

BEFORE THE QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT COUNCIL

IN THE MATTER OF the Resource Management Act 1991

and

IN THE MATTER OF the Proposed Queenstown Lakes District Plan –
Upper Clutha Mapping Hearing

STATEMENT OF URBAN DESIGN EVIDENCE

of

JILL CORSON

On Behalf of

VARINA PROPRIETY LTD
Submission # 591



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INTRODUCTION

1. My name is Jill Corson. I have a Masters in Urban Planning from Melbourne University (2007) and a Post Graduate Diploma in Landscape Architecture from Lincoln College, Canterbury University (1981).
2. I am an independent consultant in urban planning, urban design and landscape architecture and operate under the name Corson Consultancy. I am currently based in Dunedin. My business is associated with Environmental Consultants Otago Ltd which is managed by Ciaran Keogh, a planner with experience in the preparation of district and regional plans. I seek peer review from Ciaran when I have projects related to his experience. I also work in association with Hayden Smith, a free lance architectural illustrator and graphic artist.
3. I first set up in private practice in Dunedin in 1990 when I established Corson Associates with a business partner and support staff. I have been self-employed since, apart from a period of six years between 2002 and 2008 during which time I worked in the Architecture Department Urban Design Section of the Dunedin City Council and studied in the urban planning and design masters programs at Melbourne University.
4. My association with Wanaka began in the 1990s when I first started travelling up from Dunedin for work. Between 2008 and 2010, I was a member of the Wanaka Urban Design Panel assessing and making contributions to development proposals with other members of the panel.
5. From early in my career as a landscape architect, I was involved in projects that would be considered today to be of an urban design nature due to their contribution to the character and function of an urban precinct. Since formally qualifying in urban planning and design over ten years ago, I have increasingly received urban design commissions including the following in Wanaka:
 - Urban Design Review South Side of Brownston Street Wanaka with Concept for South Side of Brownston St between Helwick and Dungarvon Streets. Prepared for Varina Propriety Ltd in 2012.
 - Chalmers and Brownston Street Mixed Use Development, Wanaka: Urban Design and Landscape Assessments of Effects, 2010, for Varina Pty Ltd.
6. I confirm that I have considered all the information that I am aware of that might alter or detract from the following statements and opinions and I confirm that this evidence is within my area of expertise, except where I state that I am relying on the evidence another person.

7. My evidence is a part of the Varina Propriety Ltd Submission #591 on the Proposed Queenstown Lakes District Plan (Proposed District Plan, PDP). I defer to the planning evidence of Mr Ian Greaves, Southern Planning Group, for planning matters and to the evidence of Mr Andy Carr, Carriageway Consulting Ltd, for traffic and parking matters.

SCOPE OF EVIDENCE

8. The urban design implications of the PDP zoning for two areas, referred to in this evidence as Submission Sites 1 and 2 (see Figure 1) will be discussed along with the urban design benefits of replacement zoning as requested by Varina Property Ltd. The two areas and their zonings are:
 - **Submission Site 1:** The proposed Wanaka Town Centre Transition Overlay (TCTO) and underlying Medium Density Residential Zone which borders the southern edge of Brownstown Street by the town centre and includes both sides of Russell Street. My evidence covers the reasons why I support Varina's submission to replace the TCTO and underlying Medium Density Residential Zone with an extension to the Town Centre Zone; and
 - **Submission Site 2:** The proposed Low Density Residential Zone bound by Upton, McDougal and Brownstown Streets and Wanaka Camping Ground. My evidence describes the urban design benefits for zoning this area for medium density residential (MDR) development with a Visitor Accommodation overlay.
9. The following evidence should be read in conjunction with "The Urban Design Review and Concept for the South Side of Brownston Street" that my consultancy prepared for Varina Propriety Ltd in 2012 and was attached to the original Varina submission as Attachment [A]. The plans, cross sections and sketches presented in this report depict an ideal - a general concept to work towards. I believe it is important to have a vision such as this to guide our planning for development of a street as significant to Wanaka as Brownston Street. With this visioning, we gain a clearer view of what is most important; our priorities change and supportive solutions are found that will enable the vision to become a reality. The 2012 Urban Design Review and Concept for the South Side of Brownston Street prepared for Varina, was based on the premise that Brownston Street has potential to contribute to the function, vitality and character of the town centre well beyond its role as an arterial for traffic crossing town. I recently reviewed the report and believe that the general conclusions I made in 2012 are still relevant today and that the potential I saw then for achieving a distinctive urban design solution for Brownston Street is still achievable. It is my opinion, however, that this potential will be lost if the zones and legislation as outlined in the PDP proceed; my evidence will explain why I hold this view.



Figure 1: Shows the location of the two submission sites addressed by this evidence. Submission Site 1 is the proposed Town Centre Transitional Overlay (TCTO) shown by the black cross hatching on the south side of Brownston Street by the town centre and also both sides of Russell Street. Submission Site 2 is the block of residential land at the west end of Brownston Street shown outlined by red dashed line.

EVIDENCE STRUCTURE

10. This evidence will be presented in the following format:

- PHYSICAL AND PLANNING CONTEXT
- SITE DESCRIPTIONS
- A VISION FOR BROWNSTON STREET
- PROPOSED DISTRICT PLAN OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND RULES
- VARINA SUBMITTED CHANGES TO PDP
- URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS: Submission Site 1
- URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS: Submission Site 2
- CONCLUSIONS

PHYSICAL AND PLANNING CONTEXT

Wanaka Town Centre

11. Wanaka town centre sits beside the lake attractively orientated to the sun and outstanding views of the lake and mountains. The shoreline, Pembroke Park and the Heditch Escarpment define clear boundaries on three sides and the Wanaka Golf Course, located on elevated land to the south provides a natural backdrop. Between the golf course embankment and Brownston Street there are eighteen blocks of residential properties laid out in a grid network behind the town centre and Pembroke Park.
12. The site originally chosen for the town centre supports its continuing role as the commercial, retail and cultural heart of Wanaka and the Upper Clutha. There is a clear sense of arrival into the town centre that is dramatized by the surrounding topography and rewarding views. We subconsciously feel a sense of “rightness,” about the position of the town. There is a balance and harmony to the location; it is where we wish it to be.
13. Despite the natural advantages of the existing town centre, development at its entrances and southern edge along Brownston Street appears unresolved. Commercial activity is spreading in a seemingly unplanned manner into residential properties to the south and south-east.

Three Parks Town Centre

14. Development of The Three Parks Town Centre approximately two kilometres to the south east of the existing Wanaka Town Centre, is now underway. While the Three Parks does not have the same natural advantages of the existing town centre it has been planned and designed to high standards. In time, Three Parks will have beautifully planted boulevards connecting main entrances from Ballantyne Road and SH6. These boulevards, lined with pin oaks and elms, will lead into public precincts enclosed by a well considered balance and composition of buildings.
15. There are strong planning provisions within Section 12 – Special Zones (Three Parks) of the Operative District Plan to protect the functioning of the Wanaka Town Centre as the main commercial hub. Objective 5 of the Three Parks Special Zone states that in the development of Three Parks there will be:

“The establishment of a Commercial Core which complements and does not compromise the function, viability, and vitality of the Wanaka Town Centre.”

Objective 13.2.1 of the PDP reinforces this vision:

“Wanaka town centre remains the principal focus for commercial, administrative, cultural, entertainment and visitor activities in the Upper Clutha area.”

16. For these objectives to be realised, Wanaka town centre will need to continue to evolve and achieve a sense of “completeness” that is, in parts, currently lacking. The edges and entrances along Brownston Street referred to above will need to be more clearly defined and appropriately transformed into distinctive urban experiences that relate more positively to the existing town centre. The planning and design standards for Three Parks are being set high and in order for the existing town centre to remain the preeminent commercial hub, similarly high urban design standards, along with capacity for the town centre to expand to the south and east, will be necessary.

Civic Nodes and Potential Direction for Town Centre Growth

17. The Heditch Escarpment, Lake Wanaka and Pembroke Park contain the town centre in the east, north and west respectively. Potential for growth or expansion of the town centre is to the south and south east in the direction of Three Parks. This potential has been recognised by the location of civic nodes on the corner of Stafford Street and Ballantyne Road. Extending the town centre to the south side of Brownston Street and up Russell Street would link the existing civic centre with these civic nodes.

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

Brownston Street

18. The two areas that are the focus of this report both border Brownston Street. Submission Site 1, the area covered by the TCTO, is on the south-eastern end of Brownston Street where it borders the town centre. The second area, Submission Site 2, is at the western extremity of Brownston Street, near the Wanaka Camping Ground.
19. Brownston Street links the two main entrances into Wanaka – the entrance from Cadrona and Queenstown and the entrance from Luggate and Cromwell. It is increasingly used as a cross-town arterial enabling traffic to divert from the high amenity lakefront route. As a result, Brownston Street has become an important entrance into the town centre and civic precincts and has a key role to play in defining and revealing the character of Wanaka to visitors and residents alike.

20. The southern edge of Brownston Street is presently weakly contained by low rise residential buildings with typologies unrelated to each other and the wider context. Development is largely introverted, contributing little to the public realm or urban amenity. The dwellings, many of which seem little changed since they were first established as holiday accommodation many decades ago are set well back from the road boundary and large front yards are used for parking and access. The majority of the residential properties between Upper Ardmore Road and Pembroke Park are used for commercial purposes.



*Photos 1-4:
Examples of commercial operations in dwellings along southern edge of Brownston Street*

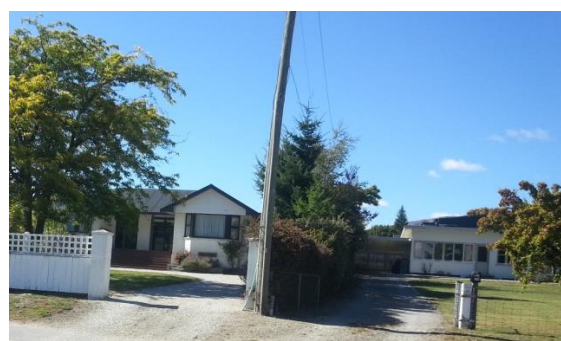
21. There has been relatively little capital investment on the high value land along the south of Brownston Street. The large sections with simple dwellings seem poised for redevelopment. While Brownston Street currently lacks style and character it possesses exciting potential for transformation - potential that is readily available for realisation while the capital investment and density of development remains low.

Russell Street

22. Russell Street is a short street leading off Brownston Street a block from Upper Ardmore Street. It borders the town centre and civic nodes on Ballantyne Road and, similar to the south side of Brownston Street has residential character reflecting its current underlying zone although many of the dwellings are now commercial premises. This existing commercial use of property within the TCTO illustrates demand for commercial space to the south east of the Town Centre.

Residential Block by Wanaka Camping Ground – Submission Site 2

23. Submission Site 2 is block of nine residential lots bordered by Brownston Street, the Wanaka Camping Ground, Upton and McDougall Streets. McDougall Street is the western entrance into Wanaka from Cardrona and Queenstown and its junction with Brownston Street on the edge of the submission site is a prominent and busy one. Approximately one third of the block has been developed with intensive medium density style of residential apartments and visitor accommodation despite the underlying low density zone. The remaining properties have a single, older style of dwelling, set back from the road boundary within spacious grounds. The block is immediately adjacent to Pembroke Park and Wanaka Recreation Grounds, about 300 metres to the lake edge and less than a kilometre to the town centre. An attractive, older style church set amongst mature trees opposite the submission site on McDougall Street also contributes to the character of the area.



Photographs 5 and 6:

Left photograph shows established church opposite Submission Site 2 on McDougall Street. Photograph on the right shows original holiday homes on Brownston Street near entrance to camping ground.



*Photograph 7:
Apartments and visitor accommodation in Upton Street that reflect MDR character sought for all of Submission Site 2.*

VISION FOR BROWNSTON STREET

24. In the urban design study on Brownston Street, prepared by Corson Consultancy in 2012, a concept was developed for Brownston Street where it connects with the existing town centre between Upper Ardmore Street and Pembroke Park. This concept illustrates how Brownston Street could be transformed into a series of stimulating and yet functional entry precincts created by built form on either side of the carriageway to create a coherent and distinctive statement of Brownston Street's importance as a primary town entrance.
25. The Brownston Street experience would be revealed in a sequence of elegant urban precincts defined by two or three stories of commercial style buildings established on the street boundary of both sides of the carriageway and used for a mix of commercial, residential and visitor accommodation purposes. There would be visual balance from one side of Brownston Street to the other with active edges enriching existing town centre vitality and character.
26. Figure 2 is a photo of the current effect of Brownston Street showing the residential development on the south (left) and town centre on the north (right). Figure 3 illustrates the proposed balanced effect of the Brownston Street development with town centre on each side of the carriageway. Figure 3 also shows how street beautification and traffic calming through strategic planting of trees and shrubs could be achieved. In the vision for Brownston Street promoted here, enhancement of public realm and entry precinct qualities would receive priority and a fresh look at the wider Wanaka context to find effective traffic management solutions that support the potential of the town centre would be encouraged.

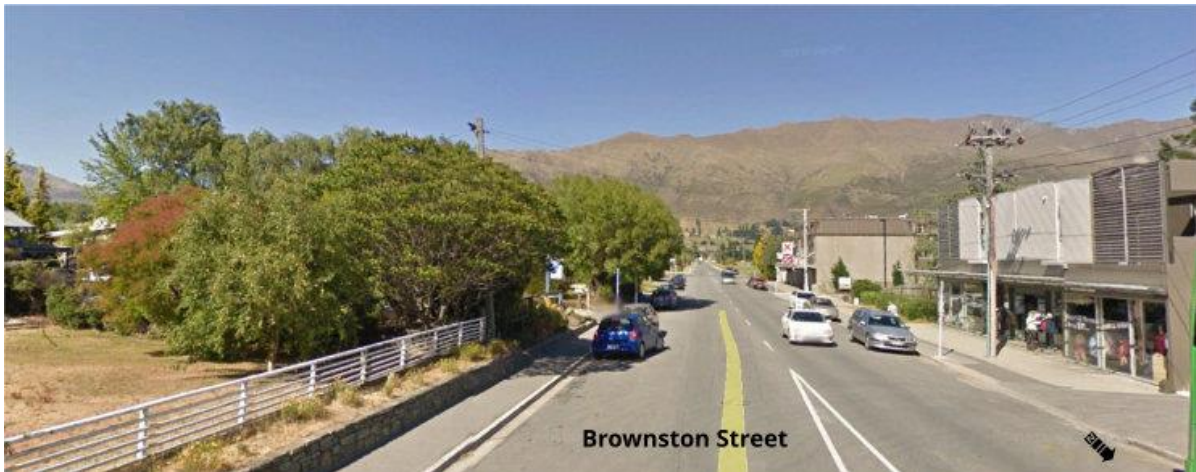


Figure 2: Brownston Street (Google Earth Streetview 2009) showing existing view from vantage point of Sketch 2 below. Note: The current view is little changed from this 2009 Google Earth image.



Figure 3: The streetscape character proposed in the 2012 Urban Design Concept for Brownston Street and proposed here to show how an extension of the Town Centre zone to include both sides of Brownston Street could be realised. Integrated development up to the street edge on each side of the carriageway provides a greater sense of enclosure and tree and shrub planting contributes to this sense of enclosure as well as providing visual amenity and traffic calming.

27. A rear lane would be located behind the proposed intensive development edging the southern side of Brownston Street to service the mixed use activities and also create separation from the neighbouring residential properties. Screen and amenity planting could be established to the rear of the Brownston Street development to further increase amenity for residential neighbours.
28. The 2012 urban design concept highlights sites and natural features along Brownston Street that could, with sensitive development, particularly enrich the town entrance experience and public realm. Bullock Creek which meanders through undeveloped land to the south of Brownston Street has particular potential in this regard.
29. While the south side of Brownston Street is visualised as having built form up to the street boundary to address the public realm in a balanced manner with the town centre opposite, there would be some flexibility on the position of the building frontages to make the best use of natural features such as Bullock Creek or to create pocket parks or a public courtyard.



Photos 8 and 9:

Existing undeveloped land around Bullock Creek on south side of Brownston Street has potential to be transformed into prominent and popular public open space as has been achieved near the lake front.

30. For this vision to be achieved it would be necessary to locate the boundary for the town centre zone at the rear of properties lining the south of Brownston Street. Locating zone boundaries this way, at the rear of properties, is a traditional town planning method favoured due to the benefits of achieving balanced street character with complimentary activities and uses.

PROPOSED DISTRICT PLAN OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND RULES

TCTO and Medium Density Residential (MDR) Zone

31. As shown in Figure 1, the proposed Town Centre Transitional Overlay (TCTO) extends along the south side of Brownston Street from Dungarvon Street at Pembroke Park to Russell Street and continues up Russell Street. It encompasses all properties immediately bordering the town centre to the south and southeast. A significant proportion of the properties within the TCTO, as noted previously, are used for commercial activities operating from dwellings located within large sections.

32. The PDP acknowledges the market forces extending commercial activities to the south side of Brownston Street by proposing the TCTO over a Medium Density Residential Zone.

33. In section 8.1 of the PDP, the purpose of an MDR Zone is described as:

“to provide land for residential development at increased densities The zone will primarily accommodate residential land uses but may also support limited non-residential activities where these enhance residential amenity or support an adjoining Town Centre and do not impact on the primary role of the zone to provide housing supply”

34. Objective 8.2.12 within the MDR chapter of the PDP describes the purpose of the TCTO as:

“The Wanaka Town Centre Transition Overlay enables non-residential development forms which support the role of the Town Centre and are sensitive to the transition with residential uses.”

35. While this objective expresses the goal of enabling a non-residential style of building for accommodating town centre activities, development in the TCTO will need to comply with MDR rules. This apparent anomaly is addressed by Policy 8.2.12.3 which states:

“Allow consideration of variances to rules for site coverage, setbacks and parking where part of an integrated development proposal which demonstrates high quality urban design.”

36. Developers seeking “consideration of variances” would need to make non-complying applications with unsure chances of approval being granted. In practice, the rules of the MDR underlay would determine the predominant characteristics of the TCTO and not the objectives and policies. The following

rules of the MDR zone of the TCTO would be particularly significant in maintaining characteristics of residential built form and layout:

- **Rule 8.4.10.2 Dwelling, Residential Unit, Residential Flat**
Permitted: Three or less per site
- **Rule 8.5.1 Building Height (for flat or sloping sites)**
A maximum of 7 metres
- **Rule 8.5.4 Building Coverage**
A maximum of 45%
- **Rule 8.5.5 Density**
The maximum site density shall be one residential unit or dwelling per 250m² net site area. However, this rule shall not apply where the development can achieve certification to a minimum 6-star level using the NZ Green Building Council Homestar Tool.
- **Rule 8.5.6 Recession Plane (including accessory buildings)**
 - 8.5.6.1 Northern Boundary: 2.5m and 55 degrees**
 - 8.5.6.2 Western and Eastern Boundaries: 2.5m and 45 degrees**
 - 8.5.6.3 Southern boundaries: 2.5m and 35 degrees**
- **Rule 8.5.7 Landscaped Permeable Surface**
At least 25% of site
- **Rule 8.5.8 Minimum Boundary Setback**
 - 8.5.8.1 Road boundary setback: 3m**
 - 8.5.8.2 All other boundaries: 1.5m**
- **Rule 8.5.9 Continuous Building Length**
The continuous length of any building façade above one storey shall not exceed 16m

37. There are three rules in Chapter 8 of the PDP which specifically address the TCTO: Rules 8.4.25, 8.4.26 and 8.4.27. Rules 8.4.26 and 8.4.27 allow commercial and community activities as permitted activities. Rule 8.4.25 makes buildings a restricted discretionary activity with discretion restricted to consideration of external appearance, building materials, signage, lighting, impact on street, contribution to integrated built form, interface with open space and natural hazards. While buildings in the TCTO would require restricted discretionary resource consents with council assessing the above factors, it

would be the controls relating to setbacks, site coverage and recession that would have predominant urban design effect on future development.

Town Centre Zone

38. As seen above, the TCTO with MDR underlying zone would facilitate primarily residential development. Where a more “non-residential” style of development did occur within the TCTO, it would still have residential characteristics, such as set back from the road boundary, low density of development and site coverage. To achieve the urban design outcomes for Brownston Street as visualised by this submission, the proposed MDR zone underlying the TCTO would need to be replaced with the Town Centre zone. The rules of the town centre zone supported by the Wanaka Town Centre Character Guideline (2011) would facilitate the creation of a built environment more suited to town centre uses that the market expresses a need for and that this submission promotes.

39. To understand the differing urban design outcomes for the TCTO with underlying MDR or with the Wanaka Town Centre zone the following town centre rules are particularly relevant:

- **Rule 13.4.4 Buildings**

Discretion is restricted to consideration of all of the following: external appearance, materials, signage platform, lighting, impact of the street (to be guided by the Wanaka TC Character guideline 2011) and natural hazards to ensure that:

The design of the building blends well with and contributes to an integrated built form.....

....The building façade provides an active interface to open space onto which it fronts, and the detail of the façade is sympathetic to other buildings in the vicinity”

- **Rule 13.5.1 Setbacks and Sunlight Access – Sites Adjoining a Residential Zone (Restricted discretionary)**

13.5.1.2: *Where a site adjoins a Residential Zone all buildings shall be set back not less than 3m*

- **Rule 13.5.3 Residential Activities**

All residential activities shall be restricted to first floor level or above with the exception of foyer and stairway spaces at ground level to facilitate access to upper levels.

- **Rule 13.5.6 Setbacks from Front Boundaries**

All buildings shall be built up to the street boundary along the full street frontage of the site except where a pedestrian link is provided. Nothing in this rule shall preclude the inclusion of recessed entrances within any façade up to a depth of 1.5m and width of 2.0 m

40. Most developments within the town centre would need to obtain resource consents under the District Plan for which the Wanaka Town Centre Character Guideline (2011) is an important reference. The following has been sourced from this guideline:

- *“Site coverage over the 80% permitted threshold in the District Plan is likely to be viewed favourably where the site and context and built form guidelines have been effectively applied.”*
- *“Generally town centre buildings sit shoulder to shoulder and front up to public spaces. Acting together the building frontages define the streetscape and other public spaces...”*
- *“For town centre buildings, the key design element is the edge between people in the street and the activities that occur inside the buildings at ground floor level. The vibrancy, vitality and commercial viability of an urban area is closely related to the design of this edge, the front façade.”*
- *“Locate buildings and main entrances on the front boundary, with setbacks only provided for pedestrian plazas, and occasional recessed entries... .. Buildings should generally occupy 100% of a site’s frontage, excluding any necessary vehicle or pedestrian lane access to the rear...”*
- *“Larger developments should appear as two or more distinct adjoining buildings that work in harmony....”*

41. The Wanaka Town Centre Character Guideline also identifies the following six desired outcomes for Brownston Street:

- *“Ease pedestrian crossing at key locations to enable strong walking links between the town centre and adjoining high and low density residential zone;*
- *Retain on-street parallel parking to assist the vitality of businesses and provide an effective buffer between vehicles and pedestrians along both sides of the street;*

- *Promote efficient vehicular movement along Brownston Street, as it forms a key east-west connection for visitors and locals;*
- *Add street trees to provide visual amenity and contribute to calming traffic and a greater sense to enclosure to the street;*
- *Remove overhead wires;*
- *Provide uniform permanent paving on footpath.”*

42. All of these desired outcomes outlined in the Wanaka Town Centre Character Guideline would be achieved by allowing town centre on the south of Brownston Street as proposed in this submission. The Guideline also includes an “aspirational” cross section for Brownston Street which is reproduced below in Figure 4. This cross section shows a preference for balanced development on either side of the carriageway through building form and planting. The vision promoted in this submission would realise even greater balance and containment by having town centre on both sides and not having the set back from the street boundary on the south.

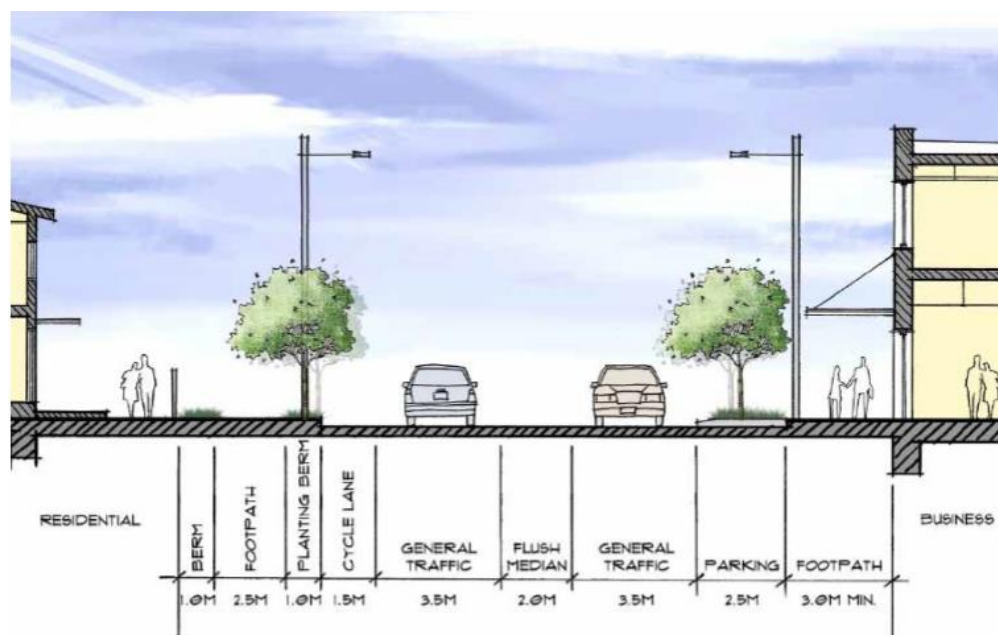


Figure 4: Proposed Cross Section of Brownston Street from Wanaka Town Centre Character Guideline (2011) with the residential development on left and town centre on right. Note the active edge of town centre and set back and fencing on southern street edge that would be necessary for privacy for street level residences. This introverted development on the southern side of Brownston St would create a more sterile, inhospitable environment for people travelling along Brownston St. It would also create a lesser degree of visual balance and enclosure than would be achieved by the concept promoted in this submission.

Low Density Residential (LDR) Zone

43. Submission Site 2 is zoned LDR in the PDP and this evidence supports the Varina submission to replace this LDR zone with MDR with a Visitor accommodation Overlay. LDR is described in Section 7.1 of the PDP as:

“... provid(ing) for traditional suburban densities and housing forms. Houses will typically be detached and set on sections between 450 and 1000 square metres in area.....”

44. The following rules in the PDP are particularly influential in determining urban design outcomes in LDR areas:

- **Rule 7.5.5 Building Coverage**

A maximum of 40%

(Note: Compare this with 45% for MDR zone)

- **Rule 7.5.7 Landscaped permeable surface coverage**

At least 30% of the site area shall comprise landscaped (permeable) surface.

(Note: Compare this with 25% for MDR zone)

- **Rule 7.5.8 Recession plane**

7.5.8.1 Northern Boundary: 2.5m and 55 degrees.

7.5.8.2 Western and Eastern Boundaries: 2.5m and 45 degrees.

7.5.8.3 Southern Boundary: 2.5m and 35 degrees.

(Note: These are all the same as for the MDR zone)

- **Rule 7.5.9 Minimum Boundary Setbacks**

7.5.9.1 Road boundary: 4.5m

7.5.9.2 Side and rear boundaries: 2.0m

(Note: In MDR the road boundary set back is 3.0m and side and rear boundaries are 1.5m)

- **Rule 7.5.11 Continuous Building Length**

The continuous length of any building facade above one storey shall not exceed 16m. (Note: This is the same as for MDR zone)

45. LDR is more traditional suburban development with typically single dwellings on larger properties. MDR facilitates residential development at greater densities with integrated developments encouraged; it is typically found near commercial hubs and community centres. As seen above, setbacks, building and landscape coverage are all less for LDR than for MDR.

VARINA RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO PDP

46. As outlined in the evidence of Mr Ian Greaves, this Varina submission recommends that the Wanaka Town Centre Transitional Overlay and MDR zone is replaced with Wanaka Town Centre Zone with a new objective and policies incorporated in the Wanaka Town Centre Chapter of the PDP that state:

Objective – *New commercial and visitor accommodation opportunities are provided for within the Wanaka Town Centre Transition Overlay in a manner that contributes to the Town Centres vitality and also safeguards the amenity of the adjoining residential zones.*

Policies

- i. *Commercial buildings to provide a quality built form which activates and integrates with the street environment and complements the existing patterns of development within the town centre.*
- ii. *Minimise conflicts between the Wanaka Town Centre Transition Overlay and the adjoining residential zone by avoiding high levels of night time noise being generated within the zone and controlling the height, setback distances and design of buildings at the zone boundary*
- iii. *To promote an integrated approach to traffic management in the Wanaka Town centre Transition Overlay including minimising vehicle access and car parking.*
- iv. *To recognise that an increase in car parking demand will be created by development in the Wanaka Town Centre Transition Overlay and promote the shared use of existing and new parking facilities for new development alongside complementary strategies to promote other travel modes and to reduce overall demand for car travel.*

47. It is the Varina submission that all existing rules of the Wanaka Town Centre Chapter of the PDP specified in Table 13.4 apply to the TCTO with the exception of the following changes (added text underlined):

13.4.4 Buildings

Discretion is restricted to consideration of all of the following: external appearance, materials, signage platform, lighting, impact on the street (to be guided by the Wanaka Town Centre Character Guideline 2011), ~~and~~ natural hazards and car parking demand, access, loading and traffic generation in the Wanaka Town Centre Transition Overlay to ensure that:

- *The design of the building blends well with and contributes to an integrated built form;*

- *The external appearance of the building is sympathetic to the surrounding natural and built environment. The use of stone, schist, plaster or natural timber is encouraged;*
- *The views along a street or of significant view-shafts have been considered and responded to;*
- *The building facade provides an active interface to open space on to which it fronts, and the detail of the facade is sympathetic to other buildings in the vicinity, having regard to:*
 - a. Building materials;*
 - b. Glazing treatment;*
 - c. Symmetry;*
 - d. External appearance;*
 - e. Human scale; and*
 - f. Vertical and horizontal emphasis; and*
- *Storage areas are appropriately located and screened; and*
- *Where a site is subject to any natural hazard and the proposal results in an increase in gross floor area: an assessment by a suitably qualified person is provided that addresses the nature and degree of risk the hazard(s) pose to people and property, whether the proposal will alter the risk to any site, and the extent to which such risk can be avoided or sufficiently mitigated.*
- *Car parking demand, access, loading and traffic generation in the Wanaka Town Centre Transition Overlay are considered in an integrated manner with the Town Centre Zone and responded to.*

13.5.1 Setbacks and sunlight access – sites adjoining a Residential zone

13.5.1.1 Buildings shall not project beyond a recession line constructed at an angle of 34° inclined towards the site from points 3m above any Residential Zone boundary.

13.5.1.2 Where a site adjoins a Residential Zone all buildings shall be set back not less than 3m with the exception of the Wanaka Town Centre Transition Overlay where the setback shall be 5.0m.

URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS: SUBMISSION SITE 1 WITH PROPOSED DISTRICT PLAN TCTO AND UNDERLYING MDR ZONE

Unbalanced development across Brownston St

48. Rules outlined in Chapter 8 require all non-residential buildings within the TCTO to comply with the Medium Density Residential built form bulk and location standards. Buildings will need to be set back 3.0 meters from the road boundary and 1.5m from boundaries with neighbours. Each site will have lower density of development in comparison to the town centre due to rules such as site coverage (45%), permeable surfaces (25%) and vehicle access. Town centre development generally has 80% site coverage, no setbacks on front or internal boundaries and access for service vehicles is limited to a few key locations along the street. The setbacks and lower density of development required in the MDR zone of the TCTO is intended to create a more spacious edge to the southern side of the streetscape which may suit the use for medium density residential but would actively work against the creation of balanced urban form in a commercial context.

Limited guarantee of development quality

49. The TCTO regulatory framework does not support the development of Brownston Street into its fullest potential as an important town entrance. Although commercial and community activities would be permitted along the TCTO and there would be “*consideration of variances*” to MDR rules to “*enabl(e) non-residential development forms*”, the medium density residential rules for setbacks and density of development would largely be adhered to. The thinking in the creation of this TCTO seems to be a hesitant mix of wanting to keep the status quo with residential development but also recognising that commercial activities need to be catered for. There appears to be a lack of a guiding vision for the TCTO and without clear direction of purpose urban design outcomes for not only individual developments but also the wider town centre and entry precincts will be compromised.

50. The Town Centre zone, in comparison to the proposed TCTO, has a clear set of development outcomes outlined in the District Plan and the Wanaka Town Centre Character Guideline. If the TCTO were replaced with Town Centre zone, Brownston and Russell Streets would benefit from this clearer platform of understanding to create a more consistent and appropriate public realm and town entrance effect.

More traffic interactions in MDR Zone

51. Number of vehicle crossings from Brownston Street would be significantly greater than if zoned for Town Centre which would not only create more traffic

interactions but would diminish the continuity and integrity of the built form and public interface along the south side of Brownston Street.

Traffic arterial poor environment for residential accommodation

52. Brownston Street is a primary arterial route for traffic to cross town and to access the town centre and civic precincts. This creates a heavily trafficked road corridor that is more appropriately developed for predominantly commercial activity rather than residential use. In the 2012 urban design concept and the vision promoted here, residential development is recommended on the second level of developments as occurs in the town centre and not on the ground floor. Within the TCTO residential accommodation would be developed on all levels.

Modest, forgettable town entrance experience

53. MDR development within the TCTO would bring buildings of a similar scale to the town centre, but as a result of the setbacks, lower density of development and lack of clear guiding vision, there would be an inconsistent street front façade with poor containment and clarity of urban form. Existing development along Brownston Street consists of an assortment of undistinguished housing styles that can be found in any older suburb in NZ. A transformation is clearly required but this transformation needs to be to a standard reflecting the calibre of Wanaka's outstanding natural setting and its growing national and international significance.

Elimination of choice for future coherent development of town centre

54. The TCTO is intended to provide for commercial uses in association with residential and visitor accommodation. However, the buildings within the TCTO will have an undesirable built form as a result of the MDR rules which will not create the commercial environment that this submission promotes. The proposed built form and footprint of the TCTO and underlying MDR will effectively constrain the central business area and prevent any future expansion of the Wanaka commercial core to the south and south-east that may over time become desirable.

URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS: SUBMISSION SITE 1 WITH TOWN CENTRE ZONE REPLACING TCTO AND MDR

Protection of residential amenity of adjoining properties

55. The vision promoted here recognises that future development along the southern edge of Brownston Street needs to protect amenity of residential neighbours. Existing Rule 13.5.1 of the Town Centre zone already defines generous setbacks and recession lines for ensuring sunlight access and amenity to residential neighbours. However, as outlined above, this Varina submission recommends

even higher levels of protection for residential amenity in proposing adoption of an additional objective and policies and rules within the Town Centre Zone for the land encompassed by the TCTO. In particular, Varina recommends a setback of 5.0m which is 2.0m greater than in the existing town centre and 3.5m greater than in the MDR zone. A rear lane at the back of the Brownston Street properties with screen planting (as shown in the 2012 concept) could be established within this generous setback. In addition to this increased setback, the PDP recession plane rule 13.5.1.1 that sets a 34 degree recession plane for town centre development adjoining residential sites will also apply.

Creation of well balanced, quality town entrance precincts

56. With the town centre boundary being placed to the rear of the properties on the south side of Brownston Street, two to three storey integrated development along the southern frontage without a setback or other MDR conditions would enable creation of balanced, strongly contained Brownston Street entrance experience.

Effective realisation of existing landuse that retains future choice

57. The dominant land use in the TCTO already is commercial. This submission seeks to allow this established use to occupy a more appropriate built form that has a more positive urban design outcome for Brownston Street. The submitted proposal to extend to the town centre zone to the south side of Brownston Street would not encourage commercial activities to extend further in an unmanaged way but it would retain that choice for the future. Brownston Street is the best place for the town centre expansion however the TCTO with MDR underlay would not facilitate or even keep this option alive for future communities to consider. Instead, they would form a barrier to it.

Optimal land use

58. Medium density residential development can occur in many places around Wanaka but locations for well-integrated commercial precincts are limited. To the south and south west of the existing town centre and Brownston Street is an area of 18 city blocks of residential development. This area was originally developed as low density residential and a substantial part of it remains in low density residential use. In the PDP these 18 blocks including the south side of Brownston Street are zoned for MDR development. If the south side of Brownston Street (approximately 17 properties) and Russell Street (approximately 10 properties) were absorbed into the town centre instead of extending into this large expanse of 18 blocks of proposed MDR, it would make little appreciable difference to this MDR area or to the supply and availability of MDR development in Wanaka in general. It would however make a substantial positive contribution to town centre character, distinction and function.

URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENTS IN SUMMARY

59. Disadvantages of retaining the TCTO and MDR in the Proposed District Plan:

- Inhibits future growth of the Wanaka Commercial Core
- Non-optimal use of land adjoining the town center.
- Diminished realisation of potential for attractive entry precinct along Brownston Street
- Lack of balanced development and use along Brownston Street
- Introverted, non active edges on south side of Brownston Street reduces vitality and connection to public realm
- More traffic interactions along Brownston Street due to greater number of vehicle crossings to MDR development along southern edge.
- Poor environment for residential development beside heavy traffic of Brownston Street arterial route
- Assets of Bullock Creek property less likely to be fully shared with public realm.

60. Advantages of replacing TCTO and underlying MDR with town centre zoning:

- Recognises that this is the best and most logical place for an extension of the urban commercial core.
- Enables provision of public services and amenity in a convenient location that will minimise vehicle miles travelled by town residents;
- Links existing and future civic precincts;
- Allows for orderly growth of Wanaka's commercial core in direction already taken by market forces.
- Provides foundations for achieving visual balance to a future Brownston Street;
- Strengthens vibrancy of the town centre by facilitating extension of commercial and retail activities into an area that is most suited to this.
- Provides greater control over development outcomes through Town Centre resource consent process supported by the Wanaka Town Centre Character Guideline.
- Recognises that Brownston Street will form the future functional entrance from the south and western parts of Wanaka and will provide the basis for greater balance and definition to that entrance.
- Fewer vehicle crossings will not only assist flow of traffic but will strengthen coherence of built form and public interface along southern edge of Brownston Street.

URBAN DESIGN ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS: SUBMISSION SITE 2

61. Varina Propriety Ltd also seeks to have the medium density zoning that is in place over the land between Brownston and Tenby Streets that terminates at McDougall Street extended to include the piece of land at the south-western end of Brownston Street immediately adjoining the Wanaka Motor Camp (Submission Site 2, refer Figure 1).
62. This small area of land is the only area of land fronting Brownston Street to be zoned low density residential in the proposed district plan. There seems to be no clearly apparent reason for it to not be included in the medium density residential zone particularly as it is already partly developed for medium density residential use.
63. In terms of urban character, it seems most appropriate that the medium density character that exists or is proposed along the greater part of Brownston Street be continued for its full length. The site of this submission is on the margin of the low density residential area. The site would be perceived by travellers from Cardrona and Queenstown using McDougall Street to access the lake front and the town centre as a part of the Brownston Street medium density precinct rather than part of the low density neighbourhoods to the south and west.
64. Submission Site 2 has frontages on significant traffic routes with McDougall Street being an arterial link from the Cardrona Road to the town centre and lake front and Brownston Street providing a key link to the town centre to the east and the Wanaka Holiday Park adjoining the site to the west. The submission site is not located on quiet suburban streets; it is an integral part of the busy foreshore townscape.
65. Factors such as the location of an older, attractive church on McDougall Street opposite Submission Site 2 and immediate proximity to the public parks and reserves, give the block the characteristics of a community hub. These characteristics would be appropriately enhanced through the managed transition from LDR to MDR development.
66. This block has potentially a useful role as a host for visitor accommodation given its proximity to the Town Centre, Lake, Pembroke Park, and show grounds- all significant attractions for visitors and all readily accessible on foot. The MDR zone is a more appropriate environment for facilitating visitor accommodation developments than LDR zones, which are designed to preserve traditional residential urban form. It seems most unlikely that LDR use will be sustainable in the long term given the block's strategic value close to the town centre and the Lake in particular.

67. In the 2012 urban design concept the western extremity of Brownston Street was recommended to be redeveloped with more arresting architecture to provide a visual focus at its junction with McDougall Street. The change from LDR to more intensive MDR development for Submission Site 2 could provide this.

CONCLUSION

68. The Proposed District Plan acknowledges the many existing commercial operations within the residential buildings along the south side of Brownston Street and recognises that it is appropriate for the “managed expansion” of the Town Centre. However, in proposing the TCTO with a MDR underlay, the rules of Chapter 8 require all non-residential buildings to comply with the Medium Density Residential built form, bulk and location standards. These standards are intended to create a more spacious edge to the southern side of the street which may suit the use for medium density residential but would actively work against the creation of balanced urban form in a commercial context.

69. Wanaka is at a critical point where development patterns are being set that will either realise or limit potential. Currently, the density of development and capital investment on the southern side of Brownston Street is low making it ideal for development from a financial and practical view point. This, however, will change if the Medium Density Residential development is granted approval to proceed along the TCTO. Once MDR development is established on the southern edge of Brownston Street, the footprint will be very difficult to change. It will be there to stay.

70. If the Town Centre is to remain the preeminent commercial hub for Wanaka with the Three Parks in a supportive role it will need to increase its commercial capacity even if only to more appropriately accommodate established businesses in dwellings along Brownston Street. The land encompassing the TCTO is the only logical place for the expansion of the Town Centre however, if MDR development is established along it, a permanent barrier to town centre expansion will be formed. Commercial activity will need to go elsewhere – to Three Parks or other commercial hubs - undermining achievement of Objective 13.2.1 of the PDP that: *“Wanaka town centre remains the principal focus for commercial, administrative, cultural, entertainment and visitor activities in the Upper Clutha area.”*

71. This submission serves to address this by requesting that the proposed medium density residential zone underlying the proposed TCTO be set aside and replaced with Town Centre Zoning.

72. This proposed change would enable Brownston Street to transform into an urban boulevard with a vitality that not only gives access across town but also gives access to adjoining commercial activities and the civic precincts. Developed in the manner envisaged by this submission, Brownston Street would provide an energetic, positive and attractive entrance to the Wanaka Town Centre, complementing Ardmore Street as the lakeside entrance.

73. This submission recommends taking a fresh look at traffic management to enable the most effective solutions for Brownston Street and the Town Centre. With this fresh approach, traffic planning will help realise the greater potential of the Town Centre and Wanaka rather than inhibit it.

74. This submission also requests the change from LDR to MDR with a visitor accommodation overlay for the block of land at the western end of Brownston Street in order to better reflect its prominent location near the Lake, Pembroke Park, Wanaka Recreation Grounds, entrance from Cardrona and also the town centre.

Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jill Corson', written over a faint, light blue circular watermark.

Name: Jill Corson

Date: 4th April 2017