

## **Henley Downs – Plan Change**

20 September 2012

Panel members:	Michael Wyatt (Chair) Pete Ritchie Preston Stevens
QLDC staff:	Tim Williams
For the Applicant:	John Edmonds - Planner Brett Thomson - Landscape Architect and Designer David Wightman - RCL Queenstown Ltd David Finney - RCL Queenstown Ltd Darren Crisp - Cadex Partners Ltd Darren Graham - Cadex Partners Ltd
Plans Presented:	Overview Plans Zone History Current Outline Development Plans Activity Layers Henley Downs Assessment Plan Change Concepts
<b>Findings:</b>	Within the scope of the New Zealand Urban Design Protocol and accepted urban design principles, as applied to the Queenstown Lakes District, the Panel provides the following initial observations:

### **Background**

It was explained to the panel that RCL is a Melbourne based property development company that has ownership of large sections of the land controlled within the Jacks Point zone and more particular to this assessment undeveloped land associated with Henley Downs.

The company wishes to take the opportunity to adjust the planning rules that control this area in the light of what has happened in the ten years that has elapsed since the zone was created and focus on to the likely demands of the next ten years.

### **Key Design Ideas**

The company wants to explore the potential to increase the density of the residential component of the zone that is yet to be developed identifying that this would allow the zone to be more responsive to the market. Smaller sites may well be in demand for some time.

John Edmonds felt that some recent decisions about how to use and build on VAL classified land were moving towards the sort of criteria used to assess ONL land and reminded us of the argument that the valley floor is less sensitive to development than the more highly visible slopes.

Transit N.Z. have been consulted and find the idea of an entrance from Woolshed Road as an alternative and more important entry in keeping with their aims and objectives.

Brett Thompson has an intimate knowledge of the master planning of Jacks Point, Henley Downs, Homestead Bay. Darby Partners in their planning for Jacks Point took the lead and were followed along by the then owners of Henley Downs who designed a similar residential layout pattern and received consent for a commercial zone to the south end of their land.

Brett argued that the pod pattern of residential layout at Jacks Point was generated out of the topography. Henley Downs just followed this lead, but the landforms are not so much a driver of layout here because the slopes are generally more gentle and evenly fall towards the north east.

Jacks Point's land sales have been a very significant proportion of district wide, generally sluggish, land sales in recent years and even at current rates will all be in the hands of first or subsequent purchasers within the next few years.

The average density of residential development has been in the 10 to 12 dwellings / hectare range and RCL wish to increase to up to 20 dwellings / hectare.

RCL also wish to create additional zones for education, low density housing, industrial, and waste water disposal.

## **INITIAL FEEDBACK**

- The panel is generally comfortable that residential densities can be increased provided there is still a range of densities within the Henley Downs boundary, with further scrutiny further into the process.
- The panel recognises that the proposed new entry location is a more direct connection to the wider community, and will quickly become the main entry for both Henley Downs and Jacks Point.
- The panel feels that both Jacks Point and Henley Downs should feel integrated in landscape, roading, and building treatment generally, always accepting the need to be flexible and open to new ideas, provided they are harmonious with what has been established.

- The panel is impressed with the attention to detail and the integrity of the landscape design at Jacks Point and wishes to see this quality continue.
- The panel does not think any kind of industrial activity should be allowed to interfere with an attractive new entry at the Woolshed Road intersection with State Highway 6. Such industrial activity should be submerged inconspicuously within the development elsewhere.
- The panel has concerns about how the developed and modified Woolshed Road will deal with traffic speed, volumes and its relationship to the zone it passes through or alongside.
- The panel feels that the land area allocated to commercial use is far in excess of the land area required to support a town centre. It seems that even a fully developed combined Henley Downs and Jacks Point population would struggle to support a town centre larger than the equivalent of say two Arrowtown.
- The panel discussed the options of linear versus nodal town centre concepts. There is a question as to whether two town centres make sense.
- The panel supports the idea of a town centre zone that is of mixed use and adaptable over time as economies of scale shift.
- The panel wholeheartedly supports the notion of school or university activities within the wider area, not necessarily in the locations indicated on plans tabled at the meeting. Open space and aircraft conflicts may push the activity to other locations.
- The locations of the disposal field for waste water in the open space zones of the site seems entirely sensible.
- The panel is generally supportive of the 'rural living' opportunities as suggested at a density of one house per hectare or less, subject to a study of landforms. House sites should generally be on the sunny localised northerly slopes within this zone and this will likely determine the density. Ensuring the principles that guided development of the preserve sites will also be relevant to this area.
- The panel sees this meeting as an introduction to the development of potential changes to the zone and wishes to remain in dialogue as the process unfolds.

Michael Wyatt.

Chair: Queenstown Urban Design Panel