

Earthworks are defined in the District Plan as

“Means the disturbance of land surfaces by the removal or depositing of material, excavation, filling or the formation of roads, banks, and tracks. Excludes the cultivation of land and the digging of holes for offal pits and the erection of posts or poles or the planting of trees.”

Earthworks can generate a range of potential effects. These include:

- Visual effects through changing the form and nature of landscapes
- Nuisance effects, including dust and noise
- Effects on water quality resulting from silt and sediment runoff
- Effects on the overland flow of stormwater
- Effects on land stability
- Effects on archaeological sites
- Changes in natural ground level, so that determining building height becomes difficult.

What do you think?

Please send your comments to:
Policy & Planning
Queenstown Lakes District Council
Private Bag 50072, Queenstown 9348

Email services@qldc.govt.nz

Or comment online at
www.qldc.govt.nz/district_plan_review

Comments should be received by 24 August 2012 although feedback on these issues will be welcome at anytime during the review process.

Please call Blair Devlin on (03) 441 0499 if you'd like to discuss this further.

Managing Earthworks Issues and Options

What are we doing?

We're currently reviewing the District Plan and looking at what works well and what needs to be changed. As part of this process, we've been looking at the provisions that manage earthworks, and how they are working.

We've identified some changes that could be made and we'd like your feedback.

The Current Situation

The main District Plan rules that manage earthworks are summarised below:

Volume of earthworks - In most 'urban' zones resource consent is required if you exceed 100m³. In the Rural General zone, this increases to 300m³.

Area of earthworks - In most 'urban' zones resource consent is required if you exceed 200m². In the Rural General zone, this increases to 1000m².

Height of cut - In most 'urban' zones resource consent is required if you excavate deeper than 2.4m.

Height of fill - In almost all zones resource consent is required if you place fill deeper than 2m.

Distance from boundary - In most 'urban' zones the cut and fill must be its own height from the boundary, unless retained (see District Plan).

Proximity to waterbody - If earthworks are to occur within 7m of a waterbody, only 20m³ is allowed before resource consent is required.

Environmental Protection Measures - In most zones, certain Environmental Protection Measures must be carried out when doing earthworks, including dust control and erosion/sediment control to stop sediment entering water bodies.



Proposed Changes

Monitoring of the current rules around earthworks has identified a number of issues that need to be looked at.

Possible changes include:

- Provide specific objectives, policies and rules to manage cleanfill and gravel extraction applications.
- Consider using site slope as a trigger for when resource consent is required, to recognise that earthworks on flat sites are less likely to cause environmental effects.
- Consider deleting the area rule of earthworks. Very few applications trigger the area rule (m²) without triggering the volume rule (m³).
- Make the Regional Plan: Water and the District Plan consistent in terms of rules relating to earthworks in proximity to waterways.
- Improve links between the subdivision and zone rules
- Tidy up the rules to improve consistency, for example there are no earthworks limits in the Gibbston Character Area, and two earthworks rules in the Bendemeer Special Zone.
- Review the definition of 'earthworks' in light of Court decisions.

A number of other minor changes are suggested in the earthworks monitoring report. You can see the full report at www.qldc.govt.nz/monitoring.



What Do You Think?

- Have we identified the issues with earthworks correctly?
- Should the permitted quantities of 100m³ and 200m² for most urban zones be retained or increased / decreased?
- Should the permitted quantities of 300m³ and 1000m² for the Rural General zone be retained or increased / decreased?
- Should we link the permitted amounts of earthworks to the slope of the site?
- Should we keep the 12 month time limit for permitted amounts of earthworks?
- Should any other types of earthworks be excluded from the definition?

