

**BEFORE THE QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**IN THE MATTER**

of the Resource Management Act 1991

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER**

Plan Change 50 (Queenstown Town Centre Zone  
Extension) to the Queenstown Lakes District Plan

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**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF DENIS RALPH MANDER**

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## **1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 My evidence provides background on the development of the Queenstown town centre transport strategy, which in turn is referred to in Mr. Don McKenzie's evidence. I confirm that the development of the town centre strategy is presently underway and that a draft strategy is expected to be reported to Council in February 2015.
- 1.2 I anticipate that in line with recent Council decisions on the Inner Links project, a key direction of the strategy will be the proposal of measures aimed at encouraging significantly greater use of cycling, walking and public transport for trips to and through the town centre.
- 1.3 Plan Change 50's approach to traffic management and the encouragement of other modes of transport is entirely consistent with this broader Council strategy.

## **2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 My name is Denis Ralph Mander. I am the Transport Policy and Stakeholder Manager at Queenstown Lakes District Council where I have worked since January 2007. Prior to being appointed to my current position in October 2013 I was the Council's Transport Manager (three years) and Transport Planning Manager (four years).
- 2.2 Prior to joining Queenstown Lakes District Council I held transport related positions with the Ministry of Transport (four years), Auckland Regional Authority/Auckland Regional Council (four years) and Auckland City Council (fifteen years).
- 2.3 I have a Bachelor of Town Planning from the University of Auckland and a Bachelor of Arts(Hons)(Geography) obtained from Victoria University of Wellington.
- 2.4 In my current role I am responsible for leading reviews of the Council's transport strategies. These reviews follow NZ Transport Agency business case process which encourages local authorities to focus their efforts on key problem areas, rather than necessarily embarking on comprehensive transport strategies as was done in the past. Accordingly, three initiatives for the review of the Wanaka and Wakatipu Transport Strategies are presently underway; for Queenstown Town Centre, the Frankton Flats and Wanaka.
- 2.5 Although I am a Council employee, rather than an independent expert, I have read the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses outlined in the Environment Court's Consolidated Practice Note and have complied with it in preparing this evidence. I also agree to follow the Code when presenting evidence to the Council. I confirm that the issues addressed in this brief of evidence are within my area of expertise and that I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from my opinions.

### 3 SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

- 3.1 In my evidence I describe the background and the Queenstown Town Centre Transport Strategy, which is presently being developed and, in so doing, I provide context for Mr. McKenzie's transport evidence.

#### THE QUEENSTOWN TOWN CENTRE TRANSPORT STRATEGY

- 3.2 The Council's commitment to producing a transport strategy for the Queenstown Town Centre was made in June this year when the Inner Links project was reported back to Council.
- 3.3 By way of background, the most recent phase of Inner Links project was undertaken in 2013/14. It is a proposal for the construction of an arterial road around the periphery of the town centre. Coming after a scoping report undertaken in 2007-2008, the work undertaken last year provided a business case that gave detail around design and timing of stages 1 and 2 of the project. (Stage 1 of Inner Links is to be a road between Frankton Road and Gorge Road, by way of Melbourne and Henry Streets. Stage 2 of Inner Links is to be a road between Gorge Road and Man Streets.)
- 3.4 The technical analysis for the project highlighted opportunities to delay construction by some years if traffic growth could be diverted into alternative modes (i.e. cycling, walking and public transport). As stated in the report to Council:

*"Traffic modelling undertaken for the project shows that if we can divert roughly a fifth of projected traffic into public transport, cycling and walking, this will be enough to keep traffic flowing in peak times and put off the time when construction of the new roading is needed. Importantly this could put back construction of Stage 1 of the project (Melbourne – Henry Street link) 15-20 years with construction of Stage 2 Henry Street to Man Street link commencing after 2040."*

- 3.5 I note that the traffic modelling undertaken for the Inner Links project is the same that was used by the Traffic Design Group for its work on this plan change.
- 3.6 Accordingly at its June 2014 meeting Council resolved to:
- a. Agree in principle, subject to further work, that planning for Inner Links roading proposals is progressed alongside travel demand management measures for improving town centre access while deferring the need for road construction beyond 2018.
  - b. Direct the Planning and Infrastructure Group to report to the Council on the proposed town centre transport strategy by February 2015.
- 3.7 The Council also made resolutions relating to the design of the road and protection of the route. A full copy of the resolution is attached to my evidence.
- 3.8 The Town Centre transport strategy sought by Council is presently being developed. Governance of the project is being provided by a group comprising representatives from Council, Otago Regional Council, NZ Transport Agency, the Queenstown Chamber of Commerce, Destination Queenstown and the district's main urban bus operator, Connectabus.

- 3.9 It follows from the Council's resolutions that a key direction of the transport strategy work is the development of measures that will encourage a significant shift of transport use towards cycling, walking and public transport. This will need to include the management of parking in support of this mode shift.
- 3.10 I anticipate that the 'proposed town centre transport strategy' referred to in the resolution will be a draft that will be subject to public consultation, and that a final strategy will be adopted by Council before the end of June 2015.

#### **4 SUBMISSIONS**

- 4.1 I wish to comment on aspects of the submission made by the Otago Regional Council.
- 4.2 In its submission (paragraph 5) the Regional Council makes reference to the preparation of 'the town structure plan'. The submission then seeks integration of transport business planning with the development of the structure plan (paragraph 5), and the review of the parking pricing and supply before or during the preparation of the structure plan.
- 4.3 The Regional Council seeks that the Plan Change integrates with the wider strategies Council is pursuing through the development of its proposed town centre transport strategy. I am confident that this is the case. As set out above, encouraging a shift towards the use of alternatives to the single occupant car is a key component of the strategy that Council is presently developing. The Plan change provisions seek to achieve this end also, and will support the Council's ambitions in this regard.
- 4.4 In addition, the wider expression of these matters in a District Plan sense will be completed by the District Plan review, which is due for notification in May 2015.

#### **5 CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 The Council is presently committed to completing a draft town centre transport strategy by February 2015. This strategy is to report back a programme of transport demand measures aimed at creating the transport mode shift necessary to delay the need for construction of the Inner Links road project beyond 2018. As such it is expected that it will comprise a programme of measures including parking management and public transport improvements.
- 5.2 Plan Change 50's provisions are consistent with that ambition.

**Dated** 10<sup>th</sup> November 2014

**Attachment – Excerpt from Queenstown Lakes District Council's Minutes of Council meeting held on 26 June 2014.**

**Inner Links – Approval of a Preferred Option**

On the motion of Councillors Perkins and MacLeod it was resolved that the Council:

- a. Agree in principle, subject to further work, that planning for Inner Links roading proposals is progressed alongside travel demand management measures for improving town centre access while deferring the need for road construction beyond 2018.
- b. Direct the Planning and Infrastructure Group to report to the Council on the proposed town centre transport strategy by February 2015.
- c. Approve the Inner Links project design comprising the following design elements
  - i. Henry Street – Man Street link to follow the direct alignment
  - ii. 12.5% gradient on Melbourne Street – Henry Street link
  - iii. Maintain side street connection between Melbourne Street – Henry Street link and Sydney Street, Beetham Street (upper section), Ballarat Street (lower section)
  - iv. Henry Street/ Shotover Street /Gorge Road intersection to be signalised and realigned to southern location option.
  - v. Frankton Road /Melbourne Street intersection to be design as a t-intersection with priority movement between the northern section of Frankton Road and Melbourne Street.
- d. Direct Planning and Infrastructure Group to prepare by February 2015, in consultation with affected landowners, a property plan for the protection of the Melbourne Street – Henry Street and the Henry Street – Man Street sections of the Inner Links route.