

DISTRICT PLAN  
FACT SHEET



# Visitor Accommodation

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Visitor accommodation is a key part of the tourism industry in the Queenstown Lakes District and is provided by hotels, motels, backpackers, camping grounds and by residential homes.

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Through the Stage 1 and Stage 2 process, changes have been made to the visitor accommodation provisions in the Proposed District Plan (PDP). With all appeals now resolved, these provisions are treated as operative.

PDP definitions now confirm a distinction between Visitor Accommodation, Residential Visitor Accommodation, and Homestay. You'll find a definition for each activity on Page 3 of this fact sheet.

Full PDP definitions are available [here](#).

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The decisions introduce tiered consenting standards for different numbers of nights of letting activity and up to date letting records must be kept

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There are no changes to existing obligations for operators to pay applicable rates or development contributions

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## WHAT HAS BEEN DECIDED?

### RESIDENTIAL VISITOR ACCOMMODATION:

'Residential Visitor Accommodation' (RVA) is now a permitted activity in zones where residential activities are enabled as long it complies with certain standards such as (but not limited to):

- the total number of nights specified is not exceeded, this ranges from 42 nights to any number of nights. Check your zone [here](#).
- maximum number of guests
- activity is registered with QLDC prior to commencing visitor accommodation activity
- Council is provided with up-to-date records of letting activities and any complaints received on an annual basis.

Breaches to the permitted activity standards will trigger either a controlled or restricted discretionary activity resource consent. Matters of control/discretion generally relate to (but not limited to):

- scale, intensity, and frequency
- vehicle access and parking
- management of noise, rubbish, and outdoor activities

### VISITOR ACCOMMODATION:

The definition of 'Visitor Accommodation' (VA) applies to activities such as camping grounds, motor parks, hotels, motels, backpackers' accommodation, bunkhouses, tourist houses, lodges, timeshares and managed apartments.

In the residential zones, visitor accommodation is a restricted discretionary activity in visitor accommodation sub-zones shown on planning maps and is a non-complying activity outside of the sub-zones.

In other zones, visitor accommodation is either a controlled or restricted discretionary activity, permitted in some of the relevant Special (Resort) zones and non-complying within Commercial zones or site-specific locations.

### HOMESTAYS:

The definition of 'Homestay' requires either the residential unit (or flat) to be occupied by a resident as a residential activity but excludes a staff member living on site.

Homestays are a permitted activity in all zones, subject to standards. Breaches to the permitted activity standards will trigger either a controlled or restricted discretionary activity consent dependent on the zone.

Operators of homestays are required to notify QLDC prior to commencing the activity and keep up to date records of letting activities and any complaints.

## DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS:

### RESIDENTIAL VISITOR ACCOMMODATION (RVA)

Means the use of a building established as a residential unit (including a residential flat) by paying guests where the length of stay by any guest is less than 90 nights.

*Excludes:* Visitor Accommodation and Homestays.

*Note:* Additional requirements of the Building Act 2004 may apply.

### VISITOR ACCOMMODATION

Means the use of land or buildings to provide accommodation for paying guests where the length of stay for any guest is less than 90 nights; and

*Includes:*

- camping grounds, motor parks, hotels, motels, backpackers' accommodation, bunkhouses, tourist houses, lodges, timeshares and managed apartments; and
- services or facilities that are directly associated with, and ancillary to, the visitor accommodation, such as food preparation, dining and sanitary facilities, conference, bar, recreational facilities and others of a similar nature if such facilities

are associated with the visitor accommodation activity. The primary role of these facilities is to service the overnight guests of the accommodation however they can be used by persons not staying overnight on the site.

- onsite staff accommodation.

*Excludes:* Residential Visitor Accommodation and Homestays.

### HOMESTAY

Means the use of a residential unit including a residential flat by paying guests (where the length of stay by any guest is less than 90 nights) at the same time that either the residential unit or the residential flat is occupied by residents for use as a residential activity. Includes bed & breakfasts and farm-stays.

*Excludes:* Residential Visitor Accommodation and Visitor Accommodation, including where a staff member lives on-site.

### PERMITTED ACTIVITY

A permitted activity can be carried out without the need for a resource consent so long as it complies with the necessary standards of the district plan.

### CONTROLLED ACTIVITY

A controlled activity requires a resource consent before it can be carried out. The consent authority must grant consent for a controlled activity and can impose conditions but only in respect of those matters which it has control over as specified in the District Plan.

### RESTRICTED DISCRETIONARY ACTIVITY

A restricted discretionary activity requires a resource consent before it can be carried out. The consent authority can exercise discretion as to whether or not to grant consent, and to impose conditions, but only in respect of those matters over which it has restricted its discretion in the District Plan.

### NON-COMPLYING ACTIVITY

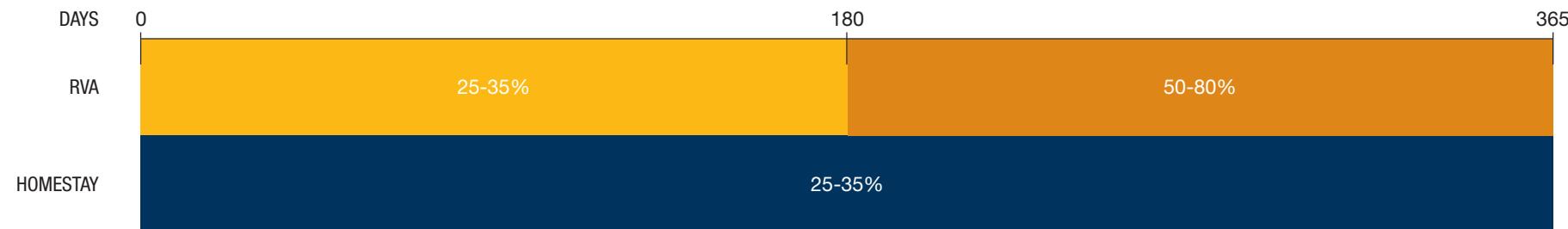
A non-complying activity requires a resource consent before it can be carried out. A resource consent can be granted for a non-complying activity, but first the applicant must establish that the adverse effects of the activity on the environment will be minor or that the activity will not be contrary to the objectives of the relevant plan or proposed plan.

### REGISTERED

To register with the Council means to complete the RVA and homestay registration form on the Council's website. We will accept registration through the QLDC website as fulfilling the requirement to notify the Council.

## WHAT ARE THE RATE IMPACTS OF THESE CHANGES?

Rates increases are impacted by various factors such as property location and type, the fixed charges and capital value rates, as well as the inclusion of the tourism promotion rate. The table below illustrates the rates increases (%) for a change from the Residential rating category for properties that are currently rated for all QLDC services (such as water supply and sewerage services). Note that this increase (%) will be greater if the property is not rated for all QLDC services.



## HOW WILL THE DECISIONS AFFECT ESTABLISHED VISITOR ACCOMMODATION BUSINESSES?

Under the Resource Management Act (RMA), activities that have been lawfully established and operated in compliance with the rules in the District Plan that were in place when the activity was first established have 'existing use rights'. This means they can continue operating and no new consent is needed when the rules are changed - as long as the nature and scale of the activity stays the same.

**The new rules on visitor accommodation and homestays came into legal effect on 30 January 2023.** After this date, any new RVA or homestay activity has to comply with the new District Plan provisions or obtain resource consent under the new provisions where necessary.

## HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION?

If you want more information about a zone which is not described here, please review the decisions in detail and/or contact a QLDC Duty Planner: [PDPenquiries@qldc.govt.nz](mailto:PDPenquiries@qldc.govt.nz) or call 03 441 0499 (Queenstown) or 03 443 0024 (Wānaka).