

# Urban Growth Boundaries

Discussion Document

July 2008



QUEENSTOWN  
LAKES DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

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## Introduction

There is ongoing pressure for more housing, business and commercial development within our District. In the past some urban growth has occurred randomly and there has also been pressure to expand around the edge of settlements. This can affect how a place looks, feels and functions.

One possible planning tool to define the limit of where urban development can take place is Urban Growth Boundaries. This can be done through a change to the District Plan.

Before the Council goes down that path it wants to know what you think. Please take the time to read and understand this discussion document, and give us your valuable feedback on the form provided. Feedback must be received by Friday 12 September 2008.

## What are Urban Growth Boundaries?

Urban Growth Boundaries are a planning tool used to define where new urban development should take place.

## The need to manage growth

There is ongoing pressure for more housing, business and commercial development within the District.

In the past some urban growth has occurred in a random manner. There has also been considerable pressure to expand around the edge of a number of settlements. This can affect how a place looks, feels and functions.

Considerable research has recently been undertaken to inform Council and the community on what new development is needed and how best to manage it. This includes:

- A Growth Management Strategy for the Queenstown Lakes District (2007)
- Growth Projections (2008)
- Dwelling Capacity Model
- Commercial and Industrial Land Needs Study (2006)
- Wanaka Structure Plan (2007)

- Urban Growth Boundaries and the Queenstown Lakes District – Issues and Options Report (2007)

A number of Community Plans have also identified the desire of many residents to define an urban boundary to clearly mark the transition between town and country. Good examples of this are Tomorrow's Queenstown, Wanaka 2020 and the Arrowtown Plan.



# The purpose of Urban Growth Boundaries

Urban Growth Boundaries can be used to achieve a number of objectives:

- Manage growth – control the amount and location of new development opportunities to achieve the outcomes of strategies like the Growth Management Strategy.
- Create cohesive urban areas – co-ordinate and integrate new development in a way that reflects local circumstances and improves the efficiency of service delivery and transport.
- Efficient use of urban land – make best use of development and infrastructure capacity through a staged approach to land release.
- Allow compact urban form – maintain the character of settlements and promote accessible communities that enhance the sense of community ownership.
- Ensure urban containment – safeguard rural land resource, including landscapes, by preventing urban sprawl.
- Facilitate community outcomes – to ensure growth is managed, as much as it can be, to reduce negative and maximise positive effects. Promoting good urban outcomes and safeguarding the setting of settlements within the wider landscape.

## Things to consider:

- Do these principles cover all of the locally relevant issues?

## How will it work?

The following criteria are suggested to help determine Urban Growth Boundaries. This will ensure a consistent approach is taken whilst allowing local issues to be taken into account:

- Identify the amount of growth required in the settlement. In addition to new residential and commercial development this includes opportunities for new schools, sports fields, health care and community facilities needed to support the resident population and visitors in the district's urban areas and townships.
- Identify current development commitments – zoning and resource consents.
- Establish land availability – determine whether land is genuinely available for development (will the landowner want to subdivide or redevelop?).

- Confirm the relationship between current and future land use activities and determine which ones need to be located close together.
- Confirm the servicing requirements for development and availability of infrastructure.
- Identify future transport opportunities.
- Identify constraints – areas where development will be restricted eg: sensitive landscapes, ecological habitat, heritage sites, reserves, natural hazards.
- Define boundaries – use landscape features, physical features (eg road corridors) and property boundaries.

## Things to consider:

- Should any other issues be taken into account?



## Currently identified boundaries

Some work has already taken place which identifies the preliminary ideas for Urban Growth Boundaries for Queenstown and Wanaka. Details are contained in the following documents:

### Tomorrow's Queenstown

The community plan developed in 2002 sets out the community's vision, goals and priorities for the Wakatipu basin over the next 10-20 years. Two of its key values and principles are:

- protect and build a sense of place that reflects the landscape and environment within which we live, and
- promote a more sustainable community within the limits of the environment.

Managing growth was identified as priority issue 1, and a set of strategies was developed to provide long term direction including containing urban development within defined boundaries.

### Wanaka Structure Plan

The Structure Plan was evolved from the Wanaka 2020 community planning exercise. One of the key outcomes identified by the community was to manage growth in a way that protects the landscape and the environment. The Structure Plan provides details about how Wanaka should grow and identifies an inner growth boundary that could accommodate growth over a 20 year period, and an outer growth boundary within which longer term growth needs could be met.

## Other opportunities for Urban Growth Boundaries

Queenstown and Wanaka will be the focus for the majority of the District's urban growth over the next 20 years. However, other settlements are under development pressure and could benefit from having growth boundaries established. For example the council has already committed to commence a Plan Change process to consider the Arrowtown boundary and some work has also been carried out in Kingston.

### Things to consider:

- Are there other settlements where Urban Growth Boundaries should be considered?
- Where should the boundaries be drawn for identified settlements?

## How will it be done?

To become a formal planning tool, the Urban Growth Boundaries need to be included in the District Plan. This will give them statutory weight and mean that they will be considered for large scale developments.

It is considered appropriate that such a technique should be introduced in the District Plan under a section called 'District Wide Issues'. This approach will provide a consistent framework for the District as a whole. It will also allow flexibility, enabling local issues to be taken into account. This can happen when determining the precise location of boundaries and allowing further Urban Growth Boundaries to be identified in the future.

### Things to consider:

- Is it appropriate to take a broad strategic approach to the introduction of Urban Growth Boundaries?

## What other tools do we need?

On their own, Urban Growth Boundaries might not address all of the issues necessary to ensure that the community's objectives of sustainable development and good urban design are achieved. Various other methods exist to help ensure that the anticipated outcomes can be secured through the District Plan. Here are some of the tools that we could develop:

- Density standards for urban areas – promoting efficient urban development.
- Zone alignment – ensuring existing District Plan provisions (zones) are consistent with the Urban Growth Boundary policy.
- Future Urban Zone – identifying and safeguarding land for longer term growth, within the Urban Growth Boundary.
- Green belt – restricting development around the edge of settlements outside Urban Growth Boundaries.

Combinations of these methods can be used to promote particular outcomes.



## What are the issues and implications?

Each of the tools mentioned has a number of issues and implications that need to be considered. All will require a formal Plan Change that must be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Resource Management Act. This means that any Plan Change will be publicly notified and open to public submission. It will be necessary to ensure that the scope for any Plan Change is clear and that there is a robust case for introducing the proposed measures.

| Tool                                     | Benefit   | Risk  |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Urban Growth Boundary</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly identifies the extent of acceptable urban development for specific settlements.</li> <li>Gives effect to Growth Management Strategy.</li> <li>Supports staging of land release and infrastructure provision.</li> </ul>                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other provisions of the District Plan may still enable development to occur beyond the defined boundaries.</li> <li>There may be disputes over which sites to include within the boundary.</li> <li>There may be pressure to include too much or too little land to meet identified needs.</li> <li>Ongoing monitoring of development and land supply will be required.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Density standards for urban areas</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Best use of development potential within Urban Growth Boundaries.</li> <li>Gives effect to Growth Management Strategy.</li> <li>Supports staging of land release.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Needs to be considered alongside the character of individual settlements and the demand for a range of housing types.</li> <li>Uncertain how the market will respond to a more prescriptive approach.</li> <li>Does not address development proposals beyond the Urban Growth Boundary.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Zoning alignment</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brings together current planning provisions with the Urban Growth Boundary policy.</li> <li>Prioritises land within Urban Growth Boundary for urban development.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impacts a number of zones.</li> <li>Cost and time implications to introduce Plan Changes.</li> <li>Likely to require some tightening of existing zones. This could be challenged.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Future Urban Zone</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguards land within the Urban Growth Boundary and signals potential for long term development beyond current urban zones.</li> <li>Enables some activities to continue that will not physically or economically compromise longer term growth.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not tried and tested in this district.</li> <li>New zoning may not be accepted by land owners.</li> <li>Risk of development jumping over the Future Urban Zone</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Green belt</b>                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creates a buffer around the urban boundary.</li> <li>Stops urban sprawl.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not tried and tested in this district.</li> <li>Risk of development jumping over the green belt</li> <li>Will require prescriptive zoning, which is likely to be challenged.</li> </ul>  |

### Things to consider:

- Which, if any, of these tools should be introduced alongside Urban Growth Boundaries?
- What other methods are necessary or appropriate to ensure that the objectives for managing urban growth are achieved?

## How can I get involved?

### Have your say

The Council is seeking feedback on the approach it should take to Urban Growth Boundaries. In particular it would like to receive input on the following:

- The purpose and objectives for Urban Growth Boundaries.
- How we define Urban Growth Boundaries.
- The range of tools suggested to support the implementation of Urban Growth Boundaries.
- Which settlements could benefit from Urban Growth Boundaries and where should they go.

A feedback form is on the back of this document. Feedback on any other aspect of the use of Urban Growth Boundaries is also welcome.

Feedback should be made to:

Urban Growth Boundaries discussion document, QLDC, Private Bag 50072, Freepost 191078, Queenstown 9348 or email to [services@qldc.govt.nz](mailto:services@qldc.govt.nz)

Feedback must be received by **12 September 2008**.

Further information can be found on the Council website [www.qldc.govt.nz](http://www.qldc.govt.nz)

### Drop-in sessions

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this project with senior council staff, please join us on the following dates: This is your opportunity to ask the hard questions!

- Queenstown Memorial Hall – Tuesday 5 August 2008, between 3pm and 6pm
- Lake Wanaka Centre, Ardmore Street – Wednesday 6 August 2008, between 3pm and 6pm

## What happens next?

All feedback received will be collated and presented to Council's Strategy Committee. From there a firm proposal for progressing Urban Growth Boundaries will be developed and presented to Council for approval.

If Plan Changes are required they will be subject to a formal public consultation process, providing further opportunity for the community to get involved in the decision-making process.

For further information, please contact senior policy analyst Mark Rushworth on 03 441 0499 or email [markr@qldc.govt.nz](mailto:markr@qldc.govt.nz)



# Feedback form - have your say!

Your feedback on Urban Growth Boundaries is important to us.

## How to respond

Please fill in the following form and return it to:

Urban Growth Boundaries discussion document, QLDC, Private Bag 50072, Freepost 191078, Queenstown 9348 or email to [services@qldc.govt.nz](mailto:services@qldc.govt.nz)

## Your details

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone number \_\_\_\_\_  
Email address \_\_\_\_\_

## Your feedback

1. What should be the purpose of Urban Growth Boundaries (UGB): please tick

- Manage scale and location of growth
- Achieve good urban areas
- Best use of urban land
- Maintain accessible communities
- Prevent urban sprawl
- Other - please explain

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. What issues should be taken into account when considering how to define UGB?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Should the concept of UGB be introduced throughout the district or just for specific settlements? (please tick)

- Throughout the district
- Specific settlements (please name the settlements)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Where do you think the boundaries should be drawn? (either describe the position below or, if referring to a specific settlement, mark it on a map and attach it to this form)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Which, if any, of these tools should be introduced along side UGB? (please tick)

- Density controls
- Zoning alignment
- Future urban growth
- Green belt
- Other - please explain

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_

6. Do you have any other comments or responses to questions highlighted throughout the document?

\_\_\_\_\_  
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**Feedback must be received by 12 September 2008**