

In the matter The Resource Management Act 1991
of

and

In the matter Proposed Queenstown Lakes District
of Council (Chapters 3: Strategic
 Directions and Chapter 4: Urban
 Development)

to Queenstown Lakes District Council

1 STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF JULIE MCMINN

2 QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

1 My name is Julie McMinn

2 I hold the degrees of Bachelor of Science and a Diploma of Regional and Resource Planning Canterbury and Otago Universities.

3 I have over twenty years of professional experience in the field of Resource Management Planning.

4 I currently work for Opus International Consultants in Dunedin as the Principal Resource Management Planner having have been employed by Opus as a planner since 1994. I am responsible for the provision of consulting services in resource management and planning to a range of public and private clients including government departments and regional and territorial authorities.

3 SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

5 I have been engaged by the Ministry of Education (The Ministry) to prepare this written evidence on the Proposed Queenstown Lakes District Plan (Chapters 3 and 4).

6 In my evidence I discuss the following matters:

- The Role of the Ministry of Education;
- Background to the submission;
- The Planner's Report;
- Conclusion.

4 THE ROLE OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

7 The Ministry of Education (the Ministry) is the Government's lead advisor on the New Zealand education system, shaping direction for education agencies and providers and contributing to the Government's goals for education. The Ministry has responsibility for all education property owned by the Crown. This involves managing the existing property portfolio, upgrading and improving the portfolio, purchasing and constructing new property to meet increased demand, identifying and disposing of surplus state school sector property and managing teacher and caretaker housing. The Ministry is therefore a considerable stakeholder in terms of education facilities and assets in the Queenstown Lakes District, and has a strong interest in the provision for educational activities and facilities and their continued operation within the Queenstown Lakes District generally.

8 The Minister of Education is also a Requiring Authority as defined in Section 166 of the Resource Management Act (RMA). Designation of existing and proposed school sites is a technique used nationally by the Minister. It is the most effective way of ensuring the Minister's interest in a site are protected. Certainty is important since the Minister traditionally makes a long term commitment to any particular site selected for such uses.

9 In facilitating the operation of any state school, the Ministry has the function of working alongside school boards of trustees, who have the responsibility to provide a safe physical and emotional environment for students and staff.

10 Specifically, the Ministry is interested in the provisions of Chapter 3 as it provides an overarching policy framework for managing the issues in the district and Chapter 4 as it provides the policy framework for urban growth in the district and how this policy framework will affect the provision of educational activities in the district.

5 BACKGROUND

- 11 For the Queenstown Lakes District, the Ministry is specifically interested in the strategic approach the Council is taking for land development as the Ministry has had difficulties in the past acquiring land to develop school sites to meet public demand close to where the schools are required.
- 12 The Ministry of Education submission seeks a flexible policy framework to recognise the importance of educational activities and facilities. The Ministry is also seeking that this framework supports the establishment of educational activities and facilities throughout the district to meet community aspirations when identified.

6 Planners Report

Chapter 3 Strategic Direction

- 13 The Ministry notes the planner's recommendation is to delete policies 3.2.2.1.1. to 3.2.2.1.7 be because of replication with the Chapter 4 Urban Development. The Ministry submitted on policy 3.2.2.1.4, 3.2.2.1.5 seeking that these policies recognise community activities and facilities.
- 14 The Ministry does not disagree with this recommendation as Chapter 4 does have similar but more detailed policies. However the deletion does leave objective 3.2.2.1 without supporting policies. For the purpose of the Chapter 3: Strategic Direction I would consider the policies recommended for deletion should be replaced with more high level policies. Policies introducing the tools that will implement the objective should be reintroduced. For example, a policy introducing urban growth boundaries (amongst others) could be included. In the case of such a policy the Ministry is supportive of urban growth boundaries as the provision of them assist the long term planning of the Ministry.

Chapter 4: Urban Development

- 15 With the deletion of the policies in Chapter 3 it is now important to ensure the relevant policies in Chapter 4 are clear and certain.

16 The Planners report has not recommended that Policy 4.2.4.2 be modified to add the word “education” as requested by the Ministry. This addition will help identify education facilities (and/or education activities if the Ministry’s submission to the definition section of the plan is successful) are recognised as important when considering development within the Queenstown Urban Growth Boundary.

17 The issue is with the use of the words “community facility”. This term has been defined in the definition section as:

“In relation to a community facility sub-zone means the use of land and/or buildings for Health Care services. Hospital activities, ambulance facilities, elderly person housing and car parking and residential accommodation ancillary to any of these activities.”

18 This definition does not include a broad range of community activities hence policy 4.2.4.2 as notified lacks clarity and certainty for education activities and facilities.

19 The Ministry’s submission to add an extra bullet point to policy 4.2.5.2 has also not been accepted. The policy appropriately recognises development within the Arrowtown Urban Growth Boundary should be sympathetic to the character of Arrowtown. However the policies are lacking as they do not recognise the importance of planning for education and community activities in this area. Arrowtown is of particular importance to the Ministry as Arrowtown Primary School is under pressure from increasing numbers of families settling the area with school aged children wanting to come to the school. The Ministry therefore considers it important that the district plan recognises and provides policy direction for education and community activities within the Arrowtown Urban Growth Boundary. The submission is to add an extra bullet point to the policy as follows:

20 *“ Supports the coordinated planning for transport, public open space walkways and cycle ways, and community and education facilities.”*

21 The wording in the original submission may require some minor modification to follow on from the notified objective.

- 22 The Ministry also submitted to policy 4.2.6.2. The issue is similar to the submissions on policy 4.2.4.2 (paragraphs 17,18 and 19 above). Policy 4.2.6. uses the term community facility whose definition as explained above does not include education or a broad range of community activities. Hence as notified this policy lacks clarity and certainty for education activities.

CONCLUSIONS

- 23 The Ministry would like to see education activities and facilities recognised in the Chapters 3 and Chapter 4 of the Proposed District Plan.
- 24 The Ministry's submission seek the provision of a policy framework that is clear and certain and flexible enough to support existing educational activities and support the establishment of educational activities and facilities within the District in an overall sense and in particular within the various urban growth boundaries.
- 25 The Ministry considers that Council should have appropriate regard to the matters raised in its submission and in this Brief of Evidence.

Dated at Dunedin this 26 day of February 2016



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