

Craig Barr for QLDC – Hearing Stream 14 – Wakatipu Basin chapter text

1. I have assessed and made recommendations on the submissions on Chapter 24 and the submissions on the Stage 1 Rural, Rural Lifestyle and Rural Residential Zones where they were deemed to be on the Wakatipu Basin variation.
2. Overall, I consider the Wakatipu Basin Zone and provisions in Chapter 24 to be the most appropriate way to manage land use in the Wakatipu Basin. The strategy underpinning the Wakatipu Basin Zone is to identify and provide for rural living opportunities in locations identified as having capacity to absorb additional development (the Lifestyle Precinct), and to constrain rural living development within those surrounding areas identified as having a lower ability to absorb additional rural living development.
3. A key element of the Wakatipu Basin Zone is that it requires a minimum allotment size of 80ha within the Amenity Zone, where previously there was no minimum allotment size over land zoned Rural General in the ODP. I consider that requiring a minimum allotment size is appropriate in this context because the Land Use Study undertaken prior to notifying the variation, and Landscape Character Units identified in Chapter 24 have identified areas where development is likely to be most appropriate. The chapter and PDP provides for this in defined areas through a Lifestyle Precinct.
4. Having considered the submissions and evidence, I consider that my recommended amendments to the text of Chapter 24 will provide the following benefits in terms of efficiency and effectiveness:
 - (i) in the Lifestyle Precinct, to recognise previous subdivision by retaining the notified rule that enabled one residential unit per site, and that thereafter additional residential activity would need to comply with the density provisions. From a design perspective, by providing an opportunity to dispense with the 6000m² minimum lot size by way of a discretionary activity consent. This will increase opportunities for a more flexible and design driven approach, while providing sufficient oversight to discourage poor proposals;
 - (ii) enabling the establishment of building platforms as a land use will increase flexibility for landowners; and
 - (iii) permitting exterior alterations to existing buildings up to 30% within a ten year period, permitting development within existing building platforms, and future building platforms created as land use activities subject to standards. This will lower transaction costs and be more efficient without undermining the purpose of the Zone.
5. The key outstanding matters of disagreement between myself and submitters who have filed evidence are:
 - (i) whether the policies and objectives should protect landscape character and visual amenity, rather than an approach to maintain and enhance these values;
 - (ii) the requirement for future residential activity within the Amenity Zone to achieve a density of 80ha; and
 - (iii) the requirement to obtain a resource consent to remove, undertake significant trimming or works within the root protection zone of exotic vegetation within the Lifestyle Precinct that is greater than 4 meters in height.
6. The Wakatipu Basin is a high value amenity landscape that is subject to strong development interest, and I maintain that in this circumstance the level of intervention is appropriate in order to achieve the Strategic Directions of the PDP.