

Woolbrae Development

A testament to innovation and collaboration

By James Price, Senior Project Manager – TSA Riley

As the Woolbrae Development takes shape in Queenstown's Southern Corridor, it's been great to look back on the collaborative and solutions-focused approach that's helped drive the project forward.

Led by Classic Developments, with project management from ourselves at TSA Riley, Woolbrae is a 271-lot residential subdivision currently in Stage 1 of construction, on track for completion in late 2025. Over the last 18 months, we've worked closely with the Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) Planning and Development team to navigate technical challenges and deliver outcomes that benefit both the project and the wider community.

There have, of course, been challenges—but what has stood out to us is the shared mindset of all parties: focused, solutions-oriented, and collaborative.

A highlight for our team was the adoption of a cutting-edge ground improvement technique. The innovative solution was proposed and successfully implemented by head contractor Civil Construction. Civil Construction engaged the services of Pozzolan Ltd and worked with them to complete necessary testing and workshop trials to devise a successful technique for this specific site. This involved blending calcium oxide into the existing soil to permanently improve ground conditions prior to service installation – mitigating risk of liquefaction. While this method is more common in large infrastructure projects, it's relatively new to residential development in this region.

QLDC, along with their independent geotechnical peer reviewer, took the time to understand the proposal and support a robust approval process. That openness to better alternatives meant we could confidently roll out the methodology during the 2024/25 summer season.

The outcomes speak for themselves:

- » Faster construction timeframes
- » Approximately 150,000m³ of fill avoided, reducing earthworks related road truck movements on local roads by 50%, saving approx. 2400 truck movements in 12 months.
- » Substantial embodied carbon savings, contributing to more sustainable delivery
 - Reduced pressure on local infrastructure and local dump sites
 - Up to 60% reduction in working hours of carbon emitting machinery
 - Protection from erosion and reduced dust production
 - Up to 30% reduced costs in land development
- » A New Zealand-centric approach; using New Zealand resources to build and improve New Zealand infrastructure.

Benkelman Beam testing



Throughout the project, we've appreciated Council staff's responsiveness and willingness to engage—particularly when navigating complex technical questions under pressure. Being able to pick up the phone and have a pragmatic, solutions-focused conversation helped us maintain momentum and build trust.

For others in the development industry, our experience at Woolbrae is a strong reminder of the value of:

- » Engaging early
- » Being transparent about risks and solutions
- » Fostering genuine partnership rather than transactional relationships

As Woolbrae progresses, we're looking forward to continuing that collaborative approach and applying what we've learned to future projects across the region. Working as a team—with consultants, contractors, and Council alike—has been key to unlocking better outcomes, and we're excited about what comes next.

The Pozzolan team with a Claas Axion 930 Tractor with STEHR SBF Stabiliser attachment (world 1st configuration of this kind)

