

Submission on Plan Change 50

1. My name is Johnny Stevenson; I am a director of Memorial Property Limited
2. I have been in businesses in Queenstown for 20 years.
3. I am not involved in any land in the Plan change 50 area.
4. I am involved in a company in Queenstown that has property in the CBD but my motivation is that it is a rushed Plan Change in isolation to the existing town and I have concerns about the rate payers assets.
5. Because of the sheer number of issues contained in the Proposed Plan Change, the greater public and rate payers have little to no comprehension of the changes proposed and the effects of those changes. Indeed it is very difficult to have a conversation about any one particular element of the proposed changes. Add to this some of the proposed rationales on why we need these changes and with outcomes that appear completely contrary in many cases. I am not against all aspects of the plan, it's just that on the 12th September PC50 was catapulted on to the scene; it is now the 19th November and it is in a hearing (a little over two months for something that proposes to double the current size of the current Town Centre Zone) Queenstown has been the subject of some very good stewardship and vision from the forefathers over the previous 150 years it has evolved.
6. On Monday I attended a few hours of presentations. There were two things for me that paraphrased this whole initiative, and I'm not meaning to pick on these people but it is representative of how far removed from the local community and rate payers this is; firstly the presenter did not know if the cemetery is still in use, despite the council advertising plots and indeed planning to extend it and secondly the planner referring to the Bay as Queenstown Basin but to be fair he seemed to have only had the opportunity to familiarise himself on the Sunday prior.

7. In regard to Plan change 50 I have 5 Points I would like to have considered in any assessment:

- a. **Growth:** this is **not** demand Growth; this is "zone it and they will come". Previous District plans of 2007 & 2012 have identified growth areas with initially health and education overlays. Surely these were the areas of desired development. The simple rezoning will not increase the land value if that is in fact a goal. At the very least rezone a corridor for example Breacon Street, for the uses desired. There are sites in Queenstown still undeveloped because it is not economic to do so, there is a surplus of office space so who is this town centre growth for?
- b. **Rate Payers Money;** recently I attended a meeting with a council employee re the replacement of rotting decking timber on road reserve, the roading officer said the council has no money, this has been very successfully communicated to all divisions and staff and yet when I see the selection of hire guns here and see very significant money having been spent. Last month a meeting was called inviting Retailers, Food and Beverage Owners, Property owners and corporate's whom all pay rates in the CBD to a meeting with a view to forming a Business Improvement Group. It was very well attended with 60 attendees electing to raise \$ 70,000 through voluntary membership to employ a town centre manager. Prior to this a Downtown Revitalisation Survey was conducted with 191 respondents outlining their concerns on what wasn't happening; they were Traffic, Parking, Rent, Streetscape. Not one respondent suggested doubling the town centre zone and there was no real mention of the convention centre as the immediate problem (I have a copy of the Report)
Where is the mandate for this to throw all resources at this one initiative?
What are the motivations and whose are they?
- c. **Frankton;** there is a bit of irony here as competing with Frankton seems to be some of the motivation on why we need Plan Change 50. Frankton as we see it is the result of some bad planning and ill-founded decisions in the past. However we have Frankton and it needs to be

considered in consideration with Queenstown. It is not Alexandra and it is a part of the basin but doubling the Town Centre Zone as one aspect of Plan Change 50 to somehow counteract planning decisions made 10 years ago seems flawed.

- d. **Convention Centre:** certainly the majority of Business people want a Convention Centre but not at any cost. I don't think anyone would disagree that at very best a convention centre will break even. As a rate payer there are two things that cannot happen; the Council cannot build it and the Council cannot run it. I'm not saying they should not be involved but if a Convention Centre is a break even enterprise every effort must be made to minimise the risks and maximise success. I have real concerns with the design. At the designs inaugural launch to the public its initial views of some of its end users (the staging companies) were not positive and clearly the architects had not thought about extending it in the future as they had no answer other than knock half it down. As architects they seemed overly concerned with its ascetic design than functionality. The proposed location is a risk. It is a steady 15 minute walk up hill and I am concerned this will mean buses and/or taxis from hotels. There has been a lot of work done on other locations nearer to the town centre and these appear to have been dismissed out of hand. As far as a commercial precinct springing up around it, this will just not be viable for tenants or developers we may as well use the CBD we have or a slightly amended zone on a corridor to the convention centre on another site.
- e. **Traffic;** this is my main concern. In a supposed effort to protect and rejuvenate Queenstown we choke it off through traffic congestion. There are many times now that the traffic network reaches more than capacity. The goal may well be to have an attractive and vibrant town but you simply cannot have a plan change to this extent, leapfrogging all the infrastructure requirements like roading and parking, You are simply going to end up with a lot of disgruntled & angry people. There is already a strong local ethos **not** to go to Queenstown, you can go to a barbeque in Arrowtown and hear people say "What's happening in Queenstown I haven't been there for about 3 months." I do not doubt

Traffic Design Groups credentials but clearly they simply do not drive to and from work or have been here at any busy holiday periods as we quite often have grid lock in town. As a general comment the witness's evidence seem to reflect an approach of "we are doing this, can you write a report around it"

The Frankton Road already exceeds capacity according to Transit and we have one main arterial route into town which runs into a series of roundabouts. These run at capacity and even if they had a chance of working we have strategically placed pedestrian crossings 4 metres before them just to ensure they don't.

Plan Change 50 just ignores the traffic and I know the CEO feels Frankton Road is Transits' problem and that if it gets bad enough people will change to buses. As Mr Kelly's evidence points out bus patronage isn't improving and guess what? The buses are crawling long Frankton Road bumper to bumper with everyone else.

Plan the infrastructure first then stage the development to match it. We would never build the building and then go, right how do we deal with Storm water, telecoms, sewerage, water and parking. What is the first thing that happens in a new subdivision? Services and Roding!

We have traffic problems now. You cannot add this level of development, not implement the roading plan ahead of the development, say the main road in and through the town is someone else's problem and then expect it to work.

Summary.

I am certainly not anti-development and on the whole I agree with the stated goals and objectives but this is too rushed. A 30 year plan implemented in 2 months threatens to act against the very situation it is promoted to create; an Active and Vibrant Town Centre.