

**BEFORE THE QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**IN THE MATTER OF** of the Resource Management Act 1991 ('Act')

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER** the Queenstown Lakes Proposed District Plan – Stage  
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**AND**

**IN THE MATTER** of Hearing Stream 15 – Visitor Accommodation  
Variation

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**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF BRIDGET ALLEN  
ON BEHALF OF Greenwood Group Limited (SUBMITTER 2552)**

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**6 August 2018**

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## INTRODUCTION

### Qualifications and Experience

1. My full name is Bridget Jane Allen.
2. I am a Director and Independent Planning Consultant at John Edmonds & Associates Limited, a firm of independent planners and project managers based in Queenstown.
3. I hold the qualifications of a Bachelor of Science and a Post Graduate Diploma in Resource Studies. I am an Associate Member of the New Zealand Planning Institute. I have approximately 13 years' experience in planning and resource management, which includes 18 months at Queenstown Lakes District Council (**Council**) and have been practising as a consultant for John Edmonds & Associates for the last 12 years.

### CODE OF CONDUCT

4. I confirm that I have read the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses as contained in the Environment Court Practice Note dated 1 December 2014. I agree to comply with this Code. This evidence is within my area of expertise, except where I state that I am relying upon the specified evidence of another person. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions that I express.

### SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

5. This planning evidence is in respect of the submission to the visitor accommodation variation for two contiguous parcels of land at 8 Frankton Road legally described as Lots 1-2 DP 99459 (**Site**). The site has an area of 2808m<sup>2</sup> and is shown in **Figure 1** below.



**Figure 1:** Aerial View of the Submitters Site

## RELIEF SOUGHT

6. Amend the District Plan Map 35 to include a visitor accommodation subzone over those lots that adjoin Frankton Road and that are located within the Medium Density Zone. Alternatively, the submitter seeks that visitor accommodation activity status is either Controlled or Restricted Discretionary.

## BACKGROUND

7. Under the Operative District Plan (ODP), the Site was High Density Residential - Subzone C and Visitor Accommodation required a Controlled Activity consent.
8. The submitter was not able to be contacted during the Stage 1 submission period, and was unable to participate in the proposed zoning process.

9. The findings of the Independent Commissioners on the Stage 1 mapping decision agreed with evidence of Ms Devlin and Ms Leith that High Density Residential is the most appropriate zoning for this area and would give effect to the strategic objectives and policies of Chapters 3 and 4 of the PDP however it was concluded that there was not scope to rezone this area from the notified Medium Density Residential zoning.<sup>1</sup>
10. The Site is zoned Medium Density Residential under the Stage 1 decisions version of the PDP. To undertake a visitor accommodation activity under the Stage 2 PDP Visitor Accommodation provisions would require a Non-Complying Activity consent.
11. The following outlines the relevant consenting history for the Site:

RM060810 - Queenstown Projects Limited. Consent was granted on 21 October 2008 for a 45 unit visitor accommodation development. This lapsed on 21 October 2013

RM050508 - Stone Crest Apartments – Consent granted for the construction of 22 Visitor Accommodation Units. This was very similar to RM040409 below but was amended to provide for visitor accommodation.

RM040409 SLA Properties – Consent was granted for the construction of 30 Residential Units.

RM020836 - Taradale Properties – Consent was granted for 59 Visitor Accommodation Units.
12. All of the consents above were granted non-notified on the basis that the adverse effects were minor and that neighbours were not adversely affected. Reasons in the most recent decision note that “*the site is adjacent to a note of visitor accommodation activity and an area of intensification of a much higher density of visitor accommodation units rather than the low density residential style development to the west and south of the site.*”<sup>2</sup>
13. There are no live resource consents for the Site. The submitter has been working on developing the Site for a hotel.

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<sup>1</sup> Report and Recommendations of Independent Commissioners 17-2 Part L: Neville Mahon Section 45-47 Reports Stream 13 Mapping of Central Queenstown

<sup>2</sup> Description of the Receiving Environment Page 5 RM060810

14. Currently the Site is being used as temporary storage for the construction of the Safari Group Limited hotel on 18-24 Frankton Road on the corner of Frankton Road and Stanley Street.
15. There were two other submissions seeking to protect their rights for visitor accommodation located in the neighbouring PDP High Density Residential Zone. There were no further submissions in opposition to the submission.
16. The s42A report prepared by Ms Rosalind Devlin has recommended that the subzone be rejected on the basis that the Site is not the most appropriate way to meet the notified policy framework for restricting visitor accommodation with the Medium Density Residential Zones (**MDRZs**) or the strategic direction of the PDP that provides for visitor industry at locations where this is consistent with the objectives and policies for the underlying zone.

## **SECTION 32 ASSESSMENT**

17. PDP Chapter 3 – Strategic Directions seeks to achieve a resilient and equitable economy in the District. Objective 3.2.1.1 recognise the benefits of appropriately located visitor facilities and that the Queenstown Town Centre (QTC) is a hub of New Zealand’s premier alpine visitor resort.
18. Objective 3.2.2 seeks urban growth that in managed in a strategic manner and thorough supporting objective 3.2.2.1(a) and (b) promotes compact and integrated form that builds on historical urban settlement patterns.
19. PDP Chapter 4 – Urban Development seeks to ensure that urban development is coordinated with infrastructure and services and encourages urban development next to existing larger settlements.
20. The objectives and policies of the MDRZ provide for visitor accommodation but only within the subzones.
21. The purpose of the MDRZ in regard to visitor accommodation is to restrict residential visitor accommodation to avoid the loss of housing supply and residential character as opposed to visitor accommodation
22. The National Policy Statement on Urban Development Capacity (**NPS**) came into effect on 1 December 2016 and must be given effect to through the PDP. The NPS requires that local authorities provide sufficient growth

to meet the demand of both residential and visitor accommodation<sup>3</sup>. The NPS covers development capacity for both housing and business, to recognise that mobility and connectivity between both are important to achieving well-functioning urban environments. Queenstown has been identified as a 'High Growth Urban Area' under the NPS. The NPS therefore supports the provision of sufficient area of development for visitor accommodation within defined sub-zones.

23. The following attributes make the Site ideal for visitor accommodation:
- a) The location and proximity to the town centre.
  - b) The location adjacent to the gardens reserve and open space.
  - c) The sites frontage onto Frankton Road.
  - d) Its consistency with historic settlement patterns and adjoining visitor accommodation development that follow the arterial routes into town centres.
  - e) That it is a large undeveloped flat site and that the site is bounded by two streets.
  - f) The scarcity of available sites that have these attributes.
24. The relief sough does not remove or preclude residential development but enables visitor accommodation.
25. If the Site was developed for residential purposes it is unlikely to contribute towards the type of housing supply that is of a key concern to the community due to the high value of the land.
26. In my opinion the visitor accommodation variation focuses on residential visitor accommodation and has neglected to consider sites like this one, being one of a few undeveloped sites that are in close proximity to the town centre and appropriate for hotel development.
27. The provision of more hotels and visitor accommodation may assist in alleviating the demand on other types of visitor accommodation such as residential visitor accommodation.

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<sup>3</sup> Interpretation of demand includes visitor accommodation (Page 6 NPS)

### **Benefits & Cost of a Subzone on These Sites**

28. The benefits include greater efficiency of land use, increased opportunity for visitor accommodation in close proximity to the town centre, economic benefits and certainty for the developer including reduced development and consenting costs.
29. Costs include potential effects to the residential character of the area. However, in my opinion this is mitigated by the following:
- g) The Site is adjacent to high density visitor accommodation activities along Frankton Road. The residential character within this zone is located to the south and west to the site.
  - h) Visitor accommodation has been consented numerous times on the Site without adversely affecting neighbours.
  - i) As shown in **Figure 1** above, the Site is bound on two sides by roads and the eastern side by the Black Sheep Backpackers. There is one residential neighbour to the south, the zone setbacks and building controls will protect this neighbour's amenity in regard to building bulk and location.
  - j) Traffic demand is likely to be less due to the proximity to the town centre however effects from buses could result in adverse effects to residential amenity.
  - k) Traffic effects can be split between two separate roads and any movements will be directed away from the residential area and back onto the State Highway due to Brisbane Street not being a through road. A site-specific rule could be imposed that requires that buses must access the site from Frankton Road. This would provide adequate separation from residential activities and appropriately mitigate effects.

### **Efficiency**

30. The proposed subzone is more appropriate as it provides certainty and the ability to provide visitor accommodation in close proximity to the town centre in an area that follows historic development patterns. The subzone would reduce development costs and uncertainty for the submitter whilst maintaining the amenity values of the area.



31. The maintenance of a more enabling consenting regime for visitor accommodation at appropriate locations is considered the most effective and efficient method to achieve the set of proposed objectives.

## RESPONSE TO 42A REPORT

32. The s42A report prepared by Ms Rosalind Devlin has recommended that the subzone be rejected on the basis that the Site is not the most appropriate way to meet the notified policy framework for restricting visitor accommodation with the MDRZs or the strategic direction of the PDP that provides for visitor industry at locations where this is consistent with the objectives and policies for the underlying zone.
33. Ms Devlin rejects the subzone on the basis that it doesn't meet the notified policy frame work for restricting visitor accommodation. As mentioned above the purpose is to restrict residential visitor accommodation particularly where is would result in a loss of housing supply and provide for visitor accommodation in appropriate locations within subzones. For the reasons outlined above the Site is an appropriate location and unlikely to result in a loss of housing supply.
34. Ms Devlin does recognise that enabling visitor accommodation over the Site may assist in avoiding further loss of housing supply within the residential zones by meeting some of the visitor accommodation demand.<sup>4</sup>
35. The s42A report comments that there is substantial provision for visitor accommodation throughout the nearby HDR through the notified policy framework for that zone however does not take into account that there are few undeveloped sites that are in close proximity to the Queenstown Town Centre that are appropriate for hotel type visitor accommodation.


## CONCLUSION

36. I consider the subzone to be more appropriate than the notified version of the PDP as higher density of development and the provision of visitor accommodation in close proximity to the QTC aligns with the strategic objectives and policies of Chapters 3 and 4 of the PDP.

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<sup>4</sup> Para 30.7 Stream 15 QLDC Ms Devlin Evidence

37. The interface with the residential area to the south and west can be managed through a provision that requires that buses access the site from Frankton Road and away from these areas.
38. Overall, I consider that the subzone is the most suitable zoning taking into account all of the matters above.



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Bridget Allen

6 August 2018