SAL. Due to the separation from the ONL, there will be no direct or indirect adverse effect on this landscape.
- 9 Development is contemplated in the SAL and in my opinion, the Proposal will maintain the SAL's key values of openness, rural character, visual coherence and legibility at the broader landscape scale. From closer viewpoints the RLA 6 development will be apparent, but from mid and longer range viewpoints it will be seen as a coherent extension of the consented Shannon Farm development and the established Cromwell Basin landscape.
- 10 I assess the adverse landscape and visual effects arising from the proposed RLA 6 lots as **low** to **low-moderate**. My assessment does not rely on screening as a substitute for openness. These effects are appropriately managed by building controls, curtilage controls, post-and-wire fencing requirements, naturalised planting requirements, and the retention of the open upper slopes. Openness is maintained through the location and containment of development and retention of open pastureland on approximately 36 hectares of RLA6, across the upper slopes.
- 11 Earthworks must be carefully managed, particularly in RLA 6. With detailed design, contouring, planting and the proposed conditions, I consider that prominent earthwork batters can be avoided and the landform appropriately integrated. Controlled night-time lighting will have very low to low cumulative effects.
- 12 I acknowledge that the Proposal departs from the Structure Plan and is inconsistent with limited limbs of Policy 4.4.18. However, I do not consider the Proposal will create a homogeneous rural lifestyle pattern or significant adverse rural character effects. The bulk, and most visible parts, of the SAL slope will remain open, legible, and free of built development. I consider this achieves the overall purpose and RRA5 policy intent of maintaining the values of the SAL, which in this case are its legibility, open and natural character.
- 13 Rural character depends on open space, buildings, vegetation, fencing and curtilage, not lot size alone. I consider that the Rural character of Shannon Farms will be maintained with the open-space network, productive areas, No Build Area and upper slopes remaining unchanged.

- 14 It is my opinion, from a landscape and visual perspective, the Proposal achieves the overall intent of the Rural Resource Area (5) framework. It avoids the most sensitive areas, retains substantial open land and applies existing landscape controls, thereby maintaining the legibility and open and natural character values of RLA 6.
- 15 Overall, the Proposal is a carefully located and controlled intensification. Development does not need to be avoided within the SAL, with the lower aspect (particularly outside the No Build Area) having capacity to absorb some development as demonstrated by the anticipated subdivision already present within the SAL / RLA 2, RLA 3, RLA 4 and RLA 5 areas of overlap, and the fact that **Ms Harshey** generally supports the intensification of the RLA 3 and RLA 4 areas as proposed by this Application.
- 16 The Proposal will result in a coherent lower edge to RLA 6, while maintaining the openness and legibility of the broader SAL and the relationship between the Cromwell Basin floor, the lower foothills, and the Pisa Range ONL.
- 17 I am of the opinion the Proposal can be appropriately integrated into the receiving environment, and that adverse landscape and visual effects will be no more than minor.

Dated this 7 August 2026

Tony Douglas Milne