

Context of Proposal

Milford Staff Accommodation for Southern Discoveries

Background

Southern Discoveries was previously called Milford Sound Red Boats and was formerly owned by the Government's Tourist Hotel Corporation (THC) . This company was the original operator of cruise service in Milford Sound commencing regular trips soon after the Homer Tunnel opened in 1954.

Today the company operates the following services in Milford Sound :

- Four cruise vessels operating 6 cruises per day in winter and 12 per day in summer
- The Underwater Observatory in Harrison Cove which allows visitors to view coral and sea creatures from an underwater viewing chamber
- A kayaking operation also operates from the Underwater Observatory in Harrison Cove
- The Milford Sound Café adjacent to the main carpark
- Daily coach services into Milford Sound from Queenstown and Te Anau

Southern Discoveries is currently applying for a consent from DOC for a long term lease of two parcels of land, namely Areas B2 & H3 in the Deepwater Basin Accommodation precinct at Milford Sound. The intended use of this land is to build new staff accommodation to replace the existing accommodation that the company leases from Tourism Milford Ltd.



The intention is to build new staff accommodation units across the two sites to house up to 65 staff. This is envisaged to meet our future staff requirements for the next 40-50 years based on the fact that our marine operation in Milford is close to its maximum capacity given current berth facilities.

Southern Discoveries currently accommodate between 50-55 staff in Milford Sound in buildings that were constructed by the Tourist Hotel Corporation (THC) in the late 1950s as hotel staff quarters.



This accommodation block is beside the Mitre Peak Lodge and is the oldest building complex in Milford. It comprises a large two story building consisting of corridors of single and double rooms with staff using shared facilities. A limited number of rooms have en-suite bathrooms. In the peak of the season Southern Discoveries houses 50-55 staff in the main accommodation building, all sharing one laundry facility, one communal living area, one kitchen facility and three shared bathrooms for the non-ensuite hallways.

The current buildings are in a dilapidated state, are increasingly expensive to maintain and have had numerous electrical and plumbing faults in recent years. All of the roofing on the accommodation block needs replacing and the buildings have not been painted for over ten years.

Due to significant deterioration of the weatherboards on the southwest facing walls marine plywood has been attached to the building frame to replace rotten weather boards.



Southern Discoveries sublease of the accommodation buildings from Tourism Milford Ltd is a result of the transfer of the sublease from THL to SDL on 01 Sep 2008. The sublease that was transferred was originally activated on 04 Aug 1999 and expires on 31 May 2020. The main lease is between DOC and TML. Southern Discoveries have a further 30 year right of renewal of the sublease arrangement and currently have the option of staying in these buildings for a further 30 years but has been discouraged

to do so by DOC who in the long term have a preference for all staff accommodation in Milford to be located in the Cleddau Village Area.

From a staff welfare perspective, the Southern Discoveries accommodation is probably at the lowest standard in Milford and is an increasing obstacle to successful recruitment and staff retention. The company therefore has a strong desire to build new staff accommodation in Milford Sound that is of higher quality, can withstand seismic events, is compact, thermally efficient and is in buildings that blend in well with the natural landscape.

Current DOC Position

The Fiordland National Park Management Plan (FNPMP) requires all staff accommodation to be located in the Cleddau Village on Deepwater Basin which is the area designated for staff accommodation.

DOC have been actively encouraging Southern Discoveries to shift out of the current TML owned accommodation spaces and build new staff accommodation in the accommodation area at Deepwater Basin designated in the FNPMP. The only remaining space for new staff buildings are in areas B2 & H3 that run behind the eastern end of the Milford Airport runway.

These two sites provide only 837sqm and 844sqm respectively and with high density placement of two storey dwellings would provide us with only enough space to house between 54 and 65 staff depending on the number of staff sharing rooms in coupled relationships. These two sites would cater for 80% of our existing staff but not for the 9 staff who are currently in skipper and management flats.

Over the past 18 months we have examined these sites and worked with Luke Clark (Frequency), Mark Gray (Architect) and Mick Moffat (Qube Quantity Surveyors) to develop a site plan, a building plan and associated costings. Given the very limited space left available we have been forced to go to two levels and a site coverage that exceeds the designated 35% set down in the Cleddau Village Planning Guidelines. DOC Managers in Te Anau who oversee Milford Sound have so far been supportive of this more concentrated layout in the representations they have made to the Southland District Council on the basis of the overall benefits of the project.

Car Parking : Conditions of any future consent

When we first presented our building plan to DOC in December 2016 it was observed that given the size constraints of the two sites (B2 and H3) did not provide enough space to also fit the proposed parking spaces within the boundaries of the land being leased. It is noted that sites B2 and H3 have an inset boundary that does not extend to the edges of the roadway. At the time our Architect Mark Gray had positioned the proposed parking spaces in the area between the formal site boundary and the roadway edge.

In applying for the concession (lease) Southern Discoveries wish to make it clear that the proposed design and building proposal cannot work without parking spaces being included in the project as the parking spaces are a requirement of the Cleddau Village Design Guidelines and we have no other land available to us to put the parking spaces on.

The parking spaces that we wish to have included in the leased area are indicated on the developed design site plan (refer Appendix 1).

Style of accommodation proposed

The staff accommodation we propose will be built in three accommodation categories to ensure we have viable solutions that fit the needs of the different employee groups that we have at Milford and minimise cost.

1. **Seasonal and junior staff (Block A on Area B2)** - Two storey dwelling with three living modules each designed with 8 bedrooms – total 24 rooms of 12.5 sq metres. Shared bathrooms and cooking/lounge areas.
2. **Team leaders (Block B on Area H3)** – contains 12 x 17.7 sq metre units with ensuite bathrooms. Shared kitchen and lounge space.
3. **Managers and long term staff (Block C on Area H3)** – contains 18 self-contained units of 28 square metres that include bedroom/lounge/cooking area with ensuite bathrooms plus one larger shared lounge space.



Details of the building placement on the two sites are attached with our consent application.

The benefits of the proposal for Southern Discoveries and the Milford community are that :

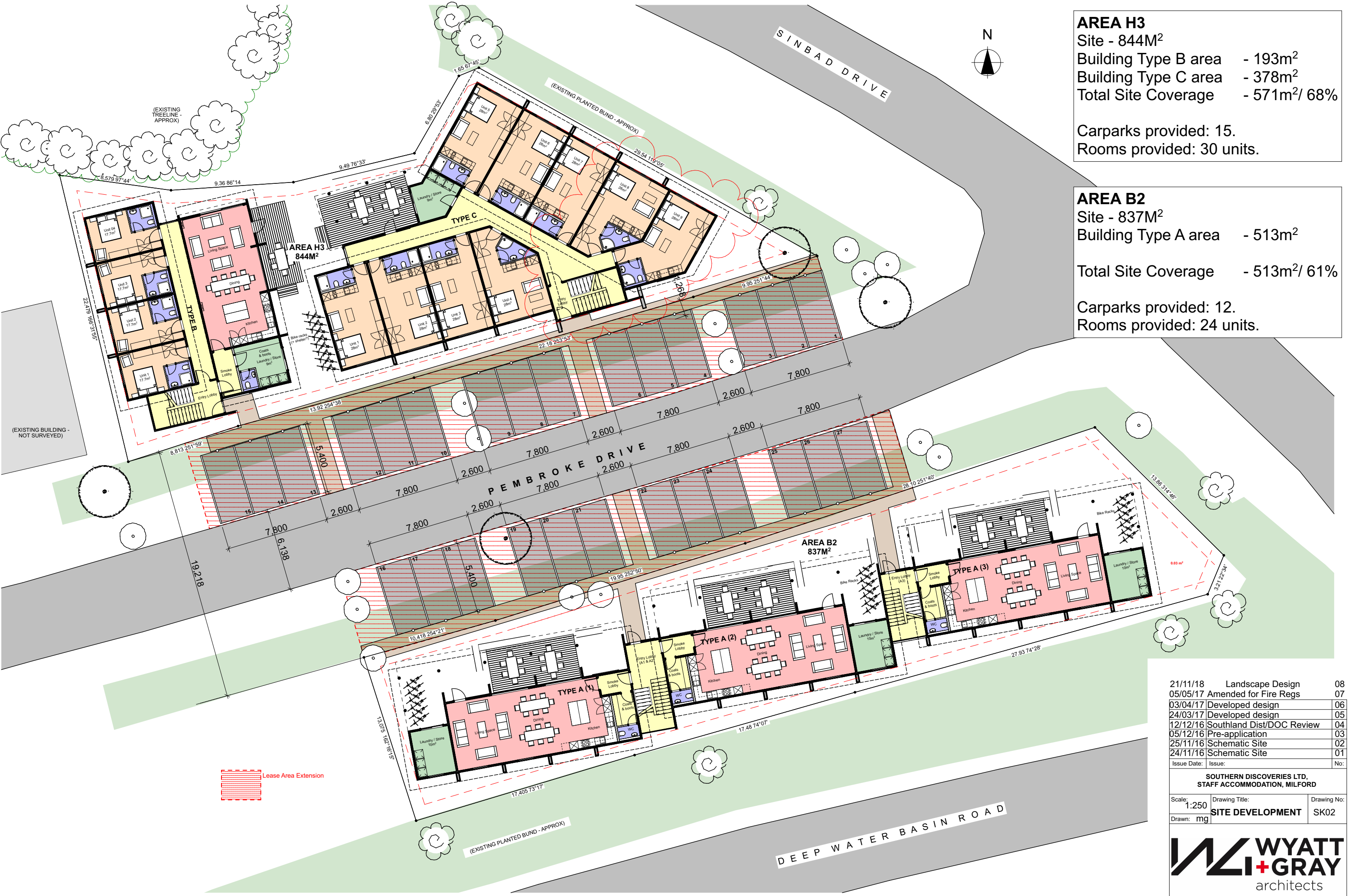
1. Building new accommodation will provide us with an enduring long term solution that enables us sustain and staff our existing Milford activities into the future.
2. New accommodation will have a positive impact on the physical and emotional wellbeing of our staff.
3. The new buildings will be built to a superior standard than the status quo solution in respect to fire and seismic ratings.
4. The new buildings will be designed in such a way as to blend into the natural environment.
5. The thermal efficiency of the proposed structures will reduce demand on the Milford power grid which is already operating at its maximum capacity.
6. New accommodation that caters for all stages of employment and seniority will enhance our ability to keep team leaders and managers for longer thus building our capacity to train staff more easily and enhance the transfer of institutional and job-related knowledge.

7. New accommodation will ensure we can comply with the long term requirements of the Tenancy and HSAW (2015) Acts.

Prepared by Tim Hunter

18 Nov 2018

Appendix 1: Developed Design Plan



AREA H3
Site - 844M²
Building Type B area - 193m²
Building Type C area - 378m²
Total Site Coverage - 571m²/ 68%

Carparks provided: 15.
Rooms provided: 30 units.

AREA B2
Site - 837M²
Building Type A area - 513m²
Total Site Coverage - 513m²/ 61%

Carparks provided: 12.
Rooms provided: 24 units.

21/11/18	Landscape Design	08
05/05/17	Amended for Fire Regs	07
03/04/17	Developed design	06
24/03/17	Developed design	05
12/12/16	Southland Dist/DOC Review	04
05/12/16	Pre-application	03
25/11/16	Schematic Site	02
24/11/16	Schematic Site	01
Issue Date:	Issue:	No:

SOUTHERN DISCOVERIES LTD.
STAFF ACCOMMODATION, MILFORD

Scale: 1:250	Drawing Title: SITE DEVELOPMENT	Drawing No: SK02
Drawn: mg		

WYATT + GRAY
architects

+64 3 441 1014 0275 857 448
mark@wyattgrayarchitects.nz

Do not scale off print - refer to figured dimensions.
Refer to larger details where possible.
Confirm all dimensions on site prior to construction.
Consult with Architect immediately if discrepancies are found.

Developed Design - Ground Level.