



A GUIDE TO  
**SUITABLE BUILDING  
COLOURS AND MATERIALS  
IN RURAL ZONES**

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## WHY A GUIDELINE?

Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) aims to preserve its unique and sensitive landscape for future generations to enjoy and appreciate. It is important then that any development is carefully considered in terms of the colours and materials that are used. As such QLDC seeks to:

- 1 Encourage the use of colours with low reflectance to make buildings appear unobtrusive within the landscape (so they don't stand out).
- 2 Encourage the use of building materials, in particular for roofs, that complement the environment in terms of colour and texture and do not cause glare.

## WHAT ARE THE RULES?

### RURAL ZONES

- The external appearance of any building in the Rural Zone (Rural Residential, Rural Lifestyle, Rural General and Gibbston Character) is assessed under the resource consent process.
- The assessment matters emphasise that buildings should not be prominent.
- Recessive colours and materials help to protect the rural landscape.

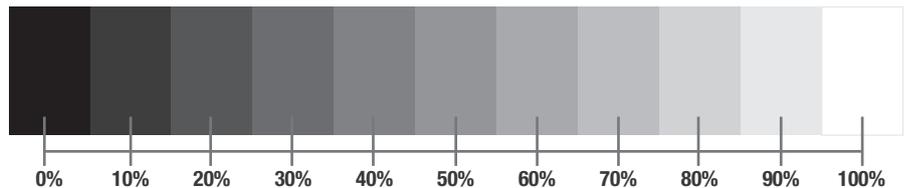
### HIGH AND LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL ZONES

- Metal cladding, roofing or fencing is required to be painted or otherwise coated with a non-reflective finish (Rule 7.5.5.2(ix)).
- Best practice is to consider neighbours and any potential adverse effects on them

## WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

### REFLECTANCE

The term 'reflectance' as it is used in this Guide refers to the amount of white or black within a colour. White pigment reflects all the light that strikes it. Black pigment absorbs all the light that strikes it. All colours are somewhere between these two extremes. This effect is measured by the Light Reflectance Value (LRV) of a colour.



### GLARE

The term 'glare' as it is used in this Guide refers to the effect which occurs when a bundle of light is reflected from a smooth surface regardless of the colour of that surface.

### COLOURS

Light colours, ones that have a high LRV are visually prominent. Darker colours, ones that have a low LRV, are recessive. That is, the same object coloured with a light colour will appear closer to a viewer and more obvious, regardless of its background, than if it were a dark colour.

Some colours with a low LRV still do not appear recessive within, or sympathetic to, the landscape in the Queenstown Lakes District. The colour ranges that do are the natural browns, greens and greys with an LRV of less than 36%.

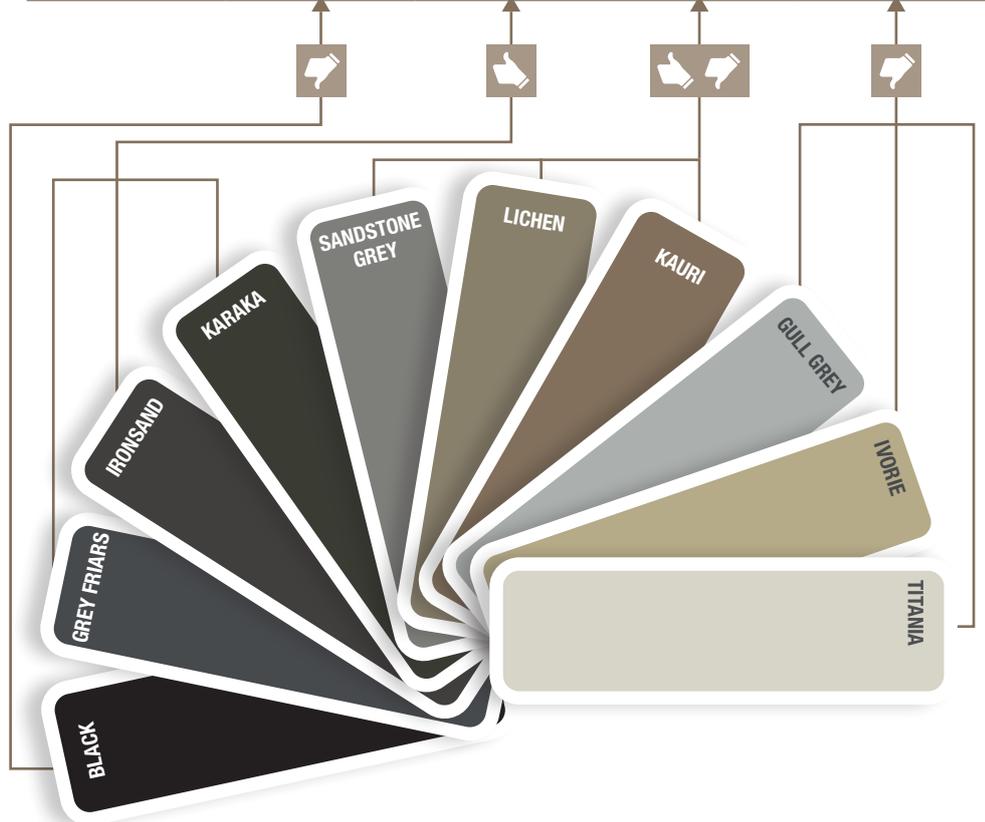
### MATERIALS

Smooth surfaces reflect light directly, whereas textured surfaces scatter the light causing it to be less bright in any one spot. This means that smooth surfaces are more likely to cause glare than textured surfaces, regardless of the colour.

## WHAT COLOURS ARE APPROPRIATE?

Preference should be given to colours in the natural range of browns, greens and greys to complement materials and tones found in the natural surroundings. In particular, pale colours should be avoided as they can stand out within the landscape. The LRV should be in the range of 5% to 35% depending on its use and its context, darker colours usually being appropriate in sensitive parts of the landscape. Colours with an LRV of less than 5% (for example, Black) can create stark contrasts and often are not appropriate.

LRV	0–4%	5–20%	21–35%	36–100%
Appropriateness	Inappropriate	Natural colours usually appropriate	Natural colours often appropriate	Inappropriate
Examples in the Colorsteel range	Black	Grey Friars Ironsand Karakā	Sandstone Grey Lichen Kauri	Gull Grey Ivorie Titania



## WHAT MATERIALS ARE APPROPRIATE?

For roofs and walls, materials with a non-shiny, textured or matt/powder finish are preferable to glossy or shiny finishes. The following materials should be avoided as external cladding:

- Untreated Zinalume
- Any shiny materials, even for small surfaces
- Large smooth surfaces, including some types of timber

Large expanses of glass, in particular, can cause problems with glare. This can be managed by considering the area of the glass, the angle of the windows (particularly in regard to the sun when it is low in the sky), and the provision of eaves which can cast shadows and help prevent glare.

Even dark coloured metal roofs can cause glare. One way of avoiding this is by managing the angle of the roof in relation to the sun.

## DO I NEED A GLARE REPORT?

In some cases it is desirable to use a material described above as inappropriate, for example, glass for a conservatory. If it is thought that glare from the structure may be a problem for the public or neighbours, a report may be required to clarify the extent of any effect, and possible means to mitigate that effect. The report should consider the angle and orientation of the surface to the sun at various times of the year, the surroundings of the building (context) and the extent of any resulting glare effect.