

BEFORE INDEPENDENT COMMISSIONERS

IN THE MATTER of a change under Part 1 of the First
Schedule of the Resource Management
Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER of proposed Plan Change 50:
Queenstown Town Centre Zone
to the Queenstown Lakes District Plan

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF
JOHN BERNARD EDMONDS (PLANNING)
FOR KELSO AND CHENG'S CAPITAL INVESTMENTS LTD**

Dated November 2014

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 My full name is John Bernard Edmonds. I hold the qualification of Bachelor of Regional Planning from Massey University, and am a full member of the New Zealand Planning Institute. I have 20 years' experience in planning and resource management, spanning policy and resource consent roles in local government and as a private consultant. I spent five years at Nelson City Council and six years with the Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC), most of that time (1997-2001) as the District Planner. In January 2001 I went into private consultancy.

1.2 I have read the Environment Court's Practice Note 2014 and in particular Part 7 that refers to the expert witnesses, which I understand will become operative on 1 December 2014, and I agree to comply with it. Except where I state that I am relying on the evidence of another person, this written evidence is within my area of expertise. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions expressed in this evidence.

1.3 I have read the section 42A report and associated reports prepared by the other officers and consultants engaged by the Council.

2.0 KELSO AND CHENG'S CAPITAL INVESTMENTS LTD – SUBMISSION

2.1 Kelso and Cheng's Capital Investments Ltd ('Kelso and Cheng') own five contiguous parcels of land, bordered by Stanley Street, Gorge Road and Shotover Street. These lots are:

- 1, 3 and 5 Shotover Street;
- 67 Stanley Street (with the exception of one unit); and
- 2 and 4 Gorge Road

2.2 Kelso and Cheng also made a further submission in support of Remarkables Jet Ltd, Sarginson, Veint, Robins Road Ltd, the Chamber of Commerce and Memorial Property Ltd.

2.3 These sites are outlined in blue in the image below:



- 2.4 The lots owned by the submitters are currently covered by a mix of ageing buildings, used for commercial visitor accommodation, offices and residential purposes, and commercial car parking. The land to the north is owned by Queenstown District Council and is used as Council offices, and further to the north of those offices is situated a public commuter car park, again owned by the Council.
- 2.5 When combined with the Council offices, the sites form a block of land naturally bound by Shotover Street, Stanley Street, Templeton Way, and Gorge Road (outlined in green in the image above).
- 2.6 Other features in the vicinity that also define a character for this area include the Memorial Centre, Horne Creek and a Council reserve to the north. A Giant Redwood near the bank of

Horne Creek is scheduled in the list of protected features. Whilst the adjoining public carpark is designated, there are no other relevant District Plan features.

- 2.7 This block of land sits at the eastern edge of the CBD. The current zoning pattern in this area includes land on the opposite side of both Memorial Street (west) and Shotover Street (south) included within the Town Centre Zone. The land to the north is classified as community sportsfield, while to the east – across Gorge Road the land is zoned High Density Residential (Sub-Zone A)
- 2.8 The zoning of the CBD has followed the principles set out in the District Plan, with incremental expansion of the centre. This has occurred relatively slowly, and has been easy to anticipate.
- 2.9 Initially the town centre has obviously much smaller. In the earliest District Plan that I have found (1970) – the CBD was framed by Camp Street and Shotover Streets, with that area flanked by a range of government buildings as well as the local primary and secondary school.
- 2.10 During the next District Plan (1983) the CBD had expanded across Shotover Street – but not as far as Man Street, and east from Camp Street to Stanley Street.
- 2.11 In the 1995 District Plan, there was further expansion; north to Man Street and east as far as Henry Street, and there was also some southern expansion to incorporate the Novotel land near the Gardens. It is at that time that the Council also created the Commercial Precinct in upper Brecon Street – to respond to the pattern of landuse that had established.

3.0 THE CASE FOR TOWN CENTRE ZONING

- 3.1 The purpose of Plan Change 50 was notified as ‘To provide for an extension to the existing Queenstown Town Centre Zone...’ into various specified areas. The land owned by Kelso and Cheng was not included in those listed areas. Kelso and Cheng submitted to Plan Change 50 to seek that it be included in the Queenstown Town Centre Zone. The Section 42a report advised that, in the opinion of the reporting planner, this submission fell outside of the

jurisdiction of the Plan Change and should not be considered. I note that Mr. Todd has given you his submissions on this point.

- 3.2 This purpose of my evidence is to set out the planning merit of including this site within the Queenstown Town Centre Zone.
- 3.2 In my opinion, the land owned by Kelso and Cheng represents the most appropriate option available for extending the Town Centre Zone. It has little or no residential character, with much of the site having been used for Council offices over recent years and for other non-residential purposes for many more years.
- 3.3 The Commercial use of this land commenced more than 20 years ago, and has incrementally increased since that time – to the point that there is only one leased residential apartment in the block. This area of land has a lot in common with the eastern Isle Street block, and is an area where there appears to be demand for town centre use of the land.
- 3.4 The Council offices were previously used as a working men’s club, whilst the car-park at the corner of Gorge and Memorial Streets was the Queenstown Medical Centre, with physiotherapy rooms in the apartments next door. Other activities that have occurred in this block include Avis rental cars, clothing retail, café, insurance broker, commercial laundry, beauty salon, commercial offices, and backpacker hostel.
- 3.5 The Council has at some time or another leased almost all available buildings within this block as overflow offices, as well as a building on the eastern side of Gorge Road
- 3.6 The land within the block is generally flat, and at the same elevation as the town centre. Walking and transport connections are safe and direct to the adjacent Town Centre Zone. I consider that developing this site for Town Centre purposes would present an excellent opportunity to help define an ‘edge’ of the Town Centre and improve the amenity of this transitional point between zones. The fact that the site already, in practice, forms part of the Town Centre is acknowledged by the 2009 Queenstown Town Centre Strategy when it was shown to be part of the town centre or at least part of the recommended expansion. This report based the yellow perimeter on those areas that contribute to and have a strong relations hip with the town centre.

In developing a strategy for the town centre the working party considered the geographical extent of the town centre. It is noted that the area identified does not strictly correspond with the areas identified in the Partially Operative District Plan as being in the Queenstown Town Centre zone but includes other areas which were considered to contribute or have a strong relationship with the town centre. Although these areas are included in the town centre strategy it is not necessarily anticipated that they should be included in the Town Centre zone in the District Plan, however the working party have identified some areas for potential future expansion of the town centre if appropriate. (page 8)



Figure 6 – Areas for Possible Expansion of the Town Centre

- 3.7 I understand there to be no constraints in underground services that would make such a rezoning inappropriate.
- 3.8 With respect to potential effects from changing this zoning, I note that the extent of other persons that might be affected is quite limited. I have included the aerial photograph with street numbers to assist. All of the land on the opposite side of Gorge Road rises relatively steeply – consistent with that amphitheatre effect that defines the character of the town centre. The property at 11 Henry Street is a mixed use building that has recently been approved for use as a backpacker hostel. It was previously used as commercial office and retail showroom. This land is partially aligned with a view down Shotover Street. The

adjoining land at 13 Henry Street/ 1 Turner Street is an older style motel that would be more than likely redeveloped. This land also shares views down Shotover Street. These sites are separated by Shotover Street/ Gorge Road/ Henry Street intersection which results in a physical separation of between 20 to 33 metres.



- 3.9 I note that the Council offices and library are also part of the 'block' which is defined at the northern edge by Horne creek and the Gorge Road commuter carpark. I believe that this land should also be included within the Town Centre zone.
- 3.10 If there is a need for expansion of the town centre zone, then in my opinion the land covered by the Kelso and Cheng submission together with other appropriate edges should be rezoned first.

John Edmonds