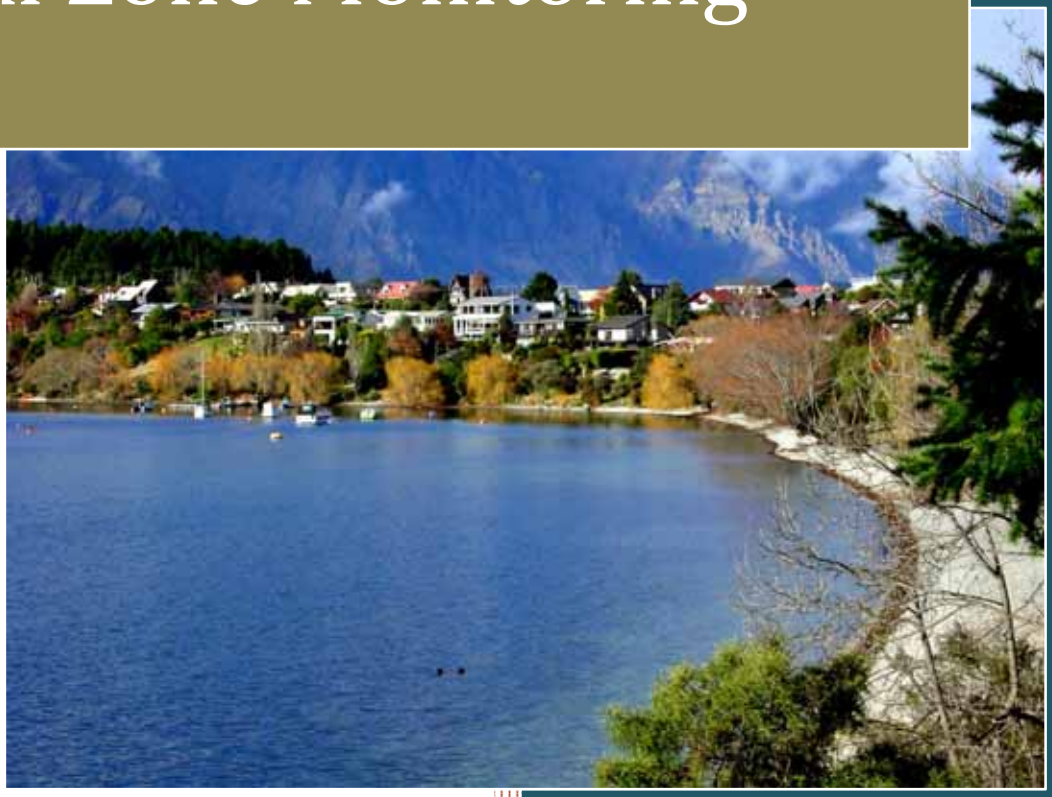
2011

The Queenstown Low Density Residential Zone Monitoring Report



Policy and Planning

Queenstown Lakes District Council

May 2011

Introduction

The focus of this monitoring report is on whether the District Plan ('the Plan') objectives and policies are being achieved in the low density residential zones (LDRZ) of Queenstown. Wanaka and environs will be addressed in a separate report.

The most recent monitoring report for this zone was dated 2 April 2009 as reported to the Strategy Committee of Council. It focused primarily on the issue of visitor accommodation locating in the zone across Queenstown and Wanaka, where this report includes that issue and others but with respect to Queenstown only. This report is distinct from the High Density Zone monitoring report which was published in February 2011.

The Community Outcome that is relevant to this monitoring report is *'High quality urban environments respectful of the character of individual communities'.*

What is the Low Density Residential Zone Trying to Achieve?

A full reprint of the relevant excerpts from the District Plan, for the Issues, Objectives and Policies related to the LDRZ in Queenstown can be found in Appendix 2.

The Objective and 3 policies which most succinctly state what the LDRZ is meant to achieve are:

Objective 3 - Residential Amenity

- *Pleasant living environments within which adverse effects are minimised while still providing the opportunity for community needs.*

Policies

3.1 To protect and enhance the cohesion of residential activity and the sense of community and well being obtained from residential neighbours.

3.2 To provide for and generally maintain the dominant low density development within the existing Queenstown, Wanaka and Arrowtown residential zones, small townships and Rural Living areas.

. . .

3.12 To ensure the single dwelling character and accompanying amenity values of the Low Density Residential Zone are not compromised through subdivision that results in an increase in the density of the zone that is not anticipated.

The resource management issue for this zone can be articulated as two questions:

1. To what extent has a predominantly low density residential character and amenity been achieved in the zone?
2. Is the integrity of the zone being challenged through either the scale of development occurring, or a proliferation of non-residential uses?

The objectives and policies for the zone appear to seek:

To Protect Residential Amenity:

-Dominance of low density residential environment in the LDRZ

-External Appearance

Building coverage

Building footprint size
- Open Space
Landscape coverage
- Shading/Sunlight Access
Building height
- Noise
- Parking

The objectives and policies also appear to present two fundamental unresolved conflicts:

- whether it is a zone of change, i.e. what we have today may not be what it is meant to look like tomorrow; or
- whether it seeks to protect a pattern of small lot size with individual buildings, even if this is intensified?

What is the "State" of the Low Density Residential Zone?

The Queenstown Low Density Residential Zone includes Fernhill, Queenstown, Arthurs Point, Frankton Road, Frankton, Kelvin Heights, Lake Hayes Estate and an area along the Lake Hayes-Arrowtown Road, and portions of Arrowtown. The zone does not include Quail Rise, Jacks Point or Millbrook, which are special zones.

The resource consent activity occurring in the zone has been compiled from Council's NCS system, with data reported for the period of 1995 through to 1 February 2011, a 15 year period. This electronic system has not historically been used to provide data that can assist with understanding the quality of consent decisions. Further work in improving the quality of data in the system (some of which is underway) will improve the speed and efficiency for preparing reports such as this. At this time however, a lot of manual reviewing of consent files is required in order to understand what trends are emerging. However we have applied a new approach in this report by reviewing Building Consent data where it can be matched with Resource Consents in order to obtain a clearer picture of the kind of development activity on unique property addresses that is being completed in this zone. This new method is more complex, and as a result provides only partial results at this stage; further analysis will continue through the District Plan Review process.

This report analyses a subset of the Resource Consent data for 581 developments in Queenstown, Arrowtown, Arthurs Point and Lake Hayes Estate, where there is a match for completed Building Consent activity with the Resource Consent. Active Resource consents where Building consent has not yet been granted or completed were excluded. It was felt that this would give a clearer picture by focusing analysis on completed developments, in a portion of the zone. As time permits, the balance of areas in the LDRZ would be analysed, as part of the District Plan review.

Type of Activity

As the table below indicates, 44% of developments (unique site addresses in the Queenstown areas listed above) sought resource consent for new development:

Type of Activity-Resource Consent		
Development	256	44%
Alteration	176	30%
Change of Use	0	0%
Subdivision	149	26%
Variation	0	0%
Total Developments- RC	581	

Use Type

The following table, for Use, indicates what the building consent application indicates the development would be used for. For this table, we see that the majority (55%) of Residential building consents are for alterations, which include additions (998), garages (240) and other (63) uses.

When we add the three categories of Residential together (Removal, Alternations, and New), we see that 91% of building consents are for "Residential" activities, which would indicate that *Objective 4 - Non-Residential Activities* is being met in the sense that the non-residential activities are not dominant in the zone.

Use Type- # Bldg Consents Issued	Total	
Commercial	96	4%
Community	62	3%
Visitor Accommodation	18	1%
Residential- Removal of unit	71	3%
Residential-Alterations (incl garages)	1301	55%
Residential-New House/Unit	765	33%
Industrial	4	0%
Infrastructure	18	1%
Other (not specified)	15	1%
TOTAL building consents	2350	100%

It is noteworthy that the 18 building consent applications listed above were all matched with Resource Consent applications for Visitor Accommodation (VA) uses; 16 of the 18 were non-complying applications, with 2 as discretionary activity status. Of these, 1 was for the 79 unit Goldridge Hotel at 594 Frankton Road, which is also a Visitor Accommodation sub-zone, thus an anticipated activity at that location. The low-density rules would therefore not be concerned with the use but the nature and scale of the activity. The next largest VA development is the Marina Baches at 875 Frankton Road, originally an application for 27 residential units that further sought resource consent to convert to 54 VA units. The process for this site involved enforcement orders that compelled the development to seek a new consent for the larger number of VA units, which was granted on the basis that once the building was built the effects of the VA use were no more than minor. Two other developments over 10 units are located in Arrowtown, and one in Fernhill,

The April 2009 LDRZ monitoring report illustrates that the issue of a high number of large-scale VA complexes locating in the LDRZ is more prolific in Wanaka.

Number of Residential Units by Size

Since we have established that residential activities are dominant in the zone by volume of consent activity, what do we know about the scale of the residential activity? The following table displays different scales of residential activity (Small = 1-2 units; Medium = 3-9 units, and Large = over 10 units).

Number of Res Units- by size, from building consent data		
Small (1-2 units)	881	75%
Medium (3-9 units)	126	11%
Large (10+ units)	173	15%
Total Residential Units	1180	

As discussed in the prior section, an area of potential concern for loss of residential amenity would be if the medium and large residential developments subsequently apply for change of use to Visitor Accommodation.

Decision Making

How was the decision granted? Whether through a Commissioner Hearing, or directly by Lakes Environmental under delegated authority? Those granted by hearing would include publicly notified applications, where the proposal would have been viewed as discretionary or non-complying.

How Granted?	**Resource Consents**	
by Delegated Authority	865	59%
by Commissioner (Hearing)	420	29%
Declined	3	0%
not stated	181	12%
Total Resource Consents	1469	100%

29% of the resource consents that went to a hearing indicate a relatively low level of rule breaches. But it does not indicate the extent to which the hearings were dealing with significant issues, or relatively minor breaches that could have been handled under delegated authority, with a slightly different rule structure.

This data appears to support a view that the current District Plan objectives and policies are being met in terms of the volume of activity in the zone, but does not tell us whether the quality of the development is as anticipated by the Plan. Officers have spent considerable time working with the available data to try and understand which rule breaches are occurring, and whether minor rule breaches would support a case for simplifying rules. As data has not been systematically kept at this level, more time will be required to reviewing individual consent applications to understand if there are any statistically valid trends that can inform the District Plan review. Having such information readily available would improve the efficiency of our monitoring efforts and be of benefit to the community and Council.

Qualitative Assessment: Subdivision

For that a more qualitative assessment is required. A related report, “Urban Design Critique of Subdivisions in Queenstown Lakes District” dated August 2010 assessed

the urban design qualities of seven subdivisions within the District. The Queenstown- specific sections of that report are attached in Appendix 3.

Overall, it found that the qualitative aspects of subdivisions at Lake Hayes Estate, Fernhill, Goldfields, and two subdivisions in Arthurs Point (including Atley Downs) ranged from Successful to Acceptable, but with room for improvement. Most of the improvements appear to relate to provisions in Section 7-Residential, not the Subdivision provisions (as currently structured).

Qualitative Assessment: Visitor Accommodation & Density provisions

Previous monitoring reports on the Low Density Residential Zone (April 2009) identified three specific provisions that were thought to be the rules that were allowing some large scale multi-unit visitor accommodation developments to locate in the Low Density Residential zone.

The 2009 report (as discussed previously above under Use Type) concluded that for large multi-unit developments, the density of development and the scale and extent of visitor accommodation that is being allowed to occur in the LDR Zone is considerably greater/ different than is anticipated in the objectives and policies and by the community, in general. This appears to be a more significant issue in Wanaka.

Specifically, this greater density and visitor accommodation activity is thought to be resulting from problems with the provisions relating to maximum density (Refer 7.5.5.2(iii), Comprehensive Residential Development (CRD) (Refer 7.5.3.4(v) and 7.5.5.2(iii)(b)), residential flats (Refer definitions) and visitor accommodation (Refer 7.5.3.4(i)). A summary of the various issues identified is provided below. These issues would be explored more fully during the District Plan Review.

*The **maximum density rule** is in contrast to the considerably larger minimum lot sizes for the LDR zone, which range from 600m^2 to 1500m^2 per lot. The effect of this anomaly is that a 900 m² lot can not be subdivided into two but two dwellings can be erected on it as a permitted activity and it can then be subdivided into two with no restriction on how small one of the lots is. This anomaly makes it unclear as to what the District Plan considers to be an "appropriate" density and, in turn, character in the LDR Zone. Whilst the density rule is clearly having some effect on character where it is enabling two dwellings on sites which would otherwise not be able to be subdivided (in areas such as Atley Downs in Arthurs Point for example) it is perhaps having a more significant effect when used in order to increase the density of multi unit developments and particularly where the 450m² density is used in a multi unit scenario and includes a residential flat on each of these newly created sites.*

In addition to the effects on character, the minimum density rule also seems to be influencing the effectiveness of the CRD provisions. Allowing a density of 1 unit per 450m² provides a relatively generous permitted baseline, from which the CRD applications are assessed and, in turn, a) may act as a disincentive to applicants to bother applying for CRD or b) limits the Council's ability to decline or influence poor proposals in that the permitted baseline is so enabling.

*The inclusion of **residential flats** in multi unit developments is enabling a clustering of high density in excess of that which is envisaged by the District Plan provisions or considered appropriate and, in turn, this often results in a built form that is out of character with that envisaged for the LDR Zone. This is essentially an issue of cumulative effects in that whilst there is an acceptance that individual dwellings or duplexes may have a residential flat, there is also a realistic assumption that not all dwellings in a street will opt to include a residential flat. As such, there is a clear distinction between the outcome anticipated by enabling*

residential flats in the LDR and that which is occurring when residential flats are included on every site within a multi unit development.

*The **comprehensive residential development** (**CRD) rule** enables multi unit developments anywhere in the LDR zone as a discretionary activity, provided the site is over 2,000m². Whilst the council could theoretically decline applications and/ or influence the outcome, the provisions appear to lack sufficient guidance in terms of design, appropriate locations, or the management of effects on character. In turn, the provisions seem to lack the "teeth" to enable applications to be declined where they are poorly designed and/ or inappropriately located.*

Trends

In many instances the LDRZ is working fine and delivering results as anticipated by the community and the District Plan

However the District Plan Review should address the following:

- When large scale developments locate in the zone, they appear to be a breach of the following policy:

  3.12 To ensure the single dwelling character and accompanying amenity values of the Low Density Residential Zone are not compromised through subdivision that results in an increase in the density of the zone that is not anticipated.

- Nearly 1/3 of Resource Consent applications are granted under delegated authority; are there matters that can be clarified in the rules such that these consents could become permitted?

- How the subdivision amenity issues raised in the Urban Design Critique can be addressed most effectively.

Issues for further consideration

How can the District Plan ensure that the community gets what it has expressed it wants through the zone Objectives and Policies?

During the District Plan Review, it is recommended that:

1. Officers conduct further investigation as to how the consenting process over the past 15 years would stack up through the Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Appropriateness tests described in Appendix 2.

2. Council build on the Urban Design Critique, to clearly articulate what outcomes can be expected for neighbourhoods within the LDR Zone;

3. Definitions be considered for the many terms used to describe the desired outcomes for the zone.

4. Engagement with the community be undertaken on a neighbourhood basis to confirm desired outcomes.

5. Council continue to research effectiveness of various tools that could improve achievement of the desired outcomes, including but not limited to:

a. amendments that provide certainty to a proposal that achieves the desired built form outcomes, and conversely, continue uncertainty for proposals that do not achieve the outcomes

b. Align subdivision and resource consent density provisions to improve certainty of outcome

6. Investigation continue into the level of intensification occurring in the Low Density Residential Zones (as documented in 2009 monitoring report), and whether HDR zone rules could be altered to attract that development to the HDRZ

7. The District Plan-Section 7-Residential is reorganised such that:

    a. the objectives, policies and rules pertaining to the HDR zone are clear and distinct from the LDR zone.

    b. the objectives and policies that pertain to three types of areas are clearly indicated as such:

        i. areas of change (where the current character is meant to change)

        ii. areas of established character (where the current character is meant to be protected)

        iii. LDRZ objectives and policies applied when zoning a new area

    c. Subdivision provisions are aligned to match the density provisions

8. Further consideration be given to cumulative effect, and what the zone will achieve:
    a. if the current rules continue with no changes
    b. if changes are made
    c. and which of these scenarios is more likely to occur

Appendix 1: Issues, Objectives, Policies

Following are the relevant excerpts from the District Plan, for the Issues, Objectives and Policies related to the existing Low Density Residential Zone in and around Queenstown.

7.1.1 Issues- Residential Areas

iii Character and Scale

The Character and scale of development within residential zones should achieve desired outcomes anticipated by the District Plan

7.1.2 District Wide Residential Objectives and Policies

Objective 2 - Residential Form

- *A compact residential form readily distinguished from the rural environment which promotes the efficient use of existing services and infrastructure.*

Objective 3 - Residential Amenity

- *Pleasant living environments within which adverse effects are minimised while still providing the opportunity for community needs.*

Policies

3.1 To protect and enhance the cohesion of residential activity and the sense of community and well being obtained from residential neighbours.

3.2 To provide for and generally maintain the dominant low density development within the existing Queenstown, Wanaka and Arrowtown residential zones, small townships and Rural Living areas.

. . .

3.12 To ensure the single dwelling character and accompanying amenity values of the Low Density Residential Zone are not compromised through subdivision that results in an increase in the density of the zone that is not anticipated.

Objective 4 - Non-Residential Activities

- *Non-Residential Activities which meet community needs and do not undermine residential amenity located within residential areas.*

Policies:

4.1 To enable non-residential activities in residential areas, subject to compatibility with residential amenity.

4.2 To enable specific activities to be acknowledged in the rules so as to allow their continued operation and economic well being while protecting the surrounding residential environment.

7.2 Queenstown Residential And Visitor Accommodation Areas Sunshine Bay-Fernhill, Queenstown Bay, Frankton Road, Frankton and Kelvin Peninsula

(Note: Section 7.2 is particularly unclear whether a provision applies to the Low or High density zone and is thought to benefit from such certainty through restructuring)

7.2.2 Issues

The District wide residential issues impact on, and are relevant to, residential activity and amenity in Queenstown. In addition, a number of local issues exist:

i *Protection of the predominantly low density residential environment in the Low Density Residential zone.*

ii *Provision for visitor accommodation.*

iii *The loss of amenity values as experienced from public spaces and neighbouring properties as a result of large scale developments.*

. . .

v *The potential adverse effects that non-residential activities may have on residential activities through increased traffic and noise and decreased visual amenity.*

vi *Opportunities for increasing the sizes and mix of units within residential and visitor accommodation to provide for a variety of living environments and for flexible future re-use.*

. . .

7.2.3 Objectives and Policies - Queenstown Residential and Visitor Accommodation Areas

(Note: this section is particularly unclear whether a provision applies to the Low or High density zone and is thought to benefit from such certainty through restructuring)

Objectives –

1. Residential and visitor accommodation development of a scale, density and character, within sub zones which are separately identifiable by such characteristics such as location, topography, geology, access, sunlight or views.

2. Residential development organised around neighbourhoods separate from areas of predominately visitor accommodation development. Provision for new consolidated residential areas at identified locations.

3. Consolidation of high density accommodation development in appropriate areas.

4. To recognise and provide for the non residential character of the Commercial Precinct overlay which is distinct from other parts of the High Density Residential Zone.

Policies:

1 *To protect the character and amenity of the residential environments by limiting the peripheral expansion of the residential areas and promoting consolidation of the residential community with the retention of easy access to the rural area and lakeshore.*

2 *To resist any peripheral extension of zoned residential areas which would undermine clear distinctions between the residential and rural areas and result in dispersed and uncoordinated residential growth patterns.*

3 *To enhance the general character of established residential environments in terms of density, height, access to sunlight, privacy and views.*

4 *To provide for higher density residential activity around the town centres and in new areas of residential development.*

5 *To encourage additional consolidated residential activity in the District.*

6 *To provide for a residential environment which allows a range of housing types, including care for the elderly and dependent relatives.*

7 *To provide for non-residential activities in residential areas providing they meet residential amenity standards and do not disrupt residential cohesion.*

8. *To ensure the scale and extent of any new Visitor Accommodation in residential areas does not compromise residential amenity values by adversely affecting or altering existing neighbourhood character.*

9. *To recognise and promote the particular role of health care and community activities in meeting the social needs of the local community.*

10. *To reinforce the character development within the Commercial Precinct Overlay through a greater emphasis on the quality and standard of non-residential building form, while recognising that this may be of a character and scale distinct from other areas of the High Density Residential Zone.*

Implementation Methods

The objectives and associated policies will be implemented through:

i District Plan

(a) Zone to enable a range of residential and visitor accommodation and non residential activity areas clearly delineated by zone and subzone boundaries and the commercial precinct overlay.

Explanation and Principal Reasons for Adoption

The policies reinforce the District wide objectives for residential activity of consolidation and enhancement of residential amenity values. In addition, the policies seek to maintain the general character of the majority of the existing residential environment which will provide a degree of certainty and security for residents by limiting changes to the scale, density and type of activity in the residential areas. This policy recognises the importance of the living environment to the social well being of the District's residents. The policies promote and enable high density development in appropriate locations.

The Council has made provision for an increase in residential zoning in the Queenstown-Wakatipu Basin. The areas identified have been chosen because they are well situated to ensure growth takes place in a manner and location which enhances the District's natural and physical resources and amenity values.

7.2.4 Environmental Results Anticipated

Implementation of the policies and methods for management relating to the established residential areas will result in:

i Maintenance of the general character and scale of existing residential areas with sites being dominated by open space rather than buildings, providing the opportunity for tree and garden planting around buildings.

ii Existing residential activity characterised by low building coverage and building height, but with opportunity for variety in building design and style.

iii Maintenance of a residential environment which is pleasant with a high level of on-site amenity in terms of good access to sunlight, daylight and privacy.

iv Maintenance of the opportunities for views consistent with the erection of low density, low height buildings.

v The exclusion or mitigation of activities which cause adverse environmental effects, such as excessive noise, glare, odour, visual distraction, traffic and on-street parking congestion, traffic safety and other hazards.

vi Residential coherence except in circumstances of established non-residential uses or where a local need prevails for non-residential activities ancillary to the surrounding residential environment.

. . .

ix Protection of the major visitor accommodation activities consistent with their significant value to the social and economic well being of the district and New Zealand.

. . .

xi Achieving an appropriate balance between retention of existing character and providing for new development in areas of change.

Appendix 2: What is District Plan monitoring?

The RMA requires that three aspects of the District Plan are assessed, with the findings used to inform the process of reviewing the District Plan. With respect to the Plan's objectives, policies and methods, these aspects are:

1. District Plan Effectiveness
2. District Plan Efficiency
3. District Plan Appropriateness

District Plan Effectiveness monitoring requires the Council to compare what is actually occurring under the District Plan provisions with the intentions of the Plan (as expressed through its objectives). This involves first identifying what the plan is trying to achieve for the High Density zones, and to then track how well it is achieving these objectives. Once an understanding of how well the objectives are being met, the next consideration is identify to what extent this can be attributed to the District Plan policies and rules and to what extent 'outside' influences may be affecting the ability of the Plan to achieve its objectives. For example, market demand for specific types of residential property.

Plan Efficiency monitoring refers to comparing the costs of administering the High Density residential provisions incurred by applicants, the Council and other parties compared to the outcomes or benefits achieved. It is noted here that determining what level of costs are acceptable is generally a subjective judgement and, as such, it is difficult to reach definitive conclusions.

Evaluating District Plan Appropriateness is the final aspect of District Plan monitoring. This relates to assessing how appropriate the Plan's objectives and policies are with regard to achieving the purpose of the Act and the function of the Council.

Appendix 3: Urban Design Critique of Subdivisions in the Queenstown Lakes District (August 2010).

(attached)

Urban Design Critique of Subdivisions in Queenstown Lakes District

Queenstown Only- May 2011

QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT COUNCIL

Boffa Miskell

August 2010

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Photographs by Boffa Miskell, except on page 46 main photo by Queenstown Lakes District Council
Graphic design by Boffa Miskell
Maps supplied by Queenstown Lakes District Council

Table of Contents

Sites F & G are not included, and will be published when the Wanaka Low Density Zone Monitoring Report is provided to Strategy Committee

Introduction

Scope of Project

Urban Design has been defined as '*the art of making places for people. It includes the way places work and matters such as community safety, as well as how they look. It concerns the connections between people and places, movement and urban form, nature and the built fabric, and the process of ensuring successful villages, towns and cities. Urban design is the key to making sustainable developments and the conditions for a flourishing economic life, for the prudent use of natural resources and social progress*' (DETR, By Design)

Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) appointed Boffa Miskell to assess the **urban design qualities** of seven subdivisions within the District. The maps on page 4 show the locations of these subdivisions. This report includes a record of built outcomes of the subdivisions alongside an assessment of the visual quality and an appraisal of other urban design outcomes.

Methodology

Overview

The project was undertaken by urban designers from Boffa Miskell in conjunction with planning and urban design staff from QLDC. It is anticipated that this will assist QLDC staff in monitoring the outcomes of subdivisions in the District and in particular, the relevant policies and rules.

Initially, a site assessment template was developed with a list of elements to assess and items to photograph. The template included a checklist of urban design criteria to ensure continuity. This served to focus on the key issues for the reviewers when critiquing the individual subdivisions. The urban design criteria is discussed more overleaf.

The site visits were undertaken in winter (June 2010) and as a consequence the effect of planting is less visible, in particular, the visual effects of deciduous street trees. For some sites snow and ice obscured part of the open spaces.

Not all of lots within the subdivisions have been developed at time of site visit. In some cases the scale of the on site survey was reduced to a smaller number of streets agreed with QLDC. On site, the subdivision was discussed and assessed in relation to each urban design criteria and its elements. The response of each subdivision to the urban design criteria was rated on a sliding scale of very successful to not successful. An example of the sliding scale is below.

Overall, how successfully does this subdivision integrate with its local context?

VERY SUCCESSFUL — SUCCESSFUL — ACCEPTABLE — LESS SUCCESSFUL — NOT SUCCESSFUL

What do these ratings mean?

Very Successful: The subdivision is considered to achieve the best outcome in relation to the urban design criteria in almost all areas of the development. Represents an example of best practice.

Successful: The subdivision is considered to result in a good outcome in relation to the urban design criteria in most areas of the development.

Acceptable: The subdivision is considered to result in a satisfactory outcome using the urban design criteria.

Less Successful: The subdivision does not result in a satisfactory outcome in relation to the urban design criteria in some areas of the development.

Not Successful: The subdivision is considered to result in a very poor outcome in relation to the urban design criteria in almost all areas of the development.

Where appropriate, a summary sentence is included to outline why a subdivision received a certain rating, in particular where it was considered close to another rating or any extremes were balanced across the subdivision.

Urban Design Criteria

The urban design criteria used in the assessment has been designed to specifically comment on residential subdivisions. Elements of the Urban Design Protocol, QLDC's Urban Design Strategy and other urban design literature informed this criteria. A brief definition of each criteria used is given below. Throughout this report each criteria below are discussed and demonstrated.

Context: Refers to how the development addresses its wider context in relation to external connectivity (i.e. links to external amenities and town centre shops and parks), natural features (i.e. landscape) and built form (scale of neighbouring subdivisions, roads, etc).

Connectivity: A development is assessed favourably if the place is easy to move around by foot, bike and vehicle and also provides connections between amenities such as reserves and streets within the site.

Urban Grain: The pattern and size of land uses and road layouts, the buildings and their lots within a subdivision. A rating of the urban grain has not been included within this report as its results are discussed within other criteria such as legibility, enclosure and scale.

Legibility: A development is assessed favourably if the place can be easily understood (and memorable) and navigated as a person moves about it.

Scale: The combined impacts of built elements when seen in relation to its surroundings i.e. roads, open spaces or other buildings and how it responds to the scale and character of the development within the wider context.

Active Edges: Refers to the potential for visual engagement (or 'passive surveillance') between the street users and activities taking place in buildings (particularly on the ground floor). The presence of 'active edges' helps places feel safer and more personable.

Enclosure: The creation of a sense of defined space by means of surrounding buildings and planting.

Quality: The external appearance and functionality of materials and design elements used in both public and private areas and their overall maintenance/longevity.

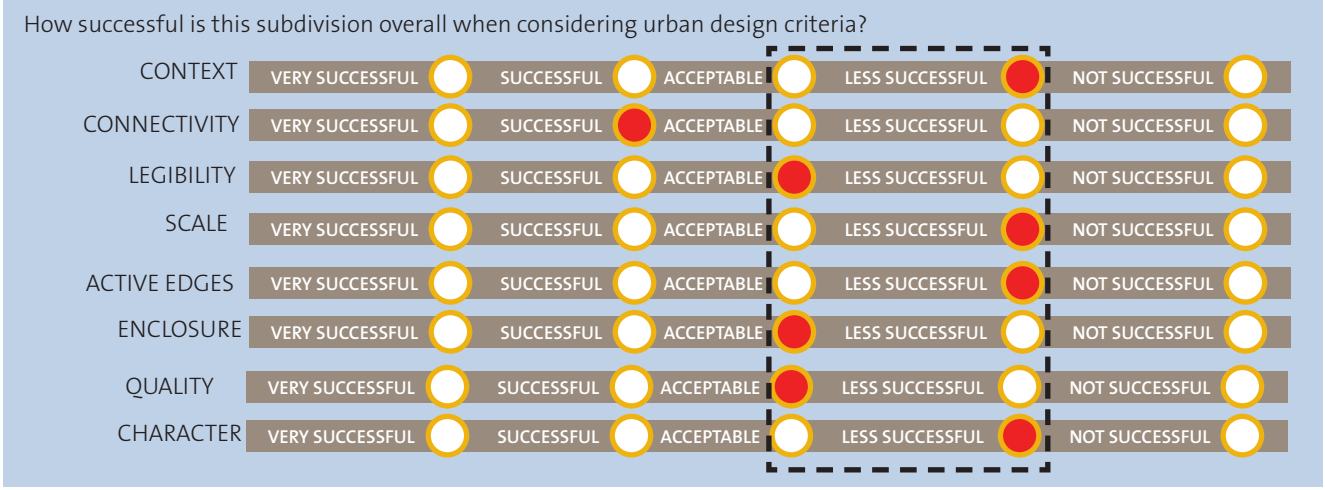
Character: A place that responds to and reinforces locally distinctive patterns of development and landscape features.

Distinctiveness: The special features which make a place more memorable and therefore more legible.

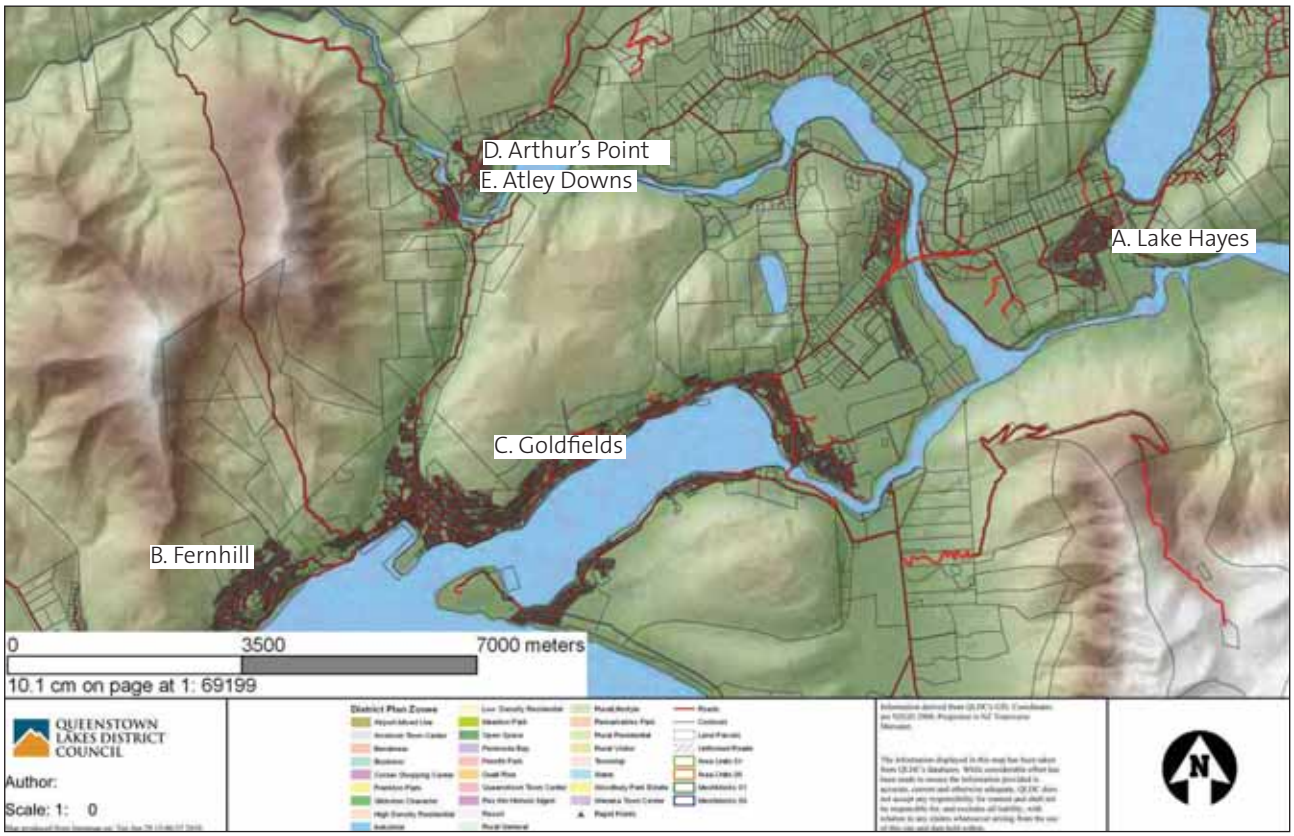
Creativity: The innovative approaches which promote diversity and turns a functional place into a memorable place. These are recorded in the key lessons at the end of each section.

Overall Assessment

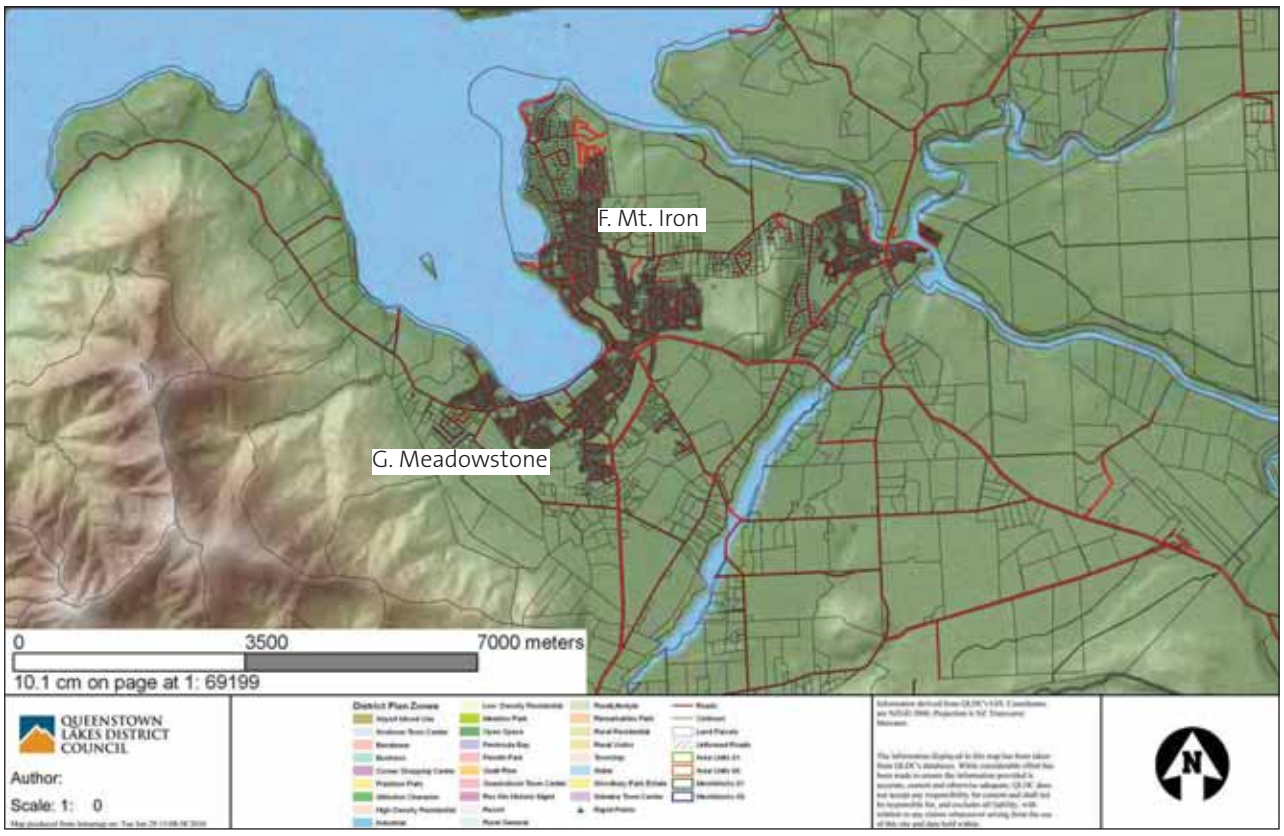
Each subdivision has a concluding overall assessment page which brings together the ratings from each individual criteria assessment. The ratings for each criterion are assembled into a diagram to assess if there is a consistent rating for that subdivision. An example of this is shown below. The dotted line indicates in general where the overall rating sits. This is followed by a short summary statement about the subdivision. A number of key lessons to learn from each subdivision are listed beneath the overall assessment table, which also comments on elements of creativity or extremes that were averaged out for the purposes of the ratings.



Sites Appraised



Sites in Queenstown



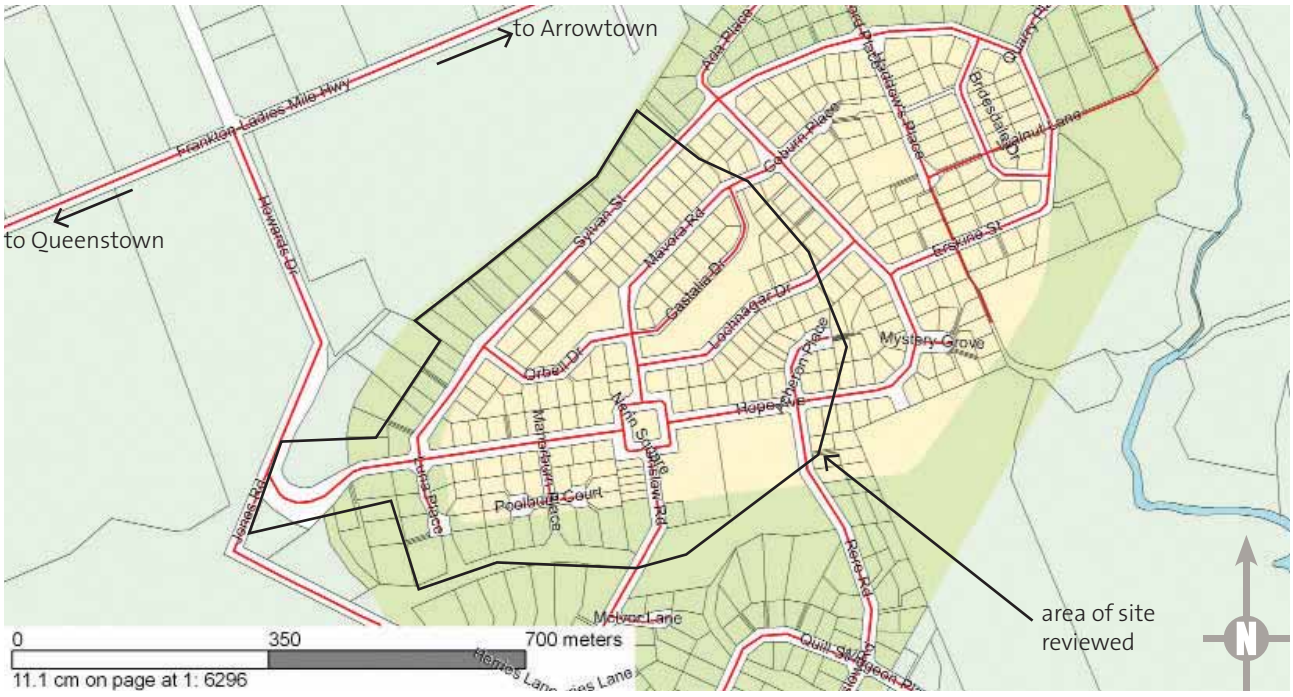
Sites in Wanaka

Site A – Lake Hayes, Queenstown

Introduction

Size: 28.6ha. Approximately 500 lots on site and 140 lots reviewed on the site visit.
Date of Resource Consent: 2001/2002
Completed: No, some undeveloped lots within the subdivision.
Zoning: Residential (light yellow), Rural Residential (green)

Location: Lake Hayes Estate is located 6 kilometres from Frankton and 12 km from both Queenstown and Arrowtown.
Conditions: Visited on a winter morning, clear sky but ice and snow on the ground.



Lake Hayes Estate Zoning

Lake Hayes Estate Aerial

Lake Hayes

Context

Lake Hayes Estate is located on an out-of-town site. It is accessed off Howards Drive which connects to the Frankton Ladies Mile Highway. A view of the site from Howards Drive is shown.

The site is at a lower level than the surrounding roads and glimpses of the development can be seen from the Highway. There are slopes and terraces evident on the site. A high-voltage electricity transmission line crosses the southern portion of the site. There are several water features on the site. It is unclear whether these are pre-existing features.

The subdivision essentially is a "dormitory" residential development and is reliant on the private car and/or public bus to gain access to shops and communities services.

INTEGRATION WITH BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- The subdivision is located on an out-of-town greenfield site and has little built context in its immediate environment.
- The walking track to Lake Hayes requires crossing the busy State Highway and public access to the Kawarau River is not apparent.
- Glimpse views of the site from Frankton Ladies Mile Highway is shown.
- The development is segmented by the existing transmission lines.
- The scale of the development is much denser than the occasional rural lifestyle blocks beyond the site to the north east and west.

INTEGRATION WITH THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- The subdivision sits across two slightly sloping terraces, separated by a steep terrace face. In general, the design recognises and retains this terrace slope.
- Its location on a terrace below the Highway limits views of the development.
- The landscape setting and views outwards are a key feature.

How successful does this subdivision **integrate** with its local context?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ● NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

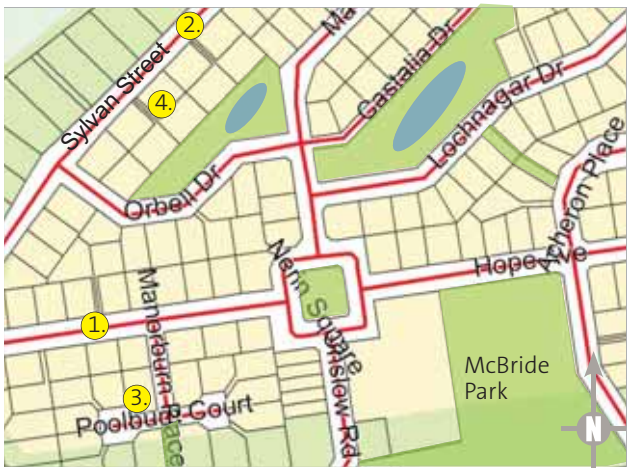
The out-of-town rural location hinders reference to and integration with a local built context. This development is remote and has an 'island' feel. On balance, its isolation and lack of service amenities are major factors in the rating. However, it is noted that the development is located well below the Highway, which aids in minimising its visual impact.

Lake Hayes

Urban Structure

Connectivity

STREETS



The site is accessed by one road link (Howards Drive) and one pedestrian link to Frankton Ladies Mile Highway. Within the site, Hope Avenue is the main street leading vehicles through the subdivision directly to Nerin Square at its centre. A network of connecting roads, cul-de-sacs and private drives provide access to individual lots. Greenways also aid walkability within this subdivision.

STREET HIERARCHY

1. Hope Avenue
   - Main Access Road
   - Two 6m lanes within a 22m road reserve
   - Central median

2. Sylvan Street
   - Connecting road
   - 23m reserve, 10m carriageway
   - Footpath one side

3. Poolburn Court
   - Double head cul-de-sac
   - 15m road reserve with 6m carriageway
   - Links to greenway

4. Private Drive
   - 6m between kerbs
   - No road reserve
   - Shared surface (no footpath)

OPEN SPACE

A network of greenway link the site to a central reserve (McBride Park) close to the square. McBride Park has a playground, BBQ area and artificial multi-sport court. Elsewhere the reserves contain ponds, landscaping and footpaths. The visual amenity and sense of safety of connections along some greenways could be improved, especially where high fences occur. A perimeter walkway provides a loop track at the base of the terrace, with a connection to a walkway on Frankton Ladies Mile Highway.

How successful is the **connectivity** through (and beyond) the site achieved using streets and open spaces?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ● ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

Internal connectivity is good due to the road layout and pedestrian paths within the greenways which link much of the site.

Lake Hayes

Urban Structure

Urban Grain

LOT DIVISION

The subdivision has a strong rectilinear layout and an informal grid with straight roads. The predominantly regular arrangement, size and shape of lots reflects this road layout. Internal lots accessed by private drives vary in size and scale, some being more irregular in shape.
Some streets act as a division line between the residential and rural residential zones, although development in the rural residential zone has occurred at densities not originally anticipated in the District Plan (and resulting in less regular lot shapes).

Size/Density
Lots in the centre of the site tend to be smaller than lots at the edge. There is no increase in intensity along Hope Avenue.

Shape
Smaller lots are generally rectangular in size. The edge sites are less regular.

Access/Frontage
The majority of lots front the local roads with back lots facing green spaces to the rear.

Variety/Variation
Variation of lots occurs as a result of irregular spaces created by the road alignment and triangular blocks.

LOT DEVELOPMENT

Houses are generally aligned with the road boundary set- back, although many are enclosed by tall fences and extensive planting, which increases the sense of separation and reduces overlooking of the street. The dwellings on the low density residential zoned land appear to fill the lot, whereas development on the rural residential land (north of Sylvan Street on the aerial shown above) tend to have similar sized dwellings situated at the road boundary with larger rear yards.

Footprint Size/Coverage
The majority of lots tend to be located close to the road setback. Many appear to maximise the site coverage.

Arrangement/Typology
Dwellings are predominantly detached and single-storey, with some two-storey dwellings in the rural residential zone.

Street Frontage: Garage/Drive
Many dwellings have double garages which reduces the number of windows/rooms overlooking the street.

Solar Orientation
Deeper setbacks are apparent on some north facing lots. This provides more usable garden but can reduces the sense of enclosure to the street.

Lake Hayes

Appearance (Outcomes)

Legibility

Arrival

Arrival is via Howards Drive, an access road situated on the upper terrace, which cuts down through the terrace face to the subdivision on the lower terrace. There is a marked visual contrast between the rural approach and the arrive into the subdivision. This entrance and arrival responds well to the existing landform.

Navigation

The site is surrounded by higher mountains and these generally aid navigation. However, internal navigation is limited by a lack of development landmarks and some direct road alignments. However, Hope Avenue is clear as a main, direct route through the development.

Security

There is no evidence of anti-social behaviour (i.e. graffiti or vandalism) along the various routes. The main open space incorporating the pylons together with its greenway is entirely bounded by high fences and undeveloped lots. For this reason it feels less safe as a pedestrian route.

Does the site achieve good **legibility**?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ● LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

Lack of built landmarks within the site reduce wayfinding. Taller buildings around Nerin Square would assist with this. Some of the greenways felt unsafe given the dominance of high fences along their edge.

Scale

Typology

Predominately the buildings are single-storey detached dwellings. There are some two-storey dwellings in the larger rural residential lots.

Buildings to Street

Views of dwellings are frequently of double garages and fencing, which reduces the community focus of the street. Buildings are large but appear less so due to the width of the roads. Some dwellings are elevated above the street which increases their scale in relation to the road and an overall sense of enclosure.

Buildings to Public Spaces

Along the internal greenway dwellings and landscape treatment are at a scale which results in good passive surveillance of the street without visual dominance. The new two-storey dwellings by Nerin Square are a good scale for the space, although they do not orientate to it. Lower buildings in proximity to the square fail to relate to scale of the road and the square.

Is the **scale** of development appropriate to the local environment?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ● NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

The width of the roads combined with the low dwelling heights results in an uncomfortable scale of development. In particular, Nerin Square and Hope Avenue should have taller buildings at their edge to reflect their scale, importance and function.

Lake Hayes

Appearance (Outcomes)

Active Edges

Visibility

Many of the lots have high fences, often in places that are elevated above the road and footpaths, resulting in less visibility of dwellings from street level and reducing the effectiveness of any active edges.

Front facade openings

Relatively few front doors are visible from the street given they are frequently setback behind projecting garage doors. However, given that some dwellings are located above the street separate paths lead to front doors. This highlights front doors and makes the entrance more inviting and visible from the street.

Orientation/ proximity

Most dwellings appear to be aligned to the minimum setbacks. Some dwellings are orientated away from lot boundaries to achieve better solar orientation. This reduces the proximity of the dwelling from the street and the potential for overlooking. This arrangement can increase variety of frontage arrangements.

Garages

Many garages front public streets and remain visually dominant due to their size, location forward of the main facade and minimal planting of front gardens. This reduces the opportunity for interaction and activity between the house and the street.

Does the layout of subdivision result in high degree of **active edges** to public areas?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ● NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

The dominance of fences and garages reduces active edges to public areas, which results in less passive surveillance of the public realm.

Enclosure

Sylvan Street: A typical straight street with a wide carriageway and road reserve, combined with low single-storey buildings to either side, which creates little sense of enclosure.

Nerin Square: Little enclosure is created to this space. The two-storey dwellings are of a insufficient scale and number for a space of this magnitude. The opportunity to create a usable community focus has so far been lost.

Does the subdivision successfully achieve good **enclosure**?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ●

Given the wide roads, large public spaces are relatively low scale dwellings it is difficult to create a strong sense of enclosure.

Lake Hayes

Appearance (Outcomes)

Quality

Private Buildings

The majority of buildings have pitched roofs, although there are a good number of mono-pitch and flat roofs. The predominant materials used include render and brick, with the some use of timber and stone. In general, building quality appears high and well maintained.

Private Lot Curtilage

Lot boundary treatment varies in quality and type with little consistency. Many gardens have no enclosure and limited planting. There is evidence of extensive tall fencing along roads and greenways and this varies in height and openness.

Public Street Materials

Streets are predominantly tarmac with standard kerbs. The exception is the block paved street crossings and car parking areas, which are incorporated within all streets. Roading and paving materials tend to be standard with little attempt to establish a separate character through landscape treatment.

Public Landscape/ Open Space

Some greenways have ponding as a central feature and this raises the visual quality of some public open spaces. Pathways of loose gravel cross over the greenways. The quality of the playground and the sports equipment was high. There is limited roadside planting and street trees.

Overall **quality** of subdivision?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ● LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

The overall quality of the subdivision is variable, but as the scheme is not completed it is difficult to comprehensively assess. In addition, the snow and ice on the day of the site visit may have hid additional good or bad design elements.

Character

Consistency Across Site

Overall this subdivision is of a large scale open character, with much variation between open space and building types. It has few distinctive characteristics that distinguish it from other subdivisions other than its strong axial main street and central square.

Building Character

There is little cohesion between buildings within this subdivision due to the high variation in building types and lot development across the site.

Appropriateness

The scale of the roads tend to dominate the character of the subdivision, though the straight and rectilinear alignment is a suitable response to this predominantly flat site and draws on the historic layout of Queenstown. The development relies on its surrounding landscape for a sense of place.

Does the subdivision establish a special **character** appropriate to its site?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ● NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

This type of subdivision could be found anywhere and does not create a distinctive character in relation to its context.

Lake Hayes

Overall Impressions of Subdivisions - Distinctiveness

Nerin Square and Hope Avenue
Central square and wide avenue are less successful due to low perimeter buildings and lack of enclosure / built scale.

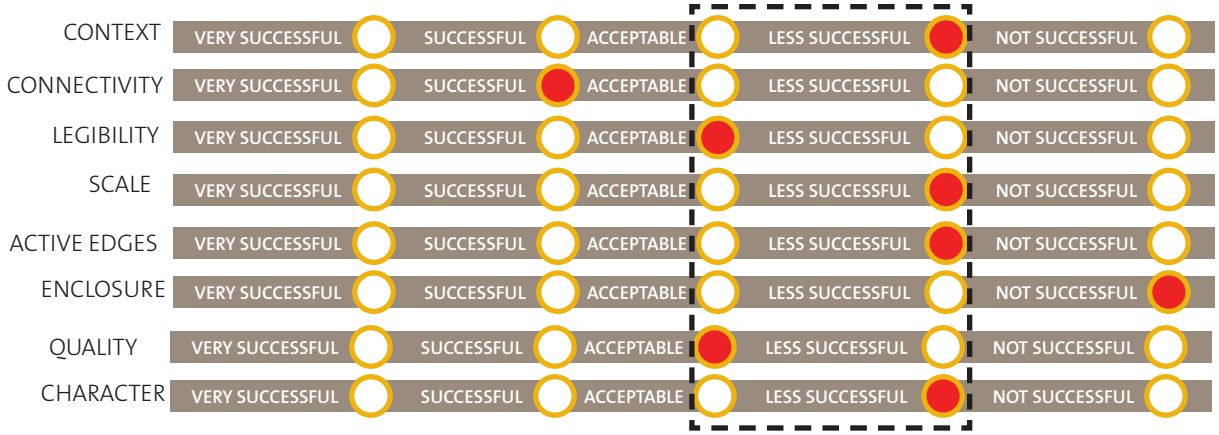
Greenways The use of ponds and playgrounds are successful. However, perimeter fencing controls for these spaces (to limit height and enhance their appearance) would be beneficial.

Out of Town Location
This subdivision requires residents to drive or bus for most of their daily needs.

Roads and Road Reserves Widths
Street scale is not matched by a sufficient built scale to create meaningful enclosure of spaces, or human comfort.

Overall Assessment

How successful is this subdivision overall when considering the urban design criteria?



THE SUBDIVISION'S OUT-OF-TOWN LOCATION WITHOUT APPROPRIATE LOCAL SERVICES FOR ITS RESIDENTS IS A MAJOR URBAN DESIGN CONCERN. THE WIDTH OF ROADS AND LOW-SCALE OF BUILDINGS DETRACT FROM ITS OVERALL QUALITY.

Key Lessons

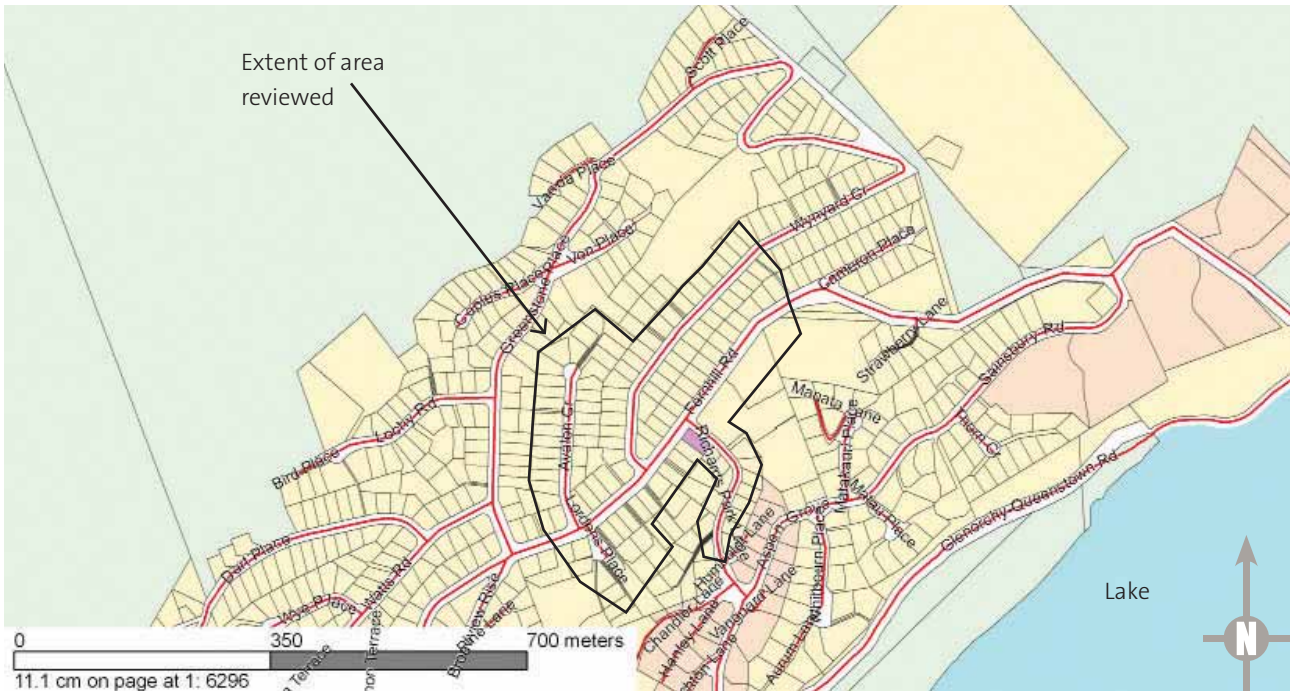
- The subdivision would be more successful if it had been treated like a standalone village development with sufficient facilities and amenities established, including shops, some employment opportunities and child care. These could have been designed to create a village centre and destination for local residents.
- The width of the roads result in an inefficient use of land for roads reserves. This excessive width may encourage faster traffic speeds.
- Fences bounding greenways reduce visibility and sense of safety, especially the greenway along the transmission line.

Site B – Fernhill, Queenstown

Introduction

Size: 10.9ha
Date of Resource Consent: 1970s
Completed: Yes, although there are a couple of vacant sites.
Zoning: Residential Zoned (light yellow), Corner Shopping Centre (purple)

Location: Fernhill is a housing area approximately 2km to the west of Queenstown town centre. It is an established subdivision dating from the 1970s facing south east on a sloped site. Avalon Crescent, Wynyard Crescent (part), Richards Park Lane and Fernhill Road (part) were reviewed. The extent of the area reviewed is shown on the map below.
Condition: Visited on a cold / icy winter afternoon in shade.



Fernhill zoning

Fernhill Aerial

Fernhill, Queenstown

Context

Fernhill is on a south-east facing slope overlooking Lake Wakatipu. Generally it is a shaded location, especially in winter. Much of the development in Fernhill is orientated to maximise views of the Lake.

It is accessed by Fernhill Road which connects to Lake Esplanade and to the Glenorchy - Queenstown Road, via neighbouring Sunnyside. Pathways through the hillside reserves link the area to the town centre and offer an alternative walking route. There are bus stops along Fernhill Road for the Blue Route. This route links to the town centre where transfers to Frankton and Arrowtown can be made.

INTEGRATION WITH BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- The predominant building type is similar to that in the surrounding neighbourhoods built during a similar period. However, the dwellings higher on the slope on Wynyard Close appear more recent.
- The area is accessed by one main road supported by local walkways through the reserves.
- Within the area, a number of local amenities exist, such as bus stops, post boxes, a dairy, restaurant and takeaway.

INTEGRATION WITH THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- Most dwellings are designed to take advantage of views of the lake.
- The area is generally shaded in winter due to its southerly aspect.
- The buildings are designed to step into the slope with split-level design being predominant.
- The sections generally sit comfortably within the bush landscape without lot fences between them.

How successful does this subdivision integrate with its local **context**?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ● ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

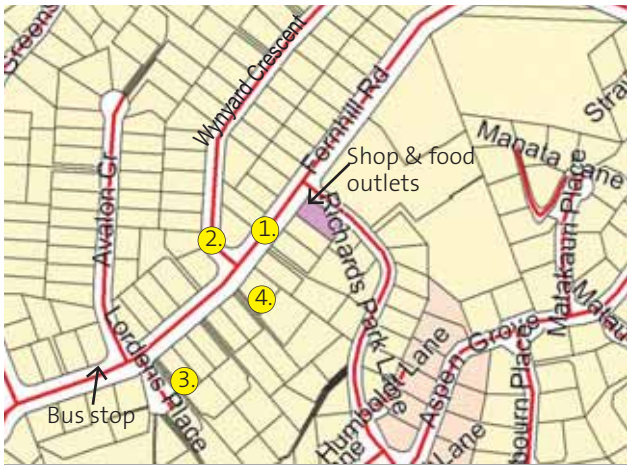
The subdivision is a similar character to surrounding development. It is accessible to the town centre and has good walking and bus connections. There are amenities located centrally on Fernhill Road to meet the day-to-day requirements of residents.

Fernhill, Queenstown

Urban Structure

Connectivity

STREETS



Fernhill Road is the main route through this area and is connected to the town centre, 2 km away, via Lake Esplanade. It is serviced by buses and has some commercial activities, including a shop and motels. Due to the slope, the majority of dwellings are accessed by local access roads, cul-de-sacs or private driveways.

STREET HIERARCHY

1. Fernhill Road
   - Main access road
   - 15m road (20m with road reserve)
   - Bus stops
2. Wynyard Crescent
   - Local Access Road
   - 9m road (21m with road reserve)
3. Avalon Crescent
   - Cul-de-sac
   - 9m road (15m with road reserve)
   - On street parking
4. Private Drives
   - 6m width

OPEN SPACE

The neighbourhood reserve is just outside the area examined and includes a playground. The surrounding bush land and hillside have paths which link to the streets. In addition, there is an internal walkway linking the Wynyard Close to Fernhill Road. Views towards the lake from Fernhill are largely absent from most streets. Views of the lake, mountains and Queenstown itself have largely been privatised.

How successful is the **connectivity** through (and beyond) the site achieved using streets and open spaces?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ● LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

The slope limits connections between the streets in this area. There are some pedestrian walkways which connect streets and the town via reserves, and more of these would improve connectivity.

Fernhill, Queenstown

Urban Structure

Urban Grain

LOT DIVISION

The section of subdivision reviewed has regular shaped lots which front on the street with the narrowest edge of the lot and back onto other lots. The exception being corners with irregular shaped lots. The main roads are parallel in an informal grid. To the south of Fernhill Road back lots are developed for lake and mountain views and to the east of Richards Place hotel and apartment complexes have been built. Most lots are located on sloping land, as a result some lots appear smaller from the street than if they were a flat lot.

Size/Density
The lots are approximately 600sqm in area, with some larger corner and internal lots.

Shape
Lots are generally rectangular with the shortest side fronting the street. Some re-subdivision of earlier lots is evident.

Access/Frontage
Lot development is related to road alignment across the slopes and the availability of views.

Variety/Variation
Some roads end in steeper slopes with higher turning areas resulting in irregular corner lots.

LOT DEVELOPMENT

The topography of the area has influenced the lot development. Many of the dwellings are two to three-storeys in height with undercroft garaging. The dwellings on the higher side of the roads tend to be developed towards the rear of the site to take advantage of views. Some dwellings have been developed on stilts to take further advantage of lake views.

Footprint Size/Coverage
The dwellings appear to fill the site, but often the rear of the building was not visible.

Arrangement/Typology
Predominantly 2-3 storey dwellings with undercroft garages and balconies on upper floors. Some duplex units.

Street Frontage: Garage/Drive
Garages are located under dwellings on the higher side of street and behind dwellings (at street level) on the lower side.

Solar Orientations
Most lots are orientated to the views of the lake/mountains and less for solar orientation.

Fernhill, Queenstown

Appearance (Outcomes)

Legibility

Arrival

Fernhill Road is the widest road, has bus stops and commercial units and as a result is clearly the primary street in this area. There is no bespoke signage for this area, with town signage used. The reserve along Lakeside Esplanade is an indication that this area is viewed separately to the town centre.

Navigation

Wayfinding is reasonably clear given that Fernhill Road provides the spine road for all secondary roads which link to it. The views of the lake and hillsides aid navigation through the site. The walkway reviewed is well signposted and connects to bus stops.

Security

Evidence of anti-social behaviour (i.e. graffiti and/or vandalism) was not seen on the site visit. The walkways appear narrow and steep. This may result in reluctance of some people to use them (it was too icy to walk these sloped walkways on the site visit).

Does this site achieve good **legibility**?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ● ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

The pedestrian walkways and connections are well signposted although the sense of safety along these is unclear. The glimpses of the lake and mountains aid way finding around this subdivision. The commercial uses, bus stops and traffic volumes along Fernhill Road clearly signal that this is the main through route.

Scale

Typology

The buildings are predominantly two to three-storey detached dwellings with balconies on upper floors. There are some single-storey dwellings. Duplex units, comprehensively developed apartments and motel units are also evident in the area. Some of these may be a result of redevelopment of sites.

Buildings to Street

There is a regularity in how the buildings address the street. On the high side of the street buildings are generally two or three-storeys with undercroft garaging and on the low side garages are generally located with direct street access. Comprehensive development creates a stronger streetscape.

Buildings to Public Spaces

Within the area reviewed there were no formal reserves, although there were public walkways. The steep alpine slopes form a significant backdrop above and behind buildings. Dwellings back onto these slopes and generally do not have rear boundary fencing.

Is the **scale** of development appropriate to the local environment?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ● LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

The scale of the buildings are two to three-storeys and in most instances have a good relationship to the street and spaces. Some of the comprehensive development appears larger (more dominant) and out of scale with the surrounding dwellings.

Fernhill, Queenstown

Appearance (Outcomes)

Active Edges

Visibility

Generally, the majority of dwellings are visible from the street. However, when houses are on the lower side of the street this visibility is reduced. There are a number on steeper slopes both above and below the road that are accessed by private roads, which results in dwellings being less visible.

Front facade openings

In most cases, there were a number of windows and doors visible from the street, although in many circumstances front doors are accessed from the side as a consequence of using the ground floor as a garage.

Orientation/ proximity

Most dwellings with undercroft garages were set back from the street to allow for driveways. Where the garage was located behind the dwelling the building was generally located closer to the street.

Garages

Garages beneath buildings on the higher side of the road, though fairly dominant, were mitigated by the presence of substantial windows and balconies above. In some cases colour has also been used to diminish the visual effect of the garages.

Does the layout of subdivision result in high degree of **active edges** to public areas?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ● LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

As a result of development responding to sloping sites and taking advantage of lake views dwellings tend to have a number of windows overlooking the street, which increases passive surveillance. However, it is unclear how well overlooked the public walkways are, particularly given the height of buildings adjoining them and the lack of ground floor activity.

Enclosure

Along Fernhill Road the taller and more substantial buildings on the north side of the street take advantage of the views and create good rhythm. However, this is not reproduced on the south side of the road.

At the junction of Wynyard Close and Fernhill Road a sense of enclosure has been created by the rhythm of taller buildings along this street and the curve of the road.

Does the subdivision successfully achieve good **enclosure**?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ● LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

Some areas of the development have a greater sense of enclosure due to taller buildings, but this is not consistent across the site.

Fernhill, Queenstown

Appearance (Outcomes)

Quality

Private Buildings

Many buildings in the area reviewed were 30-40 years old and the quality of the building materials reflected this both in their character and maintenance. Some areas where buildings/sites had been redeveloped more recently were of a better quality and in a better state of repair.

Private Lot Curtilage

The snow present during the site visit made it difficult to confirm on-site conditions. However, there appears to be private landscaping within some lots. Comprehensive developments appeared to present a more extensive landscaped edge to the street.

Public Street Materials

This was difficult to review given the snow conditions. Drainage in this area is via kerb and channel and the road and footpath materials appear to be standard tarmac.

Public Landscape/ Open Space

There appears to be an alpine theme in some public planting, although due to the snow conditions present during the site visit this was difficult to review. Planting along the walkway appeared less attractive and in general there were few street trees.

Overall **quality** of subdivision?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ● NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

The overall quality of materials and appearance of this subdivision is less than successful. The maintenance appeared poor, although the quality of some private planting on comprehensive schemes improved the impression.

Character

Consistency Across Site

The character of the buildings within the area reviewed was consistent.

Building Character

Two and three-storey dwellings with undercroft garages were the predominant building character. This development form is similar to other higher buildings on slopes elsewhere in Queenstown. Some newer buildings have continued this form.

Appropriateness

The informal grid reflects the traditional street layout of Queenstown. The buildings are similar to the surrounding neighbourhoods. The form of the buildings is appropriate to its setting, although some additional public spaces, in particular spaces with viewpoints of the lake, would enhance it.

Does the subdivision establish a special **character** appropriate to its site?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ● LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

The character is in keeping with its surrounds in terms of building form. Due to the weather on the day of site visit a clear image of the character of the landscaping was not established.

Fernhill, Queenstown

Overall Impressions of Subdivisions - Distinctiveness

Dwellings with undercroft garages are a consistent building form in both the older and newer areas. This form lessens the visual impact of garaging.

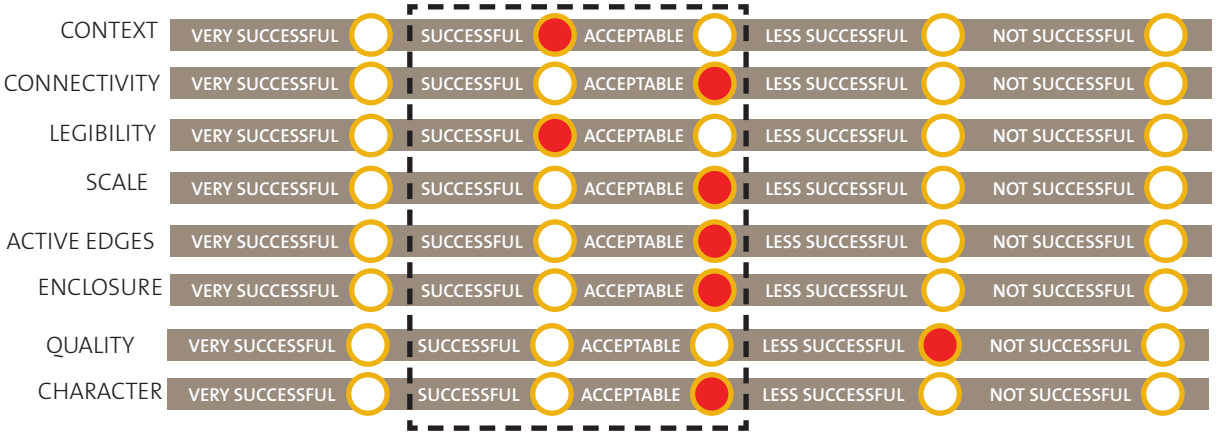
Views are privatised in parts and few public outlooks are available (this image is from a private drive).

This area is predominately in **shade in winter** (the sun only came into view in mid-late afternoon on the day of the site visit).

The subdivision is well serviced by **public transport** with regular bus stops along the centre of the subdivision near road and walkway junctions.

Overall Assessment

How successful is this subdivision overall when considering urban design criteria?



THE DESIGN OF THIS SUBDIVISION IN RESPONSE TO ITS SLOPING TERRAIN HAS RESULTED IN A REASONABLY CONSISTENT OUTCOME. HOWEVER, THE QUALITY OF THE BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPE COULD BE FURTHER ENHANCED.

Key Lessons

- Development on steep slopes has resulted in many taller buildings which results in a good scale and a sense of enclosure of streets and spaces in some places.
- Glimpse views over the lake and mountains are spectacular, but opportunities for regular glimpses of these are lost through private development and driveways.
- Although there was evidence of road reserves along the sloping roads, neither these, nor the roads appeared excessively wide with the exception of Fernhill Road. However, a combination of street parking and snow may have disguised this.
- The climate in this subdivision is cold and when visited on one of the shortest days of the year, it was late in the afternoon before any sunlight came over this subdivision.

Site C – Goldfields, Queenstown

Introduction

Size: 4.8ha
Date of Resource Consent: early to mid 1990s
Complete: Yes, although there are some vacant lots.
Zoning: Residential (light yellow)

Location: Goldfields is located approximately 3 km from the centre of Queenstown and approximately 3 km from Frankton. The section of Goldfields reviewed included Goldfield Heights Road (part), Nugget Knob, Stoneridge and Goldleaf Hill.
Condition: Site visited on a cold, sunny winter morning - much of the site was in shadow.

Goldfields - Zoning map

Goldfields Aerial

Goldfields, Queenstown

Context

Goldfields is a residential area to the east of the centre of Queenstown, located on the upper slopes well above Frankton Road. Vehicular access is achieved via St. Georges Avenue, which connects to neighbouring residential areas and to the town centre via Goldfields Heights Road and Frankton Road. To the south, St. Georges Avenue connects through to further new subdivisions. A bus stop on Frankton Road is approximately 1 kilometre from Goldfield Heights Road. This bus serves Queenstown, Frankton and the airport. The site lies across south and south-east facing slopes with excellent elevated views of Lake Wakatipu and the surrounding mountains.

A playground and reserve (Goldfields Park) is located a 5 minute walk from the subdivision.

INTEGRATION WITH BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- The subdivision appears consistent in character and form to adjacent residential developments on sloping sites.
- The use of retaining structures for dwellings and roads is evident.
- The development form consists of clusters of dwellings separated by steep undeveloped slopes.
- Existing retained vegetation on slopes assists in separating development.

INTEGRATION WITH THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- A development located on predominantly steep slopes, which takes advantage of lake and mountain views.
- The exposed rockface is well integrated, as is a natural stream and gully system through the centre of the site.
- The absence of boundary fencing helps integrate the development with the landscape.
- The south-east facing aspect of the site is a constraint to achieving solar access.

How successful does this subdivision integrate with its local **context**?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ● ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

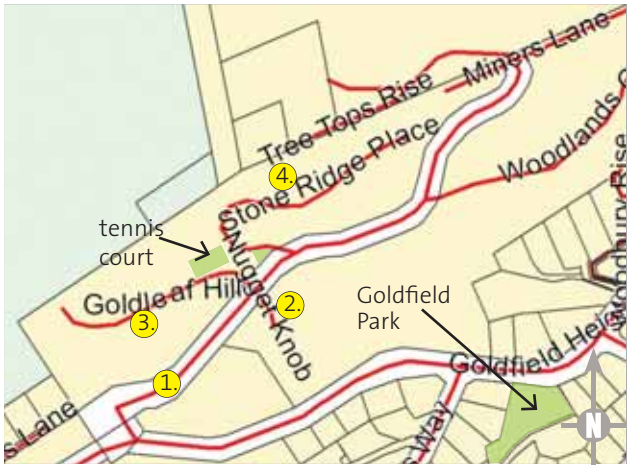
The majority of land modification is the development of the roading infrastructure rather than individual site development. Dwellings are well integrated into the densely vegetated context and roads cross steep slopes, resulting in a similar character to the surrounding development.

Goldfields, Queenstown

Urban Structure

Connectivity

STREETS



Goldfields Height Road is a steep road and the only vehicle access to the subdivision. A cul-de-sac and series of private drives provide access to the remainder of the site. Roads take a zigzag alignment to facilitate development on the slopes. Pedestrian activity is generally confined to the roads, with few public connections between internal or external roads, which lengthens walking distances.

STREET HIERARCHY

1. Goldfield Heights Road
   - 8m road
   - Single footpath
   - No readily apparent road reserve
2. Nugget Knob
   - Short cul-de-sac
   - 5m wide entrance
   - Wide turning circle
3. Goldleaf Hill
   - Private road
   - 6m wide
   - Body corporate managed
4. Stoneridge Place
   - Private Drive
   - 6m wide
   - Single footpath

OPEN SPACE

Due to the steepness of the site, the extent of open space provision is restricted to one fenced set of tennis courts. Access is for the sole use of the body corporate and therefore not for public use. The development relies extensively on the natural landscape (both internally and externally) to impart a sense of openness/ visual relief. The retention of the steam and gully system is successful, though this is marred by the unfortunate location of service utilities and the absence of crossings over the stream. A pedestrian link to the playground would increase connectivity.

How successful is the connectivity through (and beyond) the site achieved using streets and **open spaces**?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ● NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

The steep nature of this site limits connectivity to the surrounding areas. Pedestrian links between private drives and through and across open spaces would help increase connectivity.

Goldfields, Queenstown

Urban Structure

Urban Grain

LOT DIVISION

This is a very difficult, steeply sloping site. This generates either long frontage lots parallel to the roads, or more commonly, deeper lots with relatively narrower road frontages. This maximises the number of lots in relation to expensive road length on slopes. The result is a development form of more concentrated buildings interspersed with less developed rear sloping yards. Urban grain is almost entirely determined by vehicle accessibility rather than subdivision 'design'.

Size/Density
Lot sizes are influenced by the degree of slope and the proximity of developable land to roads.

Shape
Lots generally have a narrower street frontage and greater depth. Non-linear roads increase the number of irregular lots.

Access/Frontage
Access is dominated by sharp bends and acute angle junctions. Parking controlled by slope steepness/road proximity.

Variety/Variation
Variety in the urban grain arises from a combination of slope, road/junction arrangements, aspect and views.

LOT DEVELOPMENT

Buildings are predominantly of two-storey configuration to maximise development across falling slopes and parking and aspect are strong factors in both layout and building design. Proximity to roads is a priority in achieving parking and access, with sloping sites and minimal amounts of flat land restricting conventional parking and garaging arrangements. This results in more inventive arrangements, that contribute to variety within the streetscene. Whilst lower-slope development mostly involves building out over the slope, upper-slope development increased the amount of earthworks required.

Footprint Size/Coverage
Given sloping sites development is unevenly distributed within lots and results in more two-storey dwellings.

Arrangement/Typology
Many split-level and duplex/ terrace style dwellings, with some cantilevered over slopes.

Street Frontage
Generally top storey facades of dwellings are visible on lower-slopes, with entire buildings visible on the upper-slopes.

Solar Orientations
Building orientation generally subservient to slope and views. Many south-east facing balconies and little private open space to north side.

Goldfields, Queenstown

Appearance (Outcomes)

Legibility

Arrival

The vertical rock face and curving road at the entrance to the development help to create a legible entrance and sense of arrival. A chalet-style comprehensive development of higher density, adjacent to the entrance further assists with defining the entrance to the site.

Navigation

The high proportion of private roads/laneways within the development makes it unclear which roads are publicly accessible. Glimpsed views of the lake and mountains, distinctiveness of some buildings, road alignment and the rhythm of the streets all aid navigation through the site.

Security

The effect of zigzag roads and dense planting along some slopes and the road reserve reduces internal visibility and surveillance. However, there is little evidence of anti-social behaviour (i.e. graffiti or vandalism). Public footpaths with steep banks adjacent with no barriers may discourage pedestrian use.

Does this site achieve good **legibility**?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ● ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

Views out towards the lake, mountains and adjacent subdivisions help navigation people through this development. Pedestrian surveillance is compromised along some streets, due to their zigzag nature and dense landscaping. Legibility is compromised by uncertainty of public access due to the high number of private roads.

Scale

Typology

Typically only one level of a two-storey dwelling located on the lower-slopes is visible from the road, with two to three-storey dwellings visible on the upper-slopes. There is a tendency towards duplex/terrace housing given constraints. Most dwellings have been specifically designed, resulting in great variety.

Buildings to Street

Dwellings on the upper-side of the street are generally two to three-storeys. Typically, the lower-side of the street has less dominant building forms and a greater variety of entrances and garage/parking configurations that introduce a more continuous, if not lower, development frontage along the street.

Buildings to Public Spaces

The open spaces appear to be largely in private ownership, except for the stream, which has little direct overlooking. The tennis courts are overlooked by two-storey dwellings (see photograph to left) and is an appropriate scale for this space. In some cases there are views of the development from roads beyond the site where development appears dominant.

Is the **scale** of development appropriate to the local environment?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ● LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

The design and location of buildings in response to the slope has resulted in reasonably successful scale of development in relation to the street. However, some buildings can appear visually dominant.

Goldfields, Queenstown

Appearance (Outcomes)

Active Edges

Visibility

Visibility of buildings from internal roads is generally good as a consequence of the proximity of dwellings to the road. Typically there are no tall fences to separate buildings from the street, although some buildings included undercroft garaging reduced the number of windows at ground level.

Front facade openings

The degree of facade openings (doors and windows) varies on either side of the street. Upper slopes tended to have large windows to maximise views, with activity on the upper levels. On the lower slopes the ground floor of the dwellings tended to have active windows overlooking the street.

Orientation/ proximity

Dwellings are generally close to the street on the lower-slope side and set back further on the upper-slope side given requirements for garage access and related frontage parking. Most buildings followed the road alignment closely. There is little evidence of lot boundary fencing.

Garages

Parking is a significant design issue and a wide variety of solutions are evident. Whilst double garages are common on upper-slope dwellings, slopes severely restricted garages on the lower-slope side. Many resorted to carports and parking platforms, often with steep drive access.

Does the layout of subdivision result in high degree of **active edges** to public areas?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ● ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

Building intensity and dwelling / car parking design responding to topography and narrower streets, resulted in a high level of active edges to the streets. Although many of these streets are private roads.

Enclosure

Where buildings are located on man-made terraces on existing steep terrain, road level enclosure has been established by both the exposed rock face and buildings above.

Nugget Knob is a example of a cluster of buildings grouped around a short cul-de-sac, which achieves a sense of enclosure and achieves glimpse views beyond.

Does the subdivision successfully achieve good **enclosure**?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ● LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

Limited building platforms and extensive views have resulted in taller buildings and more comprehensive building forms. This contributes to the sense of enclosure of the streetscene. Enclosure is also assisted by natural features, such as rock outcrops. However, enclosure of the street is compromised in places by the separation between buildings, private parking setbacks and changes in the height of building on different sides of the street.

Goldfields, Queenstown

Appearance (Outcomes)

Quality

Private Buildings

There are examples of standardised buildings given that most are required to respond to site-specific constraints. The quality and appearance of building materials and maintenance appears reasonably good, but some had a poor appearance from beyond the site where foundations details may be visible.

Private Lot Curtilage

A characteristic of the site is the absence of lot boundary fences. The extent of private gardens is limited, as is the amount of planting along streets. However, the quality of planting on the steeper, undeveloped slopes is high and contributes positively to the public realm.

Public Street Materials

All roads comprise tarmac with concrete kerbing. Roadside footpaths include block paving and in some cases this extends into private drives. Private roads appear to operate successfully as shared surface streets where pedestrians and vehicles are comfortable to use the same space.

Public Landscape/ Open Space

Extensive use of local stone within the landscape raises the general quality and character of the place. However, conversion of roadside planting areas for carparking undermines this. Overall, the quality of surface materials appears tired, with private space appearing better than the 'public' areas.

Overall **quality** of subdivision?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ● LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

Buildings appear well maintained, as does the public realm. Planted slopes and rock faces contribute to the overall quality of the development. However, some paving appears worn and some landscaped areas have been converted to parking.

Character

Consistency Across Site

There is a consistency in character across the site given the way buildings have addressed the steep slopes. Each of the private roads is different in character and arrangement. However, the general response to the site is consistent.

Building Character

There is a mix of individually designed buildings which step into the slope. Their scale fits well with the character of the area.

Appropriateness

The development sits well within its natural setting given the large trees and rock crops. When viewed from the lower slopes the scale of development is similar to that within the context, but parts are visible on the skyline.

Does the subdivision establish a special **character** appropriate to its site?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ● ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

The private lot developments are more successful than the design of the public areas. However, as a whole there is a consistent character which sits well within the landscape.

Goldfields, Queenstown

Overall Impressions of Subdivisions - Distinctiveness

The use of **carports** are less dominant than garages and introduces variety to the scheme.

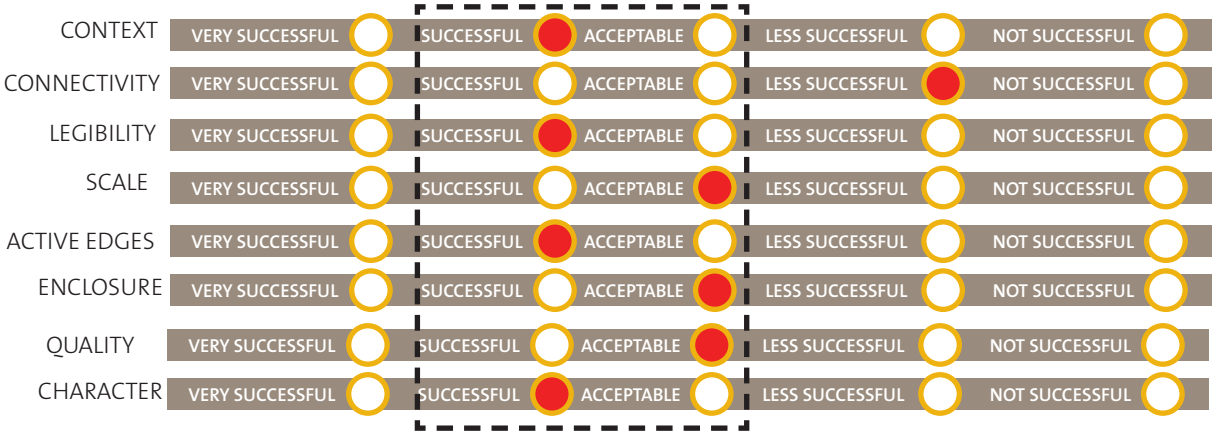
A **reduced road reserve** due to the absence of footpaths and minimal building setbacks results in a better sense of enclosure of the street than occurs with wider roads.

Clustering of buildings in groups around **short cul-de-sac**s addresses slope issues and creates a sense of enclosure of the street and good overlooking.

The extent and use of **rock faces** and **glimpse views of the lake and mountains** between buildings are significant visual elements in this subdivision.

Overall Assessment

How successful is this subdivision overall when considering urban design criteria?



THE DESIGN OF THIS SUBDIVISION IN RESPONSE TO ITS SLOPING TERRAIN HAS RESULTED IN GOOD ENCLOSURE OF SPACES AND CREATION OF ACTIVE EDGES.

Key Lessons

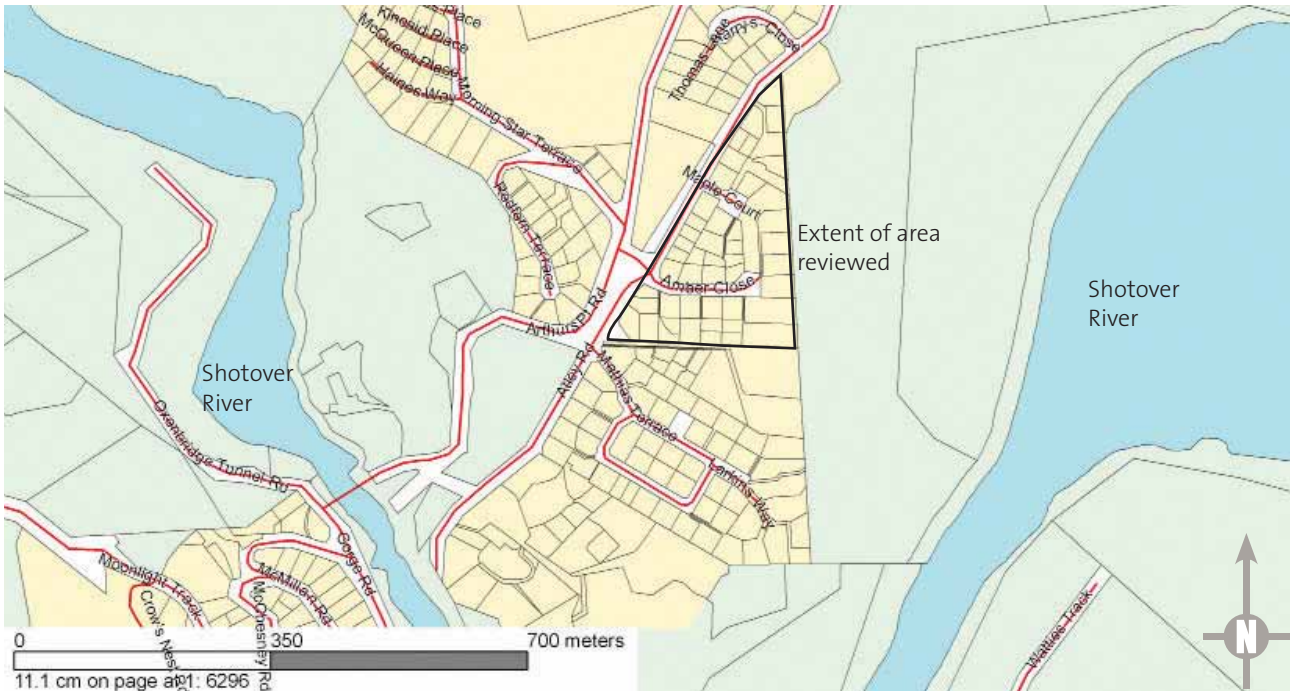
- Development on steep slopes dictates a particular road configuration that result in a more organic layout and less standardised building forms, as each lot presents its own individual design challenge.
- The open spaces and retention of natural features, together with a visual relationship to the landscape is important in integrating this development into its setting.
- The glimpse views of the lake and mountains are significant and create points of excitement between buildings.
- The apparent absence of road reserves (i.e. no front fences) establishes a good relationship between buildings and streets.
- Narrow private roads generally achieve a greater sense of enclosure of the street.

Site D – Arthur's Point, Queenstown

Introduction

Size: 2.6ha
Date of Resource Consent: 2002
Complete: Largely complete but there are a few vacant lots
Zoning: Residential (light yellow)

Location: Arthur's Point subdivision is approximately 6km from Queenstown Town Centre. It is located on a high terrace above the Shotover River and adjacent to other similar subdivisions.
Conditions: Atley Road (part), Maple Court and Amber Close were reviewed on a sunny mid winter cold morning.



Arthur's Point - Zoning Map

Arthur's Point - Aerial

Arthur's Point

Context

The subdivision is located on the northeast side of the Shotover Gorge along the road between Queenstown and Arrowtown. The bridge over the Shotover River is the main access road to Queenstown 6km away.

This subdivision is within the Arthur's Point settlement. It is accessed via Arthur's Point Road by a single entry road shared with neighbouring developments. Arthur's Point Road is shown in the photograph with the subdivision on the left.

INTEGRATION WITH BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- Houses on Atley Road the main spine road front onto the high timber fence of the motor camp.
- Level changes and boundary treatment result in a limited visual relationship between Arthur's Point Road and this subdivision.
- This area is surrounded by recent residential development. To the north along Arthur's Point Road lies an early stone cottage as shown in the photograph to the left.

INTEGRATION WITH THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- The site is located on a flat terrace beside a steep drop down to the Shotover River.
- It is surrounded by mountains on most sides, with the access road aligned with views down the valley.
- Views to the mountains are maintained throughout the scheme.
- The site is formerly farm land and contains a few existing trees.
- Views down to the river are generally privatised.

How successful does this subdivision **integrate** with its local context?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ● NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

This subdivision forms part of a linear expansion of the Arthur's Point settlement along the road to Queenstown. Its visual impact is limited to one public viewpoint and it sits comfortably on a natural terrace, without the need for substantial modifications to the existing landforms. The rating is reduced due to the lack of facilities (i.e. shops) for residents.

Arthur's Point

Urban Structure

Connectivity

STREETS

The site is served by a logical road hierarchy of Atley Road on the western boundary, cul-de-sacs and private roads. However, limited connections between internal roads reduces connectivity. The cul-de-sacs are linked by a greenway, but this connection does not provide a link to neighbouring subdivisions, or beyond.

STREET HIERARCHY

1. Spine Road (Atley Road)
   - Straight road
   - 12+m wide, 1 footpath
   - Not connected at north to Arthur's Point Road

2. Two Cul-de-sacs
   - Accessed off Atley Road
   - Circular turning heads
   - 8m wide road
   - One footpath

3. Private Link Road
   - Links Atley Road and Cul-de-sac
   - Ranges from 3-4m wide (under construction)

4. Private Right of Ways
   - Five private lanes off Cul-de-sacs
   - 8m wide
   - Shared space (no footpath)

OPEN SPACE

There is an attractive greenway (Murdock Park) which links the two cul-de-sacs and contains a playground and stormwater swales. This greenway is well overlooked by neighbouring houses and the private access road. The vegetation is currently undeveloped. It is the only public open space on the site. There is an informal pedestrian link from Atley Road to the Shotover River (photo to left). There are no other direct pedestrian links to public open spaces/ amenities in the area.

How successful is the **connectivity** through (and beyond) the site achieved using streets and open spaces?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ● LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

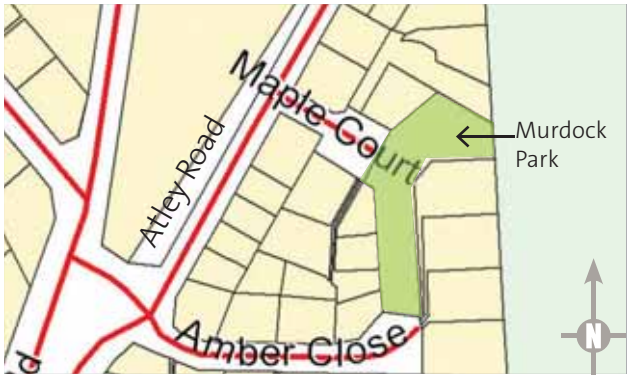
Connectivity could have been better if the greenway extended beyond this site to neighbouring subdivisions. In addition, there are limited connections between internal roads and cul-de-sacs within the development.

Arthur's Point

Urban Structure

Urban Grain

LOT DIVISION



The site is triangular and the road and lot layout generates a gradation of lot sizes from west to east. Of the lots within this subdivision, more units are accessed off private drives than public roads (21 units face a road, 26 a private drive). In all cases the lots fronting public spaces are accessed from private lanes.

The majority of lots are rectangular/nearly square in shape, with the narrowest width along the public frontage. Irregular shaped lots are internalised within the layout.

Size/Density
Larger lots located at the edge (views of river), with smaller lots nearer Atley Road. Some examples of re-subdivision.

Shape
Lots are generally deeper on their east-west axis, except where south facing on Amber Close.

Access/Frontage
Lots overlooking open spaces are accessed from private drives/ front access lane. Other lots fronted streets and lanes.

Variety
There is a reasonably wide range of lot sizes, which results in variety of house types and sizes.

LOT DEVELOPMENT

There remain a few lots that are undeveloped at the edge of the site. There is a range of lot sizes across the site, with some lots nearer the edge which have been further subdivided. This results in the appearance of greater site coverage and higher density in those areas.

On Atley Road the garages are generally located to the front of the lot (the sunny side). This may be in response to the less attractive view of the motor camp opposite.

Footprint Size/Coverage
There is evidence that some buildings maximised site coverage and were close to their lot boundaries.

Arrangement/Typology
Mostly detached dwellings, some were designed to appear as multiple buildings which lessens their visual dominance.

Street Frontage: Garage/Drive
On smaller lots garages appeared more dominant than on larger lots.

Climatic conditions
North-facing lots with aspects to Amber Close used private drives to access garages. This results in garage-free frontages.

Arthur's Point

Appearance (Outcomes)

Legibility

Arrival

The fencing at the entrance does not do the overall quality of the development justice. The fencing relates to the motor camp and the development of one lot at the entrance to the development. If another entrance occurred in the future (from the north), effort should be made to achieve better integration.

Navigation

It is difficult to differentiate between public and private roads; lamp posts, footpaths on public roads and some signage are the only clues. The road surface does not vary providing no definition between public and private roads. One private road links two public roads adding to the confusion.

Security

The greenway is wide with a clear view to destinations at either end. A central footpath is well overlooked by neighbouring dwellings and felt safe as a consequence.

Does this site achieve good **legibility**?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ● NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

The entrance is disappointing. It reduces the arrival experience and lacks integration with the surrounding subdivisions. Additionally, the lack of definition between private and public roads and uncertainty of their destinations also detract from the overall success of the scheme. However, the central greenway is a successful, safe connection between cul-de-sacs.

Scale

Typology

The buildings were predominately single-storey detached dwellings. Many dwellings were composed of multiple buildings linked together, resulting in a reduced scale, particularly on larger lots. The majority of two-storey dwellings are on larger blocks along the eastern boundary.

Buildings to Street

Buildings along most streets are of a low scale. On Amber Close garages are accessed off private drives, which helps to reduce the scale of dwellings. However, in other parts, such as Atley Road the scale of the dwellings is dominated by garaging and dwellings are occasionally hidden by fencing.

Buildings to Public Spaces

Along the greenway, on the western side, dwellings tend to be single-storey on small lots, and on the eastern side two-storey on larger lots. Dwellings and associated landscaping were at a scale which resulted in good passive surveillance of the street, without visual dominance. This makes the public space feel safe.

Is the **scale** of development appropriate to the local environment?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ● ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

The scale of the buildings within the scheme are considered appropriate to their immediate surroundings. Breaking down individual buildings into a number of smaller elements reduces the built scale. If dwellings on both sides of the greenway were two-storey with less dominant garaging/fencing this would make the development more successful.

Arthur's Point

Appearance (Outcomes)

Active Edges

Setbacks, Boundary Treatment and Landscaping

Generally the dwellings are located close to the road, with generally a 4-5m setback. The development exhibits a high degree of enclosure given the relationship of buildings with the street and through planting and fencing. Stormwater swales made use of the road reserve.

Front facade openings

Dwellings included a reasonable number of windows and front doors onto public streets which assists in passive surveillance and make the development more personable. In a few instances front doors were obscured by garages, planting and fences, as shown in the photograph to the left.

Garages

Garages occasionally dominated the street due to narrower lots along Atley Road and are often located forward of the dwelling. On other roads in the subdivision garages were generally not as dominant, in particular the north facing sunny side of Amber Close.

Orientation to streets and public spaces

Private gardens are often located to the side of the house and offered an additional active edge along the greenways and other public open spaces.

Does the layout of subdivision result in high degree of active edges to public areas?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ● LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

The garages along Atley Road and fencing of some lots reduced the overall success of achieving active edges within the subdivision. Excluding this aspect, the remainder of the development appears successful.

Enclosure

Cul-de-sac

The width of this road and road reserve significantly reduces the sense of enclosure of the street. When landscaping is fully established this may help to mitigate this effect.

Private Drive

This private drive is narrow and has the appearance of a shared surface. It has a good sense of enclosure due to reduced building setbacks and a variety of quality boundary treatments.

Does the subdivision successfully achieve good **enclosure**?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ● ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

The public roads and spaces are wide and are less successful in achieving enclosure of the street. However, better street enclosure is achieved by the narrow private drives, which create a better pedestrian-friendly and intimate street environment, although they are not part of the public realm.

Arthur's Point

Appearance (Outcomes)

Quality

Private Buildings

The majority of dwellings are individually designed (i.e. are not standardised building company designs), in particular the larger dwellings on bigger lots. This helps to create variety within the development. The quality is generally good and many include chimneys and local stone.

Private Lot Curtilage

A key characteristic of the scheme is the extensive planting of private gardens and the quality of fencing and boundary landscaping. There is evidence of some building control being exercised to ensure these outcomes.

Public Street Materials

Generally standard tarmac and concrete edging are used for roads. Flush road kerbs and drain covers within stormwater swales are incorporated into the road reserves and make use of otherwise under utilised land.

Public Landscape/ Open Space

Good quality landscaping, in particular of the playground and greenway contributes to the overall quality of the development.

Overall **quality** of subdivision?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ● ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

The quality of the materials used in the public and private realm is considered to be good and enhances the overall appearance of the scheme.

Character

Consistency Across Site

Besides the dwellings facing Atley Road, there is a reasonable level of cohesion given the quality of planting and public landscaping throughout the development. The absence of road kerbs assists with this.

Building Character

The emphasis of the development is on low-scale, simple built forms. It includes some modern designs and larger buildings, and as a consequence no overall building character is achieved. However, the use of timber and stone in dwellings provides some visual cohesion.

Appropriateness

The use of cul-de-sacs as a principle means of access is not normally encouraged. However, in this instances and given the wider context, sufficient pedestrian access is achieved. The character is, in general, small-scale and varied, offering a reasonably appropriate response to the site and context.

Does the subdivision establish a special **character** appropriate to its site?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ● LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

The quality of the materials and the consistent use of a number of landscaping elements across the site assists in creating an overall consistent character, which is considered appropriate in this location.

Arthur's Point

Overall Impressions of Subdivisions - Distinctiveness

The **greenway** incorporates stormwater swales, a path and play facilities and overall enhances connectivity.

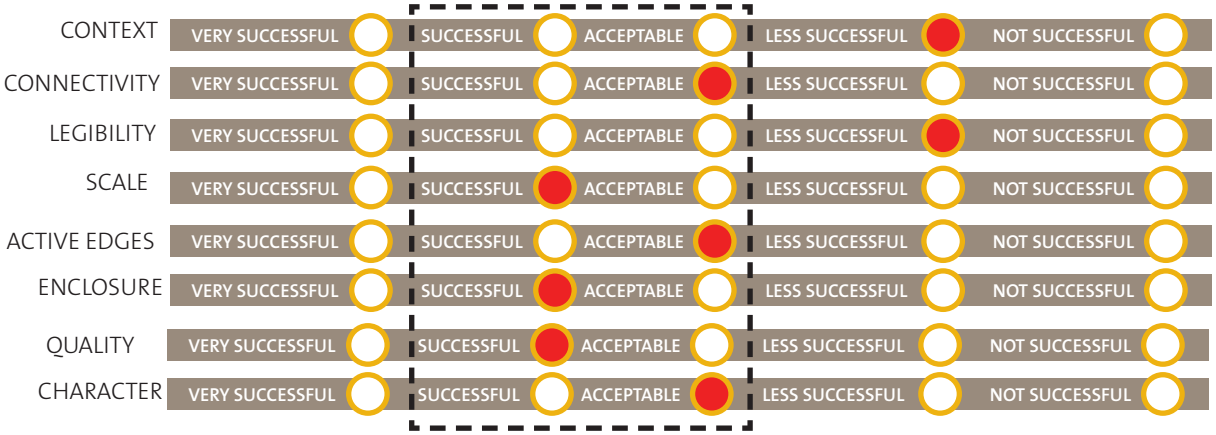
The use of grassed **swales** within the road reserve results in a treatment appropriate to the wider natural setting.

Garaging to the rear of dwellings accessed off private drives and dwellings fronting the street creates an active street frontage.

A sense of **enclosure** is achieved along the private drives as a result of planting and a narrow carriageway.

Overall Assessment

How successful is this subdivision overall when considering urban design criteria?



THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE AREAS AND WALKABILITY OF THIS SUBDIVISION IS SUCCESSFUL. THERE IS EVIDENCE OF COVENANTS WHICH ASSIST IN THE OVERALL QUALITY, ALTHOUGH SOME BOUNDARY TREATMENTS COULD BE IMPROVED.

Key Lessons

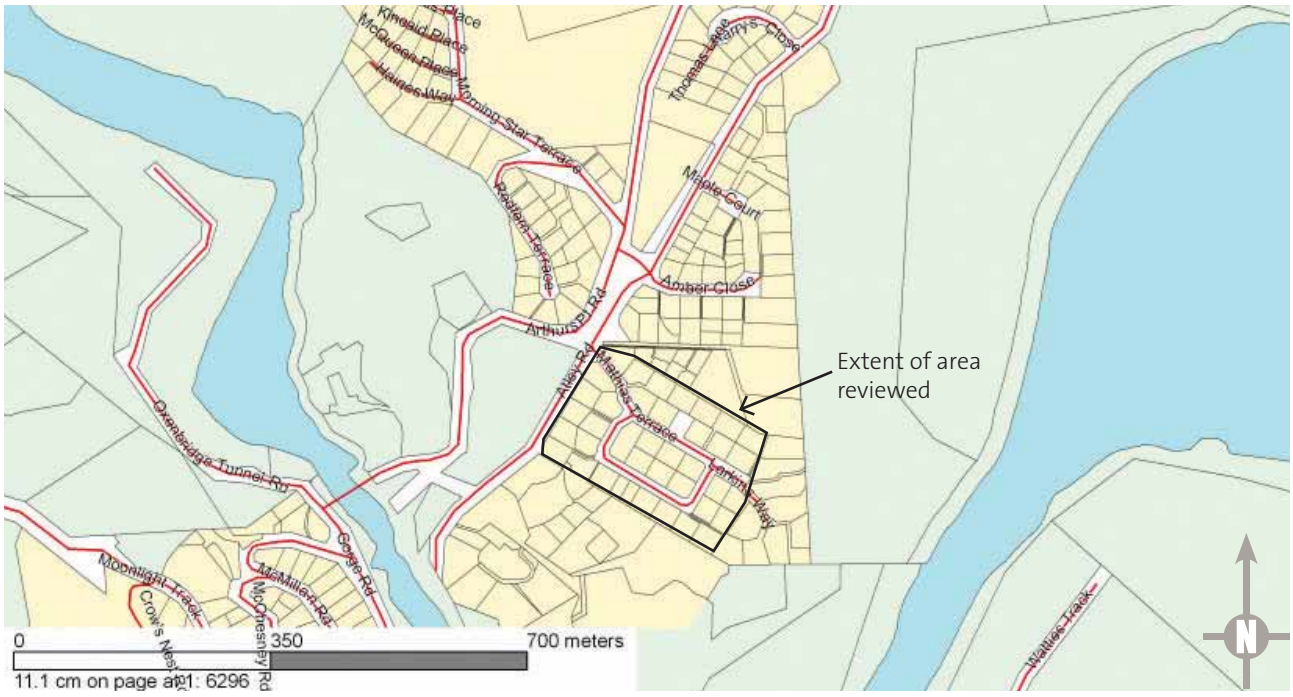
- The use of private drives (which act as public through roads) result in a better sense of enclosure and pedestrian scale than that achieved along some of the public roads.
- The greenway is successful as a result of incorporating a playground (a destination). It also includes stormwater facilities and an interesting footpath, enhancing the subdivisions overall connectivity.
- The use of swales within road reserves is attractive and helps integrate private and public landscapes.
- Private drives to the south of the east-west roads enables better residential frontage to the sunny north aspect.

Site E – Atley Downs

Introduction

Size: 1ha
Date of Resource Consent: 2002
Completed: The central sites are largely complete, some under construction. More vacant lots toward the southeast.
Zoning: Residential (light yellow)

Location: Atley Downs is a new subdivision adjacent to the Arthur's Point subdivision. It is approximately 6km from Queenstown Town Centre. It is located on a high terrace above the Shotover River.
Conditions: Mathias Terrace and Larkin Way (part) were reviewed on a sunny cold winter morning.



Atley Downs Zoning Map

Atley Downs Aerial

Atley Downs

Context

Atley Downs is located immediately south of the Arthur's Point subdivision (Site D). These subdivisions are located on a terrace above the Shotover River, on the northeast side of the Shotover Gorge and along the road between Queenstown and Arrowtown. The bridge over the Shotover River is the main access route to Queenstown 6km away.

This subdivision is within the Arthur's Point settlement. It is accessed via Arthur's Point Road by a single entry road shared by the neighbouring developments. The site has views of the surrounding mountains. Connections to the Shotover River are via Atley Road and an informal pathway opposite Harry's Close to the north. There are no direct connections to the river from this site.

INTEGRATION WITH BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- Development is a similar scale to the residential subdivisions to the south and west. The scheme west of Arthur's Point Road is shown.
- Immediately to the south of Atley Downs across the gorge lies part of the earlier settlement. This is a typical rural development of larger, irregular lots set within a wooded environment. It includes the former timber weatherboard farm buildings.

INTEGRATION WITH THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- The site is located on a flat terrace beside a steep drop down to the Shotover River.
- Views of the mountains are obtained from all parts of the site.
- There is little evidence of retained vegetation on the site, although there are existing trees at its south east edge, as shown in the image to the right.
- The central reserve varies in level and as a result it is unclear if this is a natural or man-made feature.

How successful does this subdivision **integrate** with its local context?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ● NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

This subdivision is located on a relatively flat terrace adjacent an existing settlement with limited facilities for residents (i.e. shops). Visually it is unobtrusive in the landscape. Links to the neighbouring subdivisions could be improved through pedestrian walkways.

Atley Downs

Urban Structure

Connectivity

STREETS

This subdivision has one access off Atley Road and no other external road connections. Atley Road links to Arthur's Point Road which connects Queenstown and Arrowtown. Mathias Terrace, a loop road, services most of the site with one short cul-de-sac off it. Larkins Way is a private drive and a number of smaller lanes off this provide access to back lots.

STREET HIERARCHY

1. Atley Road
   - Main Access Road
   - 8m carriageway
   - Footpath on one side

2. Mathias Terrace
   - 14m road reserve and 8m carriageway.
   - Loop Road
   - Footpaths on both sides

3. Larkins Way
   - Private Road
   - Footpath one side

4. Private Drives
   - 5m roadway
   - No footpaths

OPEN SPACE

There is one reserve within Atley Downs and it is bordered on three sides by Mathias Drive, with some dwellings on the eastern boundary. It varies in level and is grassed, with no formal activities or footpaths on it. Swales and footpaths within the landscaped road reserve result in a pleasant walking experience throughout the site. Further visual interest is created by a short cul-de-sac off Mathias Drive (photo to left) which is well landscaped.

How successful is the connectivity through (and beyond) the site achieved using streets and **open spaces**?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ● LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

Mathias Terrace is the primary access and provides adequate internal connections for a subdivision of this size. A pathway to adjacent developments (and facilities within the reserve such as play equipment) would enhance pedestrian connectivity.

Atley Downs

Urban Structure

Urban Grain

LOT DIVISION

On the flatter portion of the site, east of the central reserve, the lot sizes are generally even in shape and size, with wider frontages along the roadway. The lots which are closer to Atley Road are on a down-slope to the road and are accessed off private drives from Mathias Terrace with pedestrian connections to Atley Road. Some back lots to the north also require private drive access. The small courtyard off Mathias Terrace in the centre of the image above offers an alternative to a private driveway arrangement. The lots increase in size further east along Larkins Way.

Size/Density
The lots are generally approximately 1,000sqm in area. There is little evidence of further subdivision.

Shape
Due to the rectangular site, the majority of the lots are almost square in shape with the longer edges facing the road.

Access/Frontage
Most lots front roads. The lots on the western edge have road access to Mathias Terrace but front Atleys Road.

Variety/Variation
Further subdivision of one lot is evident (to create two even length road frontages).

LOT DEVELOPMENT

The development of the lots within Atley Downs generally results in mostly single-storey dwellings with large footprints, although there are a number of two-storey dwellings. There is a variety in the treatment of garages and their location. Mounding of the lot frontage and/or sides is evident, in particular along the northern extent of Mathias Terrace.

Footprint Size/Coverage
Dwellings and garages are generally large and cover the majority of lots, as seen on the aerial.

Arrangement/Typology
Predominantly single-storey dwellings, with some two-storey dwellings in the south east of the subdivision.

Street Frontage: Garage/Drive
Overall there is variety in how garages are designed. Some front the street and generally they are setback.

Solar Orientation
There is evidence that private open space is designed to favour the sunny side of dwellings using deep setbacks from the road edge on northern aspects.

Atley Downs

Appearance (Outcomes)

Legibility

Arrival

The entry to Atley Downs is marked by a rise in road level, a stone wall and metal signage. The paving used for footpaths also changes. As this part of the site forms part of a wider subdivision, this entry treatment might be more appropriate at the main entrance.

Navigation

The site is accessed by a rectangular loop road which links the majority of the site. Private drives extend from the corner bends of the road and effectively form private extensions to the loop, and in particular are used to access the sloped lots adjacent to Atley Road.

Security

There was no evidence of anti-social behaviour (i.e. graffiti or vandalism). The roads and lanes have good visibility and feel safe.

Does this site achieve good **legibility**?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ● ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

The grid layout of the subdivision is easy to navigate and there is a sense of safety and security.

Scale

Typology

In general, buildings are single-storey with chimneys or other rooftop features. Some dwellings at the southern edge are two-storey in height. Most dwellings have double garages and these are located in a variety of locations in relation to the dwelling (to the front, side, or behind).

Buildings to Street

The streets are wide but the footpaths and swales lessen the appearance of this. The dwellings are of a scale which help define the street edge. Some however are slightly elevated above the street.

Buildings to Public Spaces

The reserve is quite large and does not include any footpaths, seats, etc. Two adjacent buildings front this space. If there were two-storey buildings adjoining it this would achieve more achieve more effective enclosure of the space.

Is the **scale** of development appropriate to the local environment?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ● ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

The scale of buildings in relation to the street is generally appropriate to the development, although the dwellings adjacent to the reserve appear dwarfed beside this large space.

Atley Downs

Appearance (Outcomes)

Active Edges

Visibility

Fencing, mounding and slightly elevated lots limit the visibility of some dwellings from the street. When the mound planting is fully established this will further reduce visibility. Dwellings located adjoining the reserve have good visibility (it is notable that they have not fenced off their boundary to the reserve.

Front facade openings

The north facing dwellings in particular, have many windows and doors visible from the street. A number of dwellings have separate footpaths leading to the front door. However, front fences and mounding once again limit visibility of front facades in places and creates a feeling of separation.

Orientation/ proximity

The larger two-storey houses along the southern edge of the site sit further back from the road reserve than other dwellings. However, upper floor windows compensate for some loss of passive surveillance resulting from to generous front setback.

Garages

In a number of cases, garages are dominant elements when viewing dwellings from the street. However, this is not always the case. A couple of dwellings appear to have habitable rooms above the garage, which increases the number of windows overlooking the street and creation of an active frontage.

Does the layout of subdivision result in high degree of **active edges** to public areas?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ○ ACCEPTABLE ● LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

On balance, the extent of active edges within this scheme is acceptable, considering the number of lots with windows and doors facing the street in comparison to the number of sites which have high fences, mounding and concealed openings.

Enclosure

Taller building elements and slightly elevated buildings assist in creating a sense of enclosure to the street. Footpaths, swales and planting assists this, and will improve as the landscaping develops.

Some enclosure of the short cul-de-sac off Mathias Terrace is achieved given the taller building elements create a vertical impression, which balances out the width of the road.

Does the subdivision successfully achieve good **enclosure**?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ● ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

Despite the width of the road reserve, the height of the dwellings and the treatment of the roads results in definition of the street edge and a sense of enclosure. This is likely to improve when the landscaping matures.

Atley Downs

Appearance (Outcomes)

Quality

Private Buildings

Building materials appear to be of high quality and well maintained and the dwellings are also appear to have been individually designed.

Private Lot Curtilage

The quality of private planting is good (although it is not fully established). There is no evidence of a consistent approach to lot enclosure, which may have helped with strengthening the cohesiveness of the scheme. There is evidence of mounding along streets, which may be used instead of fencing.

Public Street Materials

The visual dominance of roads is broken up by the use of stone paving at crossing points. However, there is evidence of wear and tear and this detracts from the overall impression of this feature. The use of swales is more appropriate to this low density/rural setting.

Public Landscape/ Open Space

The quality of the swales, footpaths and planting within the road reserve is very good and adds to the overall impression of the scheme. However, the open space in comparison is bland given limited detailing and features and the appearances of a large grassed area.

Overall **quality** of subdivision?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ● ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

The overall impression of the quality of this subdivision is high and well maintained. If the large open space was further developed with play equipment or planting the quality of this scheme would be rated 'very successful'.

Character

Consistency Across Site

There is a consistency of building materials and forms in this subdivision which suggests that building controls may be in place. The overall impression of Atley Downs is of a reasonably consistent character.

Building Character

The overall design, use of natural materials and gables results in high quality, attractive buildings.

Appropriateness

Private and public landscaping along and adjoining the road reserve is appropriate to its setting and has an appearance of blending with the landscape. The reference to a grid layout reflects the development of other flat sites in Queenstown.

Does the subdivision establish a special **character** appropriate to its site?

VERY SUCCESSFUL ○ SUCCESSFUL ● ACCEPTABLE ○ LESS SUCCESSFUL ○ NOT SUCCESSFUL ○

The character of the Atley Downs subdivision is appropriate to its rural setting, incorporating the use of swales, landscaping and sympathetic building design and materials.

Atley Downs

Overall Impressions of Subdivisions - Distinctiveness

The post boxes on Atley Road are a unique feature of the site and result in a memorable place.

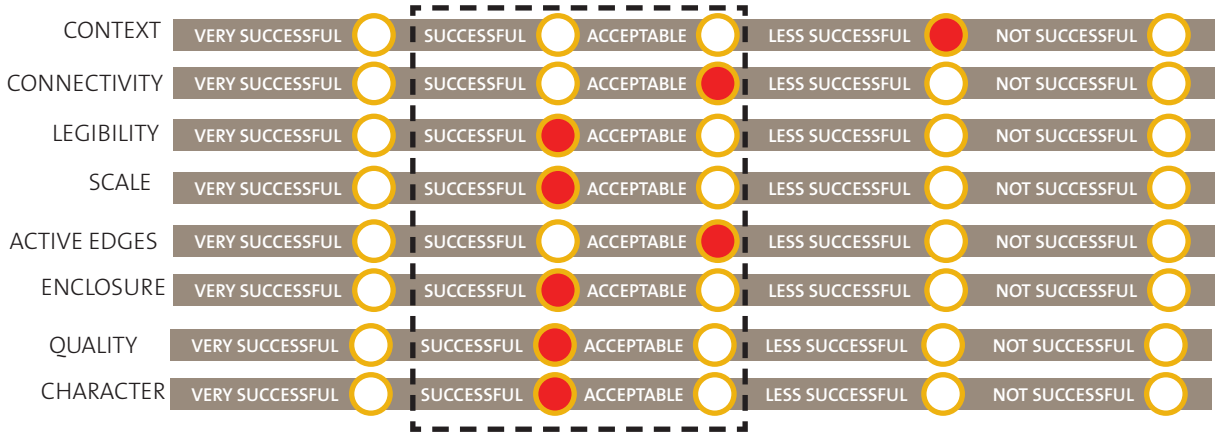
Swales used within this development are appropriate to the rural setting and the use of grey schist reflects the colours of the surrounding mountains.

The use of a stone wall at the entrance with planting reflects the rural setting.

The cul-de-sac achieves a level of creativity and is well overlooked and cohesive given it incorporates informality and a shared space design approach.

Overall Assessment

How successful is this subdivision overall when considering urban design criteria?



THIS QUALITY OF THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE AREAS OF THIS SUBDIVISION IS SUCCESSFUL. THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT BUILDING CONTROL COVENANTS MAY HAVE BEEN IN PLACE TO ASSIST IN THE OVERALL QUALITY.

Key Lessons

- The road reserve treatment and taller elements on buildings result in definition of the street, which helps mitigate some of the effects of the wide road.
- The use of swales within road reserves is attractive and helps integrate the private and public landscapes.
- The consistent use of similar building materials and apparent building controls results in an overall character which is attractive.
- The use of a short cul-de-sac which adopts an informal shared space design approach instead of a private road to achieve back lot access and increase road frontage is commendable.

Conclusion

The purpose of this review is to assess some typical subdivisions in relation to current urban design best practice. The findings of this report may assist QLDC in achieving better urban design outcomes in future subdivisions. It is important to note that the majority of the schemes reviewed were consented and commenced before the launch of the Urban Design Protocol in 2005. Therefore, a general awareness of essential urban design qualities was unlikely at the time in which they were designed.

The key findings and overall assessment of each subdivision are not compared in this report. However, a number of the key lessons learned are outlined below in relation to each of the urban design criteria.

Urban Design Criteria - Key Lessons

Context

- All schemes reviewed were on greenfield sites.
- The schemes considered more successful were generally those located close to existing communities, built areas, key routes or services.
- The natural landscape setting is important and the retention of natural features, i.e. stream, trees, slopes, makes a real difference to the overall quality.

Connectivity

- Most sites were well connected externally for vehicular traffic.
- A hierarchy of roads was not always clear on site.
- Road arrangements which are not dictated by slopes vary significantly between schemes.
- All schemes provided open spaces, but these varied in scale, level of provision and quality of connections.
- The safety and design of pedestrian connections affected the overall connectivity of the subdivisions.

Legibility

- Curved and apparently arbitrary road alignments can be confusing.
- There were few landmark buildings or central areas of focus to aid navigation Greater reliance should be made of natural features (i.e. distant views).
- Cul-de-sacs were mostly short, aligned with open spaces and had footpath connections to other destinations.
- Most developments achieved a sense of arrival, though few had a central focus determined by layout or form.

Scale

- The majority of buildings comprised detached single-storey dwellings on flat sites or two to three-storey on sloping sites.
- The larger lots tended to adjoin open spaces or site boundaries, rather than streets.
- Some larger lots have been further subdivided and this can have a negative effect on the overall visual coherence.
- Large scale open spaces and wide roads appear larger when bounded by single-storey dwellings.
- Road reserves are an under-utilised resource. However, swales within the road reserve were successful on some sites.
- There was insufficient provision of larger buildings to define and enclose public areas.

Active Edges

- Dwellings predominantly fronted streets, but a large number also were located within rear lot developments. This reduces the ability to create active streets and also resulting in deep blocks.
- Street activity is lessened by wide lot street frontages.
- There is a tendency for garages to dominate street frontages. However, there is more creativity in garage and parking solutions on steeper slopes.
- Passive surveillance is reduced by frontage enclosure (i.e. fences, walls), planting and level changes.

Enclosure

- The sense of enclosure is generally weak due to the low ratio of building height to road width/open space (roads tend to be too wide).
- Occasionally groupings of taller buildings and careful use of landscape features assisted in creating some definition to street edges and a sense of enclosure.
- In places, public and private planting and some well designed boundary fencing assisted in forming an edge to the street.
- Narrower private roads often resulted in a better sense of enclosure than wider public roads.

Quality

- Predominantly new schemes were reviewed, resulting in a generally good overall building appearance.
- Common road materials results in some monotony and there was some surface materials degradation.

Conclusion

- Good quality public landscaping and private gardens are important factors in achieving cohesion and visual quality.

Character

- Varied building character reduced an appearance of regular forms, but individual designs added interest.
- Some schemes appeared to be enhanced by building controls on colour and materials (i.e. use of local stone).
- Some formal road layouts were less successful due to lack of appropriate supporting building scale and location.

Creativity

- There was little evidence of creativity in road design and urban grain.
- Lot shapes appeared to be designed to achieve uniform lot sizes rather than creating an attractive three-dimensional built outcome, by establishing enclosure, street edges, focus on corners or good edges to open spaces.
- The lack of a comprehensive relationship between built form and roads resulted in a lack of urban structure within developments.

Local Distinctiveness

- There was a generally a low response to local character. The schemes which had more local distinctiveness tended to succeed in more criteria. Some schemes demonstrated good use of local materials in building and landscape treatment (i.e. stone and local plant varieties).
- The scale of development, especially roads, sometimes compromised the ability to respond to local character.
- Standardised roading arrangements reduced local distinctiveness.