

BEFORE THE QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT COUNCIL

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER OF Plan Change 50 to the Queenstown Lakes District Plan

QUEENSTOWN TOWN CENTRE EXTENSION

ALLAN HUNTINGTON

1. My name is Allan Huntington . I qualified B. Arch (hons) in 1985 and I have had my own architectural practice in Queenstown since 1997 specialises in high density residential and commercial development .
2. I am not directly affected by the PC50 or have any commercial interests in regards PC50 .
3. My main concern is the lack of consideration within PC50 regarding the loss of residential land adjacent the town centre . My emphasis is on the Lakeview sub zone which I consider is not required for any town centre expansion.

QUEENSTOWN TOWN CENTRE CAPACITY

4. There is a presumption that Queenstown Centre Zone is presently running at capacity and there is no analysis of what growth can be absorbed within the existing Town Centre. While I have no experience in these assessments cross referencing to other indicators would be useful- such as

Pedestrian Counts- are they high or low

Comparative analysis with similar resort towns on capacity and tourist numbers

Canvassing existing businesses on their existing capacity and capacity for growth

Assessment of the current mix and suitability of retail business

I believe a wider analysis would show that Queenstown Town Centre Zone has substantial capacity for growth within the existing built space.

5. Furthermore no capacity issues were identified in the stake holders consultation Miller McDermot report section 4.2.2 . In fact the comment was that in regards to visitor accommodation the town had excess capacity at present
6. While the centre of Queenstown has a vibrant business heart I have observed that the peripheral lower Shotover Beach \Streets, Church and Earl Streets have low foot traffic and some of these older areas are looking run down and in need of rejuvenation.
7. The QLDC analysis indicates that developers/land owners are not proposing future development in the Town Centre. The developers negative position is quite understandable as we are still suffering the effects of the GFC and the high NZ dollar with reduced tourist spending. A very narrow snapshot has been taken of developers intentions.

8. Also the response of developers and land owners that they are not proposing any development in the near future is an obvious indicator that the existing commercial space is not running at capacity and there is spare capacity within the existing built floor area.
9. There are still substantial redevelopment opportunities within lower Beach Street and Shotover Street as well as new commercial areas such as the Henry Street precinct. Potentially Brecon, Isle, and Hay Streets could also be considered along with Gorge Road and Robins Roads as another area for long term growth.

Lakeview is not required for Town Centre expansion.

COMMERCIAL

10. I would question the viability of retail outside the existing town centre and its success. The existing Town Centre has a uniqueness that is a mix of new and old and is compact and vital. The Lakeview land development and convention centre is geographically isolated from the down town by distance, elevation and a main traffic thoroughfare (Man Street) and it will be difficult to draw people to Lakeview.
11. As an example when the Steamer Wharf was first developed the majority of tenancies were direct retail but it was found that shoppers would not extend themselves the 125m metres across Earnslaw Park. The 500m to Lakeview seems very distant.
12. There is a risk that developers may favour cheaper or more greenfield land for property development over upgrading or redevelopment of the existing Town Centre. PC50 expansion to Lakeview may dilute the Town Centre and weaken the existing retail. There is a high risk that Lakeview will slow the rejuvenation and vibrancy of the existing Town Centre.
13. The Convention centre, commercial and visitor accommodation on Lakeview diminish the opportunities for suitable long term residential population close to the Town Centre. The noise, traffic, smell and Queenstowns late night revelry is not suitable for a well balanced mix of residential population.

Requiring owners to close up residences and put on the ventilation system, as proposed in Plan Change 50 is not an appropriate method for resolving these negative affects. Mechanical ventilation as a mitigation measure may be suitable for visitor accommodation but High Density living needs to extend living areas to decks and other outdoor living spaces and for the residents not to feel cooped up inside.

Residential activity is clearly treated as secondary to the commercial activities of PC50

CONVENTION CENTRE

14. PC50 has many references to a Convention Centre to Lakeview but the section 41 report advises that the reasons for this location are elsewhere. Unfortunately there is nothing in the public domain on the Lakeview location except that the site is preferred by QLDC as the site has a good view and a sunny location. While the convention Centre forms a large component of PC50, QLDCs reasoning for the Lakeview location is weak.
15. There are alternate locations on QLDC land for a convention centre. Such as the
Ballarat Street Carpark
Boundary street Carpark

16. QLDC has not as yet confirmed the location of the convention centre and its inclusion within PC50 may very well influence Lakeview as the only location and steer away from more appropriate location options.
17. The proposed Convention Centre location is on the prime land with the best views to Lake Wakatipu. A conference facility is generally inward looking and requires a lot of carpark. This is not the best use of the proposed site. The land should be left for High Density residential that would be able to enjoy amenity of the sunniest part of the site and outstanding outlook.
18. A Conference Centre should be located closer to the Town Centre on the Boundary Road carpark or the Ballarat carpark area. These locations would be more suited and allow any economic benefit to be directly associated with the existing town centre businesses.
19. If the reasons for the convention centre and commercial activity on Lakeview are strong they can be dealt with outside PC50 and at the very least the convention centre and Lakeview site should be removed from PC50.

HEIGHT

20. I am in agreement with a height increase for high density residential development on the Lakeview site but I would propose a 10m maximum with a 2.0m roof form bonus. Residential activity does not require the 4.5m lower stud height that a commercial building may require. A 10m height would be sufficient for a three storey construction on flattish land and the increase in height creates a much better utilisation of the land resource.

LAKEVIEW RESIDENTIAL

21. There is enormous opportunity to develop Lakeview and adjacent land for residential purposes. Lakeview is centrally located, flat and easy to develop. Lakeview land should be used for Queenstown's expanding population growth not for commercial activity and visitor accommodation.
22. PC50s analysis of Lakeview site for residential development is at the very low end of the sites potential. Presently the land is zoned High Density Residential sub zone A which has the highest residential development potential. Building coverage is much higher at 65% of site area, building foot print is greater etc. PC50s estimation of 185 residences for Lakeview is substantially lower than the lands potential.

Accordingly PC50s Assessment of Effects is incorrect and the proposed plan change does not increase the number of residential units available but decreases the residential potential substantially.

23. With an increase in maximum height to three stories there is potential for 500-600 residential units or 1500-1800 residents. This number of people will have a profound influence on the vitality and maintenance of Queenstown as the principal centre for the region. The economic impact of this number of residents adjacent the Town Centre would be substantial. Along with the positive environmental outcomes of reduced traffic and reducing subdivision in rural areas.

24. See attached Plan PC/30Lakeview Residential Concept Plan

The plan has been developed to indicate the potential of the site for residential development and is based on a 10-12m three storey height limit. The plan does not purport to be a definitive but is a tool to assess the site capacity for residential use. The gross residential land area is similar to that identified in the Assessment of Effects

25. The plan provides 42,000m² of residential land. With a 50% coverage (maximum 65%) this would allow a gross building foot print of 21,000m² and at three stories a maximum of 63,000 m² of building area would be available. If the residences had an average area of 100m² this would provide 630 residences. So the Lakeview site in my opinion would have a residential capacity 500-600 residences. This is a substantial increase over the 185 maximum proposed under PC50
26. The concept plan incorporates some additional space for resident amenity including open space, sports amenities, possible preschool/crèche and a small neighbourhood commercial area
27. The significant number of residential units available would provide a substantial financial resource for QLDC as well as allowing greater opportunity for affordable housing, and amenities for the elderly and social housing
28. The McDermot Capacity Report p49 table 4.2 Summary of Economic Growth anticipates a workforce increase of 6000-11,500 jobs by 2021. Where are these people to live? PC50 is silent on this issue and under PC50 the most appropriate land to accommodate residential growth is removed.
29. There is no consideration within PC50 for the reduction in residential land and PC50 will push residential development further afield with corresponding environmental, transport and land issues
30. It is clearly identified in the District Plan that High Density land is used to maintain a large core of residents close to town and that High density land is in scarce supply in Queenstown.

7.1.2 District Wide Residential Objectives and Policies

2.1 To contain the outward spread of residential areas and to limit peripheral residential or urban expansion.

2.5 To encourage and provide for high density development in appropriately located areas close to the urban centres and adjacent to transport routes.

PC50 clearly does not reflect these policies

31. Plan Change 50 rezoning Lakeview to commercial use diminishes the potential of Lakeview for residential use. A much higher level of good quality residential development on Lakeview would assist the vitality of the Queenstown Town Centre and address some of the issues with the residential drift to Frankton.

32. The fact that we have High density zoned land directly adjacent to our commercial centre should be treasured rather than discounted

Lakeview land should remain residential use and be removed from PC50.

CONCLUSION

33. Queenstown needs to maintain and grow its permanent residential population . The Lakeview site and adjacent land is well suited for this. High Density land so close to town is rare and strategic for Queenstown's growth. The existing District Plan policies and objectives include maintaining and encouraging high density residential opportunities close to town. Plan Change 50 reduces these opportunities .
34. Lakeview land is important to balance the residential requirements of the Town Centre expansion and should remain zoned High Density Residential and be developed as an example of a town addressing the issues of growth and the associated environmental effects. .

The proposed Plan Change 50 does not meet this challenge.

Allan Huntington
20th November 2014

APPENDICES
Lakeview Residential Concept Plan