

**QLDC Council**  
**30 October 2014**

**Report for Agenda Item: 5**

**Department:**

**Planning and Infrastructure**

**5. QLDC Lead Policy – Housing Accord and Special Housing Areas**

**Purpose**

- 1 To present the QLDC Lead Policy – Housing Accord and Special Housing Areas for Council's approval.

**Recommendation**

- 2 *That Council:*
  - a. **Approve** the QLDC Lead Policy – Housing Accord and Special Housing Areas.
  - b. **Agree** to proceed with community engagement on Special Housing Areas in accordance with the Lead Policy.

Prepared by:



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14/10/2014

Reviewed and Authorised by:



Marc Bretherton  
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14/10/2014

**Background**

- 3 At its meeting on 28 August 2014 Council approved the Queenstown Lakes Housing Accord for submission to the Minister of Housing.
- 4 At the time of writing, the Housing Accord had not yet been signed by the Minister and the Mayor.
- 5 A resolution of the 28 August 2014 meeting was that staff would prepare a 'QLDC Lead Policy – Housing Accord and Special Housing Areas' ('the Lead Policy') for consideration at this meeting.

## Comment

- 6 The Lead Policy guides Council's approach to Special Housing Areas ('SHAs'). It follows the approach of other local authorities such as Tauranga City Council that have developed a Lead Policy to ensure the process of establishing and administering SHAs is transparent and consistent.
- 7 The Lead Policy cannot contradict any of the statutory obligations and requirements of the Housing Accords and Special Housing Areas Act 2013 ('HASHA'). It reiterates some of the requirements of HASHA and builds on them, and sets parameters around non-statutory approaches such as community engagement.
- 8 The key elements that are set out in the Lead Policy are:
  - Criteria for consideration of land / sites as potential SHAs
  - Expectations and parameters around community engagement and quality of housing development
  - Criteria that might be applied to qualifying developments within SHAs, in terms of requirements around the minimum provision of smaller allotments / dwellings.
- 9 A key element of the Lead Policy is seeking alignment with the strategic and residential policy considerations of the District Plan review. In particular, the Strategic Directions chapter that was accepted by Council in July 2014 sets out a clear and unambiguous direction of containing urban growth. While the Lead Policy does not preclude consideration of land for SHAs in existing rural areas, a strong steer is given towards SHAs that better fit Council's compact urban development strategic direction.
- 10 Another important and related element of the Lead Policy relates to HASHA's requirement for potential SHAs to be able to demonstrate that sufficient infrastructure capacity is available to service development. The Lead Policy builds on the general statements within the legislation to provide more specific guidance on what this means for QLDC.
- 11 Setting parameters around the community engagement process on SHAs is also central to the Lead Policy. Key elements include:
  - Community engagement to commence in November 2014. Expressions of Interest (EOIs) sought from Landowners / developers in terms of specific land parcels to be considered for SHAs, with the EOIs to be assessed against the criteria set out in Section 5.2 of the Lead Policy
  - More general feedback sought from the community regarding views on housing (issues and potential policy responses) in the same community engagement process.
- 12 Section 5.5 of the Lead Policy sets parameters with regard to the process of recommending SHAs to the Minister of Housing. Importantly, final recommendations on SHAs will need to be formally reported to Council and the Council must resolve to recommend the SHAs to the Minister.

- 13 Finally, the Lead Policy also expresses some aspirational goals, one of which is the delivery of housing which delivers higher environmental performance. These goals are not legally binding due to statutory limitations on what Council can mandate in SHAs, but are considered to be important as a means of setting Council expectations for housing stock ultimately achieved via this process. These goals will be a matter for discussion in each case with would-be SHA developers. As foreshadowed in the draft residential policy of the District Plan review, potential incentives (such as extra density for higher environmental performance) are also a matter for discussion.

## **Financial Implications**

- 14 There are no direct budgetary or cost implications resulting from this particular decision. However it is noted that the 2014/15 budgets did not contemplate a Housing Accord as a workstream for the Planning Policy unit, and accordingly, there is no associated budget for such works. The Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment (MBIE) has signalled that it will consider providing Council with some consultant resource to help establish and manage processes around SHAs. The details of this relationship are yet to be finalised.

## **Local Government Act 2002 Purpose Provisions**

- 15 The proposed Lead Policy is considered to be consistent with the LGA purpose provisions (ss10, 11, 11A) summarised as:
- Activity (local democracy, infrastructure, local public services or performance of regulatory functions);
  - Quality (efficient, effective and appropriate to present and future circumstances); and, or
  - Economic (most cost-effective for households and businesses).
- 16 The development of a Lead Policy is consistent with democratic local decision making. The Lead Policy sets clear and transparent approaches to considering and establishing SHAs, and also sets out parameters for community engagement.

## **Council Policies**

- 17 The following Council Policies were considered:
- Policy on Significance. The matter is not considered to be significant as the Lead Policy is a non-statutory document that guides Council process.
- 18 No other policies are considered to be relevant. However it is noted that the Council will continue to align its consideration of SHAs with the District Plan Review.

## **Consultation**

- 19 MBIE officials have been consulted with on the development of the Lead Policy.

20 Community engagement on SHAs will commence in November 2014.

**Publicity**

21 A media statement and / or public communication will be prepared for the commencement of community engagement.

**Attachments**

A QLDC Lead Policy - Housing Accord and Special Housing Areas