

Queenstown Lakes District Council

111 Atley Road, Arthurs Point

For: Planning Hearing on 1-3 Feb 2023

Covering Letter from Ken Gousmett – 24 January 2023

Subject: Information Supporting Further Submission #65, April 2022

A: Attendance at Hearing

Unfortunately I had committed to be in the north of the south island for a family holiday for most of January and early February, with our daughters and their families. I did advise QLDC (in November or December), that I would not be able to attend the hearing when I found the conflict. I am not able to attend remotely as we are staying mainly in Abel Tasman National Park with limited cell coverage.

B: Further Communication:

I am happy to respond, in writing, to any queries, clarifications sought, etc that are received from the Panel in advance, if that assists.

C: Addendum to Further Submission (next page)

C: Addendum to my Further Submission (#65), dated April 2022

I am a person who has an interest in the proposal that is greater than the interest of the general public

- I live on the right of way (ROW) extension at the south end of Atley Road.
- I have lived at Arthurs Point since 1972, excluding 5 years overseas.
- With my wife Rezija we have built 4 houses at Arthurs Point, 3 of these houses on Atley Road. Our family trust, Cavell Heights Trust, still owns one of the houses on Atley Road, which we live in.
- We purchased the 1.6ha property at Atley Road from Dig Swan the farmer owner in the mid 1980's and subsequently subdivided the property into 8 lots.
- Our house at 94 Atley Road is immediately adjacent to the Right of Way (ROW) which is a narrow gravel access to some 15 houses.
- I designed, largely constructed and managed, until recently a private water supply built 30 years ago, which serves some 18 houses on Atley Road where there is no Council water supply.
- I have had a long involvement in development infrastructure in Queenstown since the early 1970's. This includes Development and Construction manager at Millbrook Resort from commencement in 1990 to 1995. Infrastructure manager at Jacks Point from inception in 2002 to 2015 and 2 four year periods with QLDC in infrastructure planning and management. Specifically Capital Works Manager from 2009 to 2013 and Acting General Manager Infrastructure for one year.

The reasons for my support of submissions 494 and 527 are:

- 1.1 There is considerable area of undeveloped land at the end of the Atley Road ROW that is suitable for residential development. Some is zoned for this purpose. Further suitable land is available but is still zoned Rural General, even though rural or agricultural activity stopped in this area decades ago. It is time that the zoning caught up with current use and current needs.
- 1.2 The area needs access to additional services such as a legal road, pedestrian paths, Council water supply and wastewater. In particular urban firefighting infrastructure is nonexistent.

- 1.3 The high demand for property at sunny and popular Arthurs Point and the minimal supply contributed to the excessive inflation of land value since 2012, (far more than inflation of building materials and trade labour combined). This needs to be addressed and can be by increasing supply.
- 1.4 An economic analysis is needed to identify development costs against an assessment of yield i.e. number of dwellings. Without adequate return on investment there will be no further infrastructure. This is a valid argument for allowing sufficient appropriate development to ensure that necessary infrastructure can be funded.

Infrastructure:

The non-existent Council roading, water supply or wastewater infrastructure in the vicinity of 111 Atley Road has left a legacy for the residents beyond the end of the legal road. Council has allowed a series of small scale residential subdivisions without extending basic infrastructure. There is no Council plan to rectify this situation.

The most recent opportunity for Council to take a responsible lead was when Larchmont Close subdivision was proposed. Had Council required the extension of services within Larchmont Close to serve land “beyond that being subdivided” the current infrastructure deficiency would have been solved at minimum cost. Now Council may place the burden of infrastructure cost on the last developer at the end of Atley Road ROW or it may refuse consent and walk away from the problem. If it is left to the residents it will probably never happen.

Roading – there is 195m of one way gravel road from the end of the formed and sealed legal road to the residential zoned land at the end of the ROW. There is no provision for pedestrians or cyclists. With widening and retaining walls being necessary and even considerable lengths of safety barriers for people and vehicle guard rails, the cost for roading to meet Council’s standards will be very high. The relatively tight bend is dangerous particularly for children walking and cycling for recreation and to and from the school bus.

Wastewater – there are at least 7 houses on individual septic tanks with no available connection to Council reticulated wastewater.

Water Supply – there is no Council water supply available for some 18 residential properties. A limited private water supply, which is owned and operated by the property owners, provides water to these properties as there

is no available Council water supply. There is no urban fire protection for these 18 properties i.e. no fire hydrants. The nearest Council hydrant is in Larchmont Close for which there is no legal access. Fortunately the risk of wild fire has been much reduced by the felling of Fir and Larch trees but this has not eliminated risk from wild fires.

Council needs to step forward and take responsibility for its core role in the provision of infrastructure, the problem will not be solved without active participation by Council.

Wilding Trees:

It was with considerable relief to our community that our family and neighbours observed the felling of trees at 111 Atley Road removing the danger from branches falling off in high winds and much reducing the high risk of wild fire.

I had the opportunity to visit Lake Ohau Village soon after the disastrous fire in 2020 and to talk to a local resident whose house was surrounded by the rapidly moving fire. The owner said that it was only a broad well mown lawn that saved them and their house and that was a fire driven by a very strong wind burning through long grass, shrubs and small trees. The outcome of a fire in mature larch and fir trees would have been so much worse. They came close to losing lives at the Lake Ohau Village fire. Interestingly we also observed where the fire had been stopped by mature native Beech trees on the hills above Ohau Village. That would not have happened with Fir or Larch trees with their high volume of tinder dry foliage and cones.

The felling of the Douglas fir trees also clearly illustrated the annual spread of very unpleasant pollen in great quantity from every tree.

It was good to read the solid support of the Department of Conservation (DOC) expressed in the two letters included in the Statement of Evidence of Andrew Fairfax on behalf of Gertrude's Saddlery Limited. I look forward to Council endorsing the removal of wilding trees from 111 Atley Road and adjacent DOC land, in the decision for the current application that is under consideration. I have appended those two letters to my submission, for ease of reference (Appendix 1). These are dated 17/10/2022 and 03/11/2022.

My submission covered the excellent progress made at Arthurs Point and Malaghan Road in tree removal followed by planting of native species to restore the original landscape

These are two excellent examples of rapid conversion of wilding trees to native shrubs and trees on a large scale.

Both are still in progress but already the result is impressive with all or most of the trees removed and planting well underway. One is high on the hill opposite Cargo/Gantleys and the other is further along Malaghan Road where a joint venture between QLDC and CODC has removed 75% of the trees and native shrub and tree planting will commence in two years after a follow up removal of seedlings.

This same process was proposed by DOC and WWCCG for the hill on the subject property and extending to the east along some 2km of Crown Land.

Removal of these invasive trees should not be seen as unsightly but rather a transition to a much better outcome. Certainly the preservation of weed trees should not be used to prevent homes being built.

I also made comment about visibility of houses that has been raised as a reason for not allowing development of 111 Atley Road, particularly by those who have houses across the river (i.e. true right bank). From my office I look directly across the river at the true right bank and I counted 50 plus houses that are visible, mostly partly screened by planted trees and shrubs. I have never considered my view to be impaired or degraded by the presence of these houses.

Just prior to Christmas, a developer property owner removed some 50 mature Douglas Fir trees from a 4780m² property at 65 McChesney Road, on the true right bank of the Shotover River which I also look out onto. I will welcome the houses that I expect will be built in the residential zoned property and the landscape planting that will follow. I did not hear any outcry from Arthurs Point residents to this recent example of Douglas Fir removal right in their midst.

I attached a copy of Council's policy on Wilding Exotic Trees, PDP Chapter 34 to my Further Submission. I am sure that the Commissioners are familiar with this policy and that they will support the safe removal of Douglas fir and Larch trees as proven weed trees.

Appendix 1: Department of Conservation Letters of Support (taken from Statement of Evidence - Andrew Fairfax)



17/10/2022

Gertrude Saddlery Ltd
By email: andrew@technz.com

Attn: Andrew Fairfax

Dear Andrew,

Re: Removal of trees on Public Conservation land

I am writing with regards to your request to remove approximately 1ha of trees on public conservation land to the south of your property at 111 Atley Road, Queenstown.

Due to the conservation values achieved, I agree to the tree work described. Therefore, the Department accordingly grants its consent for the work to take place subject to the following conditions being adhered to:

- Ensure the trees are removed in such a way that is not detrimental to protected wildlife.
- The Applicant and its contractors shall ensure compliance, at all times and at their own cost, with all statutes, regulations, ordinances and by-laws for the activity on the Land, including but not limited to complying with the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015;
- The Applicant must provide a health and safety plan to DOC if requested.
- The Applicant must not cause unnecessary damage to the Land during the course of its activity, must not deposit any dangerous, unsightly matter on the Land and must keep any environmental disturbance to a minimum.
- The Applicant must leave the Land in no worse condition that it was in before the Activity took place.
- All cut trees and associated debris must be removed from the Land.
- Public safety must be managed at all times.
- The Applicant must notify DOC (Will McBeth) when this work is going to be undertaken.

Yours sincerely

David Butt,
Operations Manager
Whakatipu-wai-Maori
Department of Conservation

Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai
Whakatipu-wai-Māori / Queenstown Office
PO Box 811, Queenstown 9348,
www.doc.govt.nz

3 November 2022

Andrew Fairfax

Gertrude's Saddlery Limited

Dear Andrew,

Atley Road Subdivision – Proposed Structure Plan and Revised Relief

Thank you for providing your draft Proposed Structure Plan and revised relief for development at your site at 111 Atley Road, Arthurs Point (Site) to DOC. We have reviewed the information provided and confirm the following:

1. Removal of wilding pines and revegetation opportunities
 - (a) DOC supports the removal of wilding conifers present on the site, and the continued maintenance of the site to ensure the species do not become prevalent again.
 - (b) It is noted that wilding conifers such as these are identified within the Otago Regional Council's Regional Pest Management Plan. The Department works closely with the Whakatipu Wilding Conifer Control Group (WCG) to control the exponential spread of trees by eradicating all seeding trees where possible.
 - (c) We support the ability for DOC to access and utilise the site in the shorter term to undertake its tree felling operations within the adjacent DOC land in accordance with our own wilding clearance objectives.
 - (d) DOC is supportive of proposed native revegetation of parts of the site, and also supports the opportunity to partner in considering ways to integrate this revegetation into the adjacent DOC land following wilding clearance.

2. Trail and recreation opportunities
 - (a) DOC generally supports enhanced access to public land such as recreation reserves, in particular to allow people increased opportunities to recreate and enjoy public land.

DOC remains neutral as to other aspects of the proposed rezoning and this letter does not constitute any form of Affected Party Approval.

Yours sincerely



David Butt

Operations Manager – Whakatipu-wai-Māori