

2011

Monitoring Report on the Makarora Township Zone



Policy and Planning

Queenstown Lakes District Council

December 2011

Executive Summary

This monitoring report has been formulated to outline the current state of the Makarora Township Zone (MTZ) based on factual data relating to consented development and to examine how effective the plan is in achieving the objectives and policies for the zone. Potential resource management issues that are affecting the zone are identified and issues that need specific attention during the District Plan review are highlighted for consideration.

Resource management issues for the zone are articulated below as questions and answers:

1. *Is Makarora a predominantly low density residential environment with a particular building style and is that style and residential amenity being protected?*

Development is in the form of low density residential dwellings and therefore the plan is working well in achieving what is intended in that regard. Residential amenity and open character is being appropriately protected. A particular building style is not controlled by the District Plan.

2. *Is there a mix of uses in the MTZ and is future growth in non-residential activities being catered for?*

There is a mix of uses in the Makarora Township Zone with commercial, community facilities and residential development all co-existing within the township. There are no commercial precincts in the Township and this should be examined through the review.

3. *Are objectives and policies appropriate and effective in achieving anticipated results?*

The majority of objectives and policies have associated rules and are effective in achieving anticipated results. However, there are a number of anticipated results that will not be achieved as no methods or rules exist to ensure all objectives and policies are met. An example of this is the anticipated result of a characteristic building style that cannot be achieved as there are no rules relating to external appearance. It is also considered that the style in Makarora is varied therefore it may not be appropriate to enforce a particular style. Another example of where policy is currently not effective is in relation to scheduled sites. The policy relating to the creation of scheduled sites to protect non-residential activities (1.8) should be reconsidered as other methods, such as sub zones or rezoning may be more effective. Generally sites have not been scheduled as anticipated by the policy. Finally some parts of the objective and some policies may be inappropriately located in the Township Zone section and potentially should be District Wide objectives and policies.

4. *Are developments safe from natural hazard effects?*

No they are not. Hazard maps require updating to include known flood hazards. Further examination of the hazards is required to identify actual hazards risk and the potential for the formulation of new rules to protect buildings and people from these hazards.

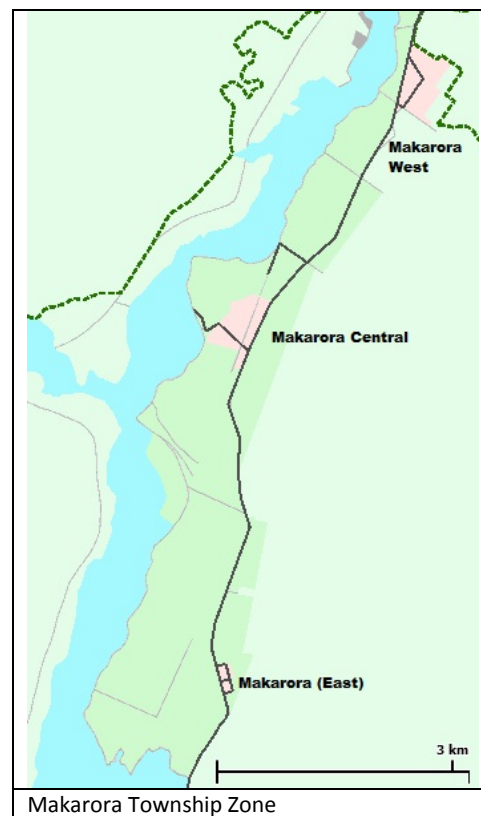
The District Plan Review should address the following:

- Anticipated results relating to specific building styles should be reviewed;
- Hazard maps should be updated and further investigation of the hazards should be undertaken. The aim to protect properties from all hazards should be reviewed;
- The possibility of creating a commercial precinct in the Township should be examined.

Introduction

This is a report monitoring the effectiveness and efficiency of the current District Plan. Monitoring of the District Plan is explained further in Appendix 1. The focus of this monitoring report is whether the District Plan ('the Plan') is effective, whether objectives and policies are being achieved in the Makarora Township zone (MTZ) and whether the plan is efficient having regard to the benefits achieved. There are similarities between this report and the reports for other Township zones however for District Plan review consultation purposes it was deemed appropriate to provide a report for each individual Township zone.

Makarora Township zone (pink colour below) is made up of three separate Township zoned areas known as Makarora (East), Makarora Central and Makarora West as shown below:



What is the Makarora Township Zone Trying to Achieve?

The key issues outlined in the Plan, relating to the Makarora Township are as follows:

- Retention of the character and quality of the environment.
- Providing for a variety of lifestyles and land use activities.
- Minimising the effects of flooding on land use activities.
- Ensuring development is compatible with landscape amenity.

The relevant objective and policies from the District Plan relating to the MTZ are outlined in Appendix 2 of this report.

The objectives and policies for the Township zone seek to achieve the following environmental results:

- Development which reflects important local characteristics in terms of building style, appearance and density;
- A range of non-residential activities satisfying residential amenity requirements;
- Townships comprising a mixture of residential, business and community activities;
- Low density development in specific areas in the absence of sewage reticulation, to maintain water quality and availability for domestic use;
- Avoidance of property damage from natural hazards;
- Well-defined and consolidated township boundaries;
- Vehicle and pedestrian access to all properties which does not conflict with the safe and efficient functioning of adjacent roads.

Overall, the resource management issues for the Makarora Township zone can be articulated as four questions:

1. Is Makarora a predominantly low density residential environment with a particular building style and is that style and residential amenity being protected?
2. Is there a mix of uses in the MTZ and is future growth in non-residential activities being catered for?
3. Are objectives and policies appropriate and effective in achieving anticipated results?
4. Are developments safe from natural hazard effects?

What is the “State” of the Makarora Township Zone and are the Objectives and Policies Effective?

Approach

The approach is the same used for other Township monitoring reports. Establishing the current state of the zone involves reviewing resource consent data in order to obtain a clearer picture of the kind of development activity on different properties in the zone.

The resource consent activity occurring in the zone has been compiled from Council’s NCS system, with data reported for the period of 2003 through to 2011, an 8 year period. The data collection starts in 2003 as the current Township section of the District Plan subject of this monitoring exercise was made fully operative in 2003. The NCS electronic system has not historically been used to provide data that can assist with understanding the quality of consent decisions. Further work on improving the quality of data in the NCS system will improve the speed and efficiency of obtaining useful, accurate data used in preparing monitoring reports. Currently much of the data comes from manual reviewing of consent files in order to understand what trends are emerging.

Several of the policies (1.1, 1.2 and potentially 1.3) and part of the sole objective relating to the Township zone are potentially in an inappropriate location in the Plan. The reason for this is that there are several policies and parts of the Township objective that are strategic-type policies. These will ultimately assist in providing for new Township zones or in assessing plan changes to existing zones however they do not direct development within the zones. Consideration should be given to the relocation of these policies to a more appropriate District Wide section. That section would be applicable and referred to/considered if resource consents are submitted that affect the zones adjoining the existing Township zones or if plan changes are submitted for new Township zones.

Makarora Township Zone Data

A total of 56 separate resource consent applications were processed for the Makarora Township zones over an 18 year period from 1993 - 2010. Since 2003, when the township section of the current plan became operative, 14 consents (apart from lapsed or withdrawn consents) were processed. This is a low number of consents when compared with some other zones in the District.

Type of Activity

As the table below indicates, 50% of developments sought resource consent for new development:

RESOURCE CONSENT ACTIVITY TYPE	#	%
Development	7	50%
Alteration	2	14%
Subdivision	5	36%
TOTAL	14	100%

Use Type

The following table, indicating type of activity shows what the consented development is being used for.

RESOURCE CONSENT TYPE	#	%
Residential	10	72%
Commercial and other Non - Residential	2	14%
Visitor Accommodation (VA)	2	14%
TOTAL	14	100%

This table shows that approximately 72% of consents were for purely residential activities while 28% of consents were for VA, a commercial activity and a non-residential activity. With regard to the commercial and non-residential activities, one consent was for alterations to the commercial activity (visitor centre) in Makarora West, another was for an implement shed to support a working farm and there were two applications relating to VA, one for signage and one for a toilet block. Apart from the implement shed these types of activities are anticipated within the Township zone.

There is no commercial precinct area in the MTZ. A mix of non-residential and residential activities is anticipated with Townships and consideration should be given during the District Plan Review to the potential establishment of a commercial precinct in one of the Makarora Township zoned areas. The inclusion of a commercial precinct would allow commercial activities to be developed in the future as controlled activities giving more certainty to potential developers and providing for a mix of uses as anticipated in the Township zone.

Other non-residential activities exist that were consented or established prior to the current plans existence. These include reserves, a playground, two service stations and associated cafes, a VA facility and visitor centre, a Department of Conservation field office/visitor centre, a fire house and a school/community centre.

It is considered there is a mix of residential and non-residential activities in the zone and that satisfies the environmental results anticipated relating to a mix of residential, business and community activities.

The next stage is to establish whether the dominant residential development identified above is low density development as intended for the zone. The following table displays different scales of residential activity (Small = 1-2 units; Medium = 3-9 units, and Large = over 10 units).

RESIDENTIAL USE SCALE	#	%
Small (1-2 units)	6	60%
Medium (3-9 units)	3	30%
Large (10+ units)	1	10%
TOTAL	10	100%

On visiting the Makarora township areas it is clear that low density development is dominant in the developed areas of the Township. The table above indicates that the MTZ is functioning as outlined in the District Plan as small scale low density residential development accounts for the majority (60%) of all residential development activity. The above figures relate to subdivisions as well as other residential development. A review of the 40% of applications that were for medium or larger scale residential has shown that these developments relate to subdivisions of land and all lots created are equal to or over the minimum lots size for the zone ensuring low density development. There is scope for further residential development in the MTZ as the vast majority of the area zoned Township has not yet been subdivided and developed.

Visitor Accommodation (VA)

There is a visitor accommodation facility, The Makarora Tourist Centre, adjoining the State Highway within the Makarora West Township area. A VA subzone exists over this facility which ensures that alterations to the facility can be undertaken as controlled activities. This is deemed appropriate to encourage on-going VA development in this area.

Overall it is considered that the Plan has been effective in allowing for a range of non-residential activities satisfying residential amenity requirements and ensuring townships comprise of a mixture of residential, business and community activities. There is much opportunity for the Makarora Township areas to develop in the future and changing the District Plan provisions to encourage future growth may not be necessary.

Decision Making and Consent Status

ACTIVITY STATUS	#	%
Controlled	7	50%
Restricted Discretionary	1	7%
Discretionary	1	7%
Non-Complying	5	36%
TOTAL	14	100%

On the whole, approximately 36% of those consents in the sample dataset had a non-complying activity status. This may give a false impression that the rules within the Townships section of the District Plan are consistently breached and that granting of consent

to these breaches can potentially give an outcome which otherwise is not anticipated by the plan. This is not the case.

The non-complying activities were for an implement shed breaching scale and nature of non-residential activities, a sign, an alteration to an existing commercial development, a breach of recession plane and a subdivision where the activity status was determined by sections 374(4) and 405(2)A of the RMA. Apart from the consent where status was determined under the previous Transitional District Plan (S374(4) and 405(2)(a)) the other non complying activities had either less than minor effects or affected party approval was provided from all affected parties.

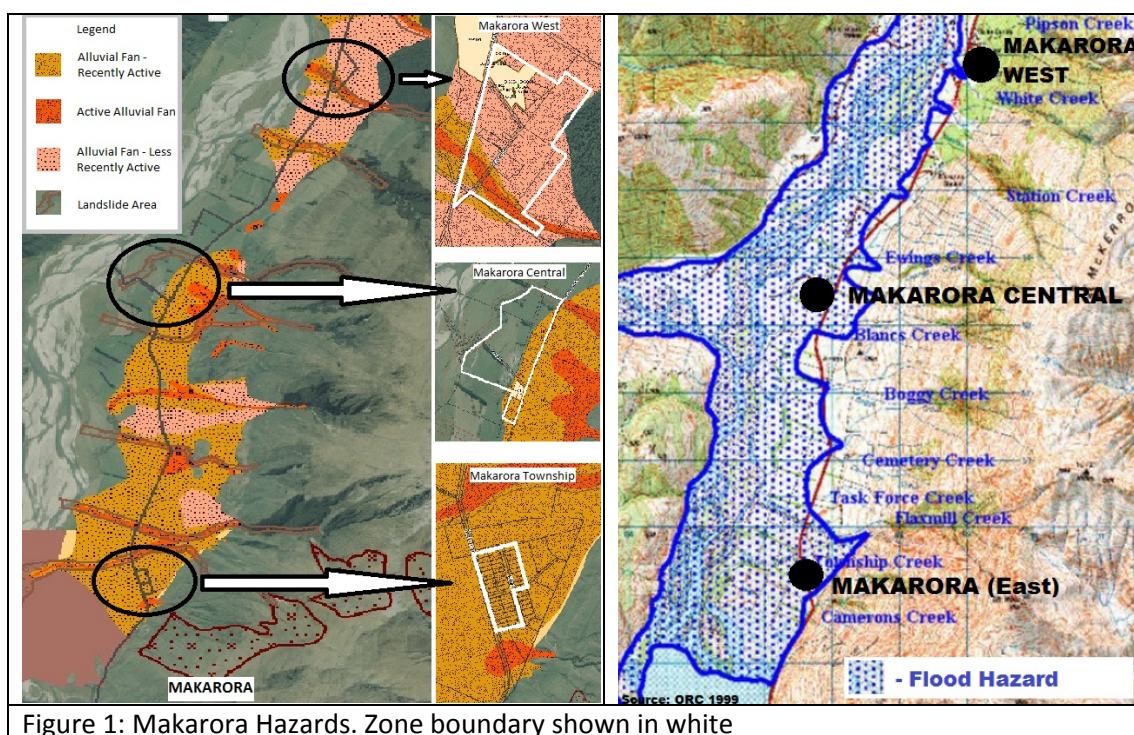
One non-complying activity consent related to the status of the activity under the Transitional District Plan. If activities were not covered in the Transitional Plan they were deemed to be non-complying under Section 374(4) and 405(2) of the Resource Management Act. For example, earthworks (as in the application in question) were not given a specific activity status in the MTZ in the Transitional Plan. As a result the consent in the MTZ involving earthworks was considered non-complying in accordance with Section 374(4) until 2005. In 2005 the present plan became operative and from that point the Transitional Plan was not used to determine activity status. The same issue arose for subdivision consents prior to 2005.

Overall a review of the consents shows that the consents granted for non-complying activities will not result in adverse effects and will not give rise to unanticipated results.

Are Provisions relating to Makarora Township Issues Effective?

Natural Hazards

An anticipated result for the MTZ, reinforced by policy, is to ensure properties are not damaged by natural hazards. The hazards affecting the MTZ are shown in figure 1.



The diagram on the left hand side of Figure 1 shows the hazards identified for the MTZ in the QLDC mapping system (Dekho) which complements the District Plan. There are four identified natural hazards potentially affecting land in the MTZ according to the current hazard maps. A key issue that needs to be resolved during the review is to ensure the flooding hazard shown on the right hand side of figure 1 is incorporated into the Councils hazard mapping system. The flooding hazard was identified by the ORC in 1999 and has not been incorporated into the hazard mapping system used when assessing plan changes or resource consents. Even if the maps were up to date the current plan does not effectively ensure that properties are not damaged by all known natural hazards. Ensuring that, bearing in mind the potential hazards as shown in figure 1, would be a difficult task.

It may be appropriate to have a rule or other method to ensure development is undertaken in a way that protects future buildings and people from all natural hazards. Much of the Township zoned land would likely undergo further subdivision to create effective township zone lots prior to further development and protection of properties against hazards can be addressed at the time of that subdivision.

It may be unrealistic to consider that the plan can protect against all natural hazards therefore the review should examine the aims set out in the plan regarding protecting properties from natural hazards.

Anticipated Building Style

The environmental results anticipated (ERA's) and objective for the Township zone anticipate development which reflects local characteristics in terms of building style, appearance and density. Rules in the Plan relating to density of development and site design, such as setbacks, heights, site coverage and recession planes help to ensure density and general development / site appearance are retained in the Township. There are no rules relating to building design and therefore the plan is not effective in ensuring a particular building design is maintained.

As in other Townships building design in the Makarora Township zoned areas is of mixed character. Without a particular design being promoted as characteristic of Makarora the Plan cannot be effective in achieving the anticipated results in relation to building design. It is possible that the various styles of built form lend to the character of the area and township zones generally. If this is accepted then the anticipated results and a portion of the Township objective relating to specific design for the MTZ may be inappropriate and should be reviewed through the District Plan review.

Protection of Non Residential Activities

Policy 1.8 requires protection of a range of non-residential activities by way of scheduled sites. This policy is not effective in the MTZ. There is a designation over a firehouse in Makarora (east) which will protect that non-residential use however the conditions of that designation state that *"No development shall be of a form that shall be adversely affected by natural hazards"*. This condition may be difficult to achieve based on hazard information as shown in figure 1 that was not available when the Plan was written. This issue should be examined through the review.

Apart from the aforementioned designation there is no protection of other non-residential uses, such as the Country Café or the Visitor Centre should the activities cease for more than a year. If these sites are to be protected from reverse sensitivity issues then they should be

either designated or re zoned for commercial use or potentially overlaid with a commercial precinct allowing controlled activities for future commercial activities. Currently if the businesses cease to exist the sites existing use rights are not fully protected in the long term.

Is the Plan Efficient?

The average Council charge to obtain resource consent in the Makarora Township zone between 2004 and 2011 was **\$1707** (including GST). The average Council charge to obtain resource consent in all the Township zones is **\$1423** (including GST).

The cost of consents in the MTZ is significantly higher than the overall township average suggesting that the MTZ is less efficient than the Township zones overall. The exact reasons for this are unclear however some extra cost may be attributed to the extra time taken to visit sites subject of resource consents due to the location of Makarora on the northern edge of the District.

Concluding Remarks

Trends

In many instances the MTZ is working fine and delivering results as anticipated by the community and the District Plan however there are a number of issues that should be addressed through the District Plan review.

District Plan Review Issues

This monitoring report has identified that the District Plan Review should address the following:

- Anticipated results relating to specific building styles should be reviewed;
- Hazard maps should be updated and further investigation of the hazards should be undertaken. The aim to protect properties from all hazards should be reviewed;
- The possibility of creating a commercial precinct in the Township should be examined.

Appendix 1: What is District Plan monitoring?

The RMA requires that two aspects of the District Plan are assessed, with the findings used to inform the process of reviewing the District Plan. With respect to the Plan's objectives, policies and methods, these aspects are:

1. District Plan Effectiveness
2. District Plan Efficiency

District Plan Effectiveness monitoring requires the Council to compare what is actually occurring under the District Plan provisions with the intentions of the Plan (as expressed through its objectives). This involves first identifying what the plan is trying to achieve for the zone, and to then track how well it is achieving these objectives. Once an understanding of how well the objectives are being met, the next consideration is identify to what extent this can be attributed to the District Plan policies and rules and to what extent 'outside' influences may be affecting the ability of the Plan to achieve its objectives.

Plan Efficiency monitoring refers to comparing the costs of administering the Plans provisions incurred by applicants, the Council and other parties compared to the outcomes or benefits achieved. It is noted here that determining what level of costs are acceptable is generally a subjective judgement and, as such, it is difficult to reach definitive conclusions. It is also considered that if development can be undertaken with no resource consent fees then that improves the efficiency of the Plan.

Appendix 2: Relevant Objectives and Policies

Objective 1

Recognition and consolidation of the townships. Recognition of the low density open space residential amenity of the townships. Recognition of the particular character, built environment and range of uses existing in the individual townships.

Policies:

- 1.1 *To encourage consolidation of the townships within identified boundaries.*
- 1.2 *To protect the low density living environment of the townships by providing for limited peripheral expansion where this does not adversely affect important adjoining rural resources and amenities.*
- 1.3 *To limit the extent and density of development of the townships in recognition of:*
 - 1.3.1 *risk of natural hazards;*
 - 1.3.2 *the need to provide options for reticulated services;*
 - 1.3.3 *the desired living environment of the majority of the township residents;*
 - 1.3.4 *the effects of activities in the townships and the scale of activities on the main transport routes;*
- 1.4 *To recognise and provide for the individual character and appearance of the individual townships and in particular:*
 - 1.4.1 *limited building heights in Glenorchy and Makarora;*
 - 1.4.2 *roof pitch design for Glenorchy.*
- 1.6 *To provide for a range of small scale non-residential activities in the towns subject to listed standards to ensure development consistent with the predominant residential environment.*
- 1.7 *To ensure subdivision and density controls do not inhibit the range of development options while providing for an open appearance.*
- 1.8 *To provide for the protection of a range of existing non-residential uses by way of scheduled sites.*
- 1.9 *To recognise the value of particular townships as important centres within the visitor industry.*