

IN THE MATTER OF the Resource
Management Act
1991

AND

IN THE MATTER OF Plan Change 30 to
the Queenstown
Lakes District Plan

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMISSIONERS

Ratified as a Council decision on 4 October 2010
Notified as a Council decision on 10 November 2010

INTRODUCTION

Plan Change 30 is designed to set down the policy framework for establishing urban growth boundaries as a tool for controlling urban growth in the District. While its evaluation can be traced back more than a decade when concerns were expressed about the growth of Arrowtown, there have been concerns about the relatively unplanned growth of other urban areas in the district. While the situation cannot be compared in any direct sense with the Metropolitan issues in Auckland and Christchurch and it is not a regional concern, the failure to effectively manage urban growth can result in significant adverse effects on the natural and physical resources of the district especially those relating to the landscape and infrastructural services. It is not envisaged that urban growth boundaries will need to be imposed on all urban areas, but Plan Change 30 would provide the policy basis for establishing such boundaries by individual plan changes if or when problems arise.

BACKGROUND

Queenstown Lakes District is one of the fastest growing Districts in the country. It experiences considerable pressure for new development. Statistics NZ growth projects indicate that the District's normally resident population will increase between 30% (low series) and 70% (high series) between 2006 and 2026. This compares to a range of -3% to 20% for the Otago Region, and 12% to 24% nationally. The Council's own growth projections closely match the Statistics NZ high series.

Whilst the overall scale of the normally resident population is still relatively small (22,959 in 2006), it is subject to significant seasonal variations due to the effects of tourism with the peak season population rising to approximately 77,500 (QLDC Growth Projections 2008).

The District contains a range of small to medium size townships spread across a largely rural area. The settlement pattern and distribution of infrastructure is significantly affected by the District's topography.

Over the last decade, the District Council has been developing the strategic planning capabilities of the District. This has included a number of Community Plans, a Growth Management Strategy for the District (2007) and Long Term Council Community Plans (LTCCPs). These documents have identified the need for a more strategic and integrated approach to land use and development in order to achieve Community Outcomes and the sustainable management of resources and development. Plan Change 30 is part of the response to this.

Plan Change 30 was notified on 19 August 2009, prior to the Resource Management (Simplifying and Streamlining) Amendment Act 2009 [RMAA 2009) coming into effect on 1 October 2009. Therefore, under the provisions of Section 161(2) of that Act the proposed plan change must be determined as if the amendments made by it had not been made.

The District Plan became fully operative on 10 December 2009.

Consultation on the proposal to prepare the plan change took place during August and September 2008. Consultees included those required by statute and in addition, all the District's Community Associations were provided with a discussion document. Two public drop-in sessions were held, one in Queenstown and the other in Wanaka. Public notification took place on 19 August 2009. A total of 120 original submissions were received of which 23 support or partly support the plan change. Five further submissions were received. The submissions raised issues relating to the section 32 assessment, the proposed objectives and policies, the explanation and principal reasons for adoption, the environmental results anticipated, the definitions, the assessment matters and other general issues. Fourteen submissions were received after the date of closure of which eleven have been accepted as late submissions. The remaining three were received after the summary of original submissions was notified. These have not been accepted. One of those parties has lodged a further submission.

THE HEARING

This was held in the Crown Plaza Hotel in Queenstown on 15th, 16th and 19th April 2010. At the hearing we were assisted by Mr Mark Rushworth, Senior Policy Analyst for the Queenstown Lakes District Council. Mr Rushworth was the author of the section 42A report which had been pre-circulated.

At the hearing the following parties were represented or presented statements on their own behalf:

<p>Mr W Goldsmith (Counsel) representing the following submitters:</p>	<p>Brown and Pemberton Clients: Mt Cardrona Station Cardrona Alpine Developments Limited Signature Investments Ltd Branches Station Ltd P D Gordon Family Trust Glen Dene Ltd Cattle Flat Station Ltd Hazeel Downs Partnership Criffel Deer Farm Ltd TM & CM Scurr Ltd John Scurr Representing Spotburn Station Pezaro Children's Trust Little Bo Peep Sheep Co. Mt Creighton Joint Venture</p>
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	<p>Jeremy Bell Investments Arcadian Triangle Ltd Cardrona Landscape Inc Cardrona Valley Residents and Ratepayers Society Inc Lake Landcare Inc</p> <p>Clarke Fortune McDonald Clients: The Station at Waitiri Ltd JP and BM Holdings Ltd Waitpu Ltd Shotover Design Platinum Estates Ltd Ladies Mile Partnership East Wanaka Land Holdings Limited</p> <p>JEA & Associates Clients: Albion Trustees Arith Holdings Ltd BNZL Properties Ltd Bungy New Zealand Ltd D and M Bunn D MacColl F11 Holdings Ltd Firgrove Farm G Rodwell Henley Downs Village Ltd High Plains Wine Company Ltd Highground Land Company Ltd Jacks Point Ltd K J Horrell Morvey Ferry Ltd Northridge Investments Ltd Parkins Bay Preserve Ltd Pelican Property Company Ltd Queenstown Gravel Supplies Ltd Raeavers NXZ Ltd Receivers OPF Bobs Cove Developments Ltd Receivers of Walter Peak Developments Ltd Speargrass Farms Ltd Steve Rout Contracting Ltd The Carter Group Ltd Treble Cone Investments Ltd Roman Catholic Bishop of Dunedin Royalburn Farming Company Ltd</p> <p>Vivian & Espie Clients: Littles Stream Ltd Mount Field Ltd Woodlot Properties Ltd JF Investments Ltd Quail Rise Estate Ltd</p>
Mr Jeff Brown on behalf of	Lake McKay Station Jeremy Bell Investments Limited, trading as

	<p>Criffel Station Spotburn Station TM & CM Scurr Ltd Hazeel Downs Partnership Criffel Deer Farm Ltd Cardrona Developments Ltd Branches Station Ltd Mt Cardrona Station Ltd Arcadian Triangle Ltd Lake Landscare Inc</p>
Mr Chris Ferguson	
Mr John Edmonds on behalf of:	<p>Henley Downs Village Ltd High Plains Wine Company Highground Land Company Ltd KJ and EF Horrell Jacks Point Ltd Jacks Point Village Ltd D MacColl Northridge Investments Ltd Parkins Bay Preserve Ltd Pelican Property Company Queenstown Gravel Supplies Ltd Reavers (NZ) Ltd Receivers of Bob's Cove Developments Ltd Receivers of Walter Peak Developments Ltd G Rodwell Royalburn Farming Company Ltd Speargrass Farms Ltd The Carter Group The New Zealand Malt Whisky Company Ltd Treble Cone Investments Ltd Adamson Family Ltd and Roger Monk Toni Lewis Lisa Miles Rebecca Monk Sam Monk Mt Soho Trust Albion Trustee Ltd Arith Holdings Ltd BNZL Properties Ltd Bungy NZ Ltd D E Bruin and Co. Faulks Enterprises Ltd Firgrove Farm F11 Holdings</p>
Mr Carey Vivian	
Mr Don Spary	
Mr Dennis Nugent	

Mr E Steck	
Ms Jan Caunter (Counsel)	For Wanaka Landfill ltd and Mangatua Contracting Ltd
Dame Elizabeth Hannan and Mr J M Hannan	
Mr Castiglione (Counsel) Mr John Kyle	For Boxer Hill Trust
Mr I M Gordon (Counsel)	For Mt Soho Trust and others
Mr John Edwards	Millbrook Country Club Ltd Adamson Family Ltd and R Monk Rebecca Monk Sam Monk Tony Lewis Lisa Miles
Mr JD Young (Counsel)	For Remarkables Park Ltd
Ms Alison Noble Mr Alan Dippie	For Willowridge Developments Ltd

Submissions were tabled on behalf of Transpower NZ Ltd and the Otago Regional Council.

The hearing began with Mr Rushworth outlining his role as author of the section 42A report. He explained that although the Resource Management Act is characterised as being effects based, its purpose and principles are somewhat wider. In particular, this is because section 5 promotes the sustainable management of natural and physical resources, section 31 includes integrated management of effects and section 74 requires account to be taken of other plans and strategies. He explained that Plan Change 30 (as notified) takes a strategic approach to the management of urban growth establishing a settlement hierarchy and de facto urban boundaries around existing urban zones.

Mr Goldsmith represented the clients of several local planning consultants each of which he would call as witnesses. These witnesses had been briefed to complement each other and avoid repetition. He said he would treat the matter as a form of enquiry in order to assist us in our deliberations.

Mr Goldsmith saw the issue of urban containment as significant and complex. It affected many matters such as the affordability of housing. It was still very much a live issue in Auckland and Christchurch and it would be interesting to see how phase 2 of the reform of the Resource Management Act dealt with it. He felt that few people understood the effects of Plan Change 30 which meant that those who did understand it bore a greater responsibility. In his opinion, the plan change was not necessary because the District Plan with its zoning patterns did the job well enough. It had taken ten years to put in place and should not be tampered with. Although he agreed that Plan Change 30 had been produced with good intentions he was highly critical of it. He was concerned the provisions of the Plan Change sought to prevent any new residential growth outside of the existing urban boundaries for at least 20 years. It was not correct to say that no growth should occur in terms of new zonings. For instance, he said many landowners were operating land banks and were timing development to suit their own circumstances rather than meeting demand. One could not say that zoned urban land was necessarily available. If the de facto boundary provision based on existing zone boundaries could be removed from Plan Change 30 that would remove a lot of opposition. In Mr Goldsmith's opinion, this level of intervention could not be justified and was not adequately justified by the section 32 analysis. The problems at Hawea and Arrowtown could be addressed adequately without Plan Change 30. In fact, he said the Council had an excellent tool to control urban growth in that if it did not wish to approve it, it did not have to provide infrastructural services. What happened at Luggate would not have occurred if the Council had not agreed to provide a water supply. He accepted that there was a problem with the Rural Living Zones but considered that Plan Change 30, at least in its notified form, was not necessary and it would incur significant costs.

Mr Goldsmith called Mr Jeffrey Brown who had been allocated the topic of urban growth boundary mechanisms promoted in other New Zealand centres. He did this because Plan Change 30 appeared to use these mechanisms as a justification in the section 32 evaluation. He discussed the mechanisms used in Greater Auckland, Christchurch and the Bay of Plenty comparing the situations in those places with Queenstown Lakes. He felt that the only common element the district had with those places was that it was experiencing significant population growth. He considered that the existing provisions of the District Plan made appropriate provision for managing urban growth.

Mr Goldsmith's next witness was Mr Chris Ferguson. In his evidence Mr Ferguson discussed the purpose of the Plan Change and analysed the significant resource management issues in terms of section 32. He remarked on the apparent severity of the measures which seemed to rely rather heavily on the non statutory and untested Growth Management Strategy for direction. He regarded the policy elements related to sequential release of zoned land as particularly difficult to achieve bearing in mind the tendency of landowners to have their own timetables. He saw some difficult consequences arising out of the setting of de facto urban boundaries based on existing zoning. For instance, it would place pressure on existing urban areas for intensification without introducing mechanisms to cope, it would have consequences for housing affordability and such adverse effects had not been examined. Plan Change 30 in this respect ignored a number of community plans and conflicted with the Wanaka Structure Plan. In this last respect, his client, East Wanaka land Trust Holdings Ltd, would be severely disadvantaged. Plan Change 25 for Kingston was an example of a successful community outcome which did not need the sort of framework provided by Plan Change 30.

Mr Ferguson could not understand why no account had been taken of the findings of the Monitoring Report on the effectiveness and efficiency of the Rural General Zone undertaken on May 2009. He outlined a number of these findings which collectively found that the zone was generally effective at preventing undesirable development.

Mr Ferguson did not believe that the objectives of Plan Change 30 were the most appropriate way to achieve the purpose of the Act. He suggested a better way would be to widen the focus of the plan change away from a single mechanism, but he found it impossible to suggest effective alterations that came within the scope of the plan change.

Mr Goldsmith tabled evidence from Mr Carey Vivian. Mr Vivian's evidence briefly discussed the problems he considered to be inherent in the Plan Change. He considered that it would be almost impossible for a resource consent application to be tested against its policy framework. He believed that in some respects it was ambiguous and that the existing provisions in the District Plan were robust and already a tough test for development. Mr Goldsmith concluded the day with a request for a "word" version of Plan Change 30 so he could return with some suggested outcomes on the third day.

Mr Don Spary made the first appearance on the second day. He asked that Plan Changes 29, 30 and 39 which are all inter-related, should be considered in an integrated way. That was why he had attached his submissions on Plan Change 29. He made the point that it would not be possible to stop people coming to the area and it was not appropriate to dictate the style in which they should live. It was very much development outside the Arrowtown boundary such as Millbrook that made Arrowtown a success. Farming, he said, had not been viable for a long time and there was bound to be much more rural lifestyle. There was an abundance of water and natural defiles for roads. Planning, he said, must be simple to work, it should not strive for perfection because that was too expensive and it must be flexible to cope with the unforeseen.

Mr Spary considered that the District Plan generally worked. The costs of involvement were too much and while he thought discretionary applications were good they should be handled in an enabling way. Houses should not have to be hidden. Too much of the control was specialist driven and the public did not look at things that way and could not see problems where specialists did.

Mr Denis Nugent generally supported the plan change but did not consider that the reasons for it met with the purpose of the Act. He wished to include references to the avoidance of urban encroachment into areas of high landscape or ecological value. One of the purposes in establishing urban boundaries should be to discourage growth that would adversely affect natural environment and landscape values.

Mr Ervin Steck considered the plan change to be unnecessary and bad planning practice. It must accommodate growth: it cannot make it happen or stop it from happening. He said it should not restrict development and likened it to a steering wheel of a car rather than the brakes. Mr Steck believes the Resource Management Act is poor legislation because it involves excessive analysis and consultation which has costs in lost creativity and invention. He said it was not valid to examine the capacity of already zoned land and higher densities often meant low amenity. Upgrading existing infrastructure is generally more expensive than installing new facilities so we should not rely very much on the intensification of existing areas. Topography could not necessarily be relied on to limit urban development. Structure planning should be required for land within extended urban boundaries. He considered that there should be more references to protection of the visual

and open space amenity values of rural areas. He said that if the change was to protect areas that are not currently urban, then that purpose must be clearly stated.

Ms Jan Caunter represented Wanaka Landfill Ltd and Maungatua Contracting Ltd which companies operate on the site of the old Wanaka refuse tip in Ballantyne Road. Their operation involves a clean fill operation, gravel stockpiling and processing, stockpiling of demolition material and some recycling. They are concerned about the lack of analysis of and provision for the protection of industrial activities from encroaching urban development and sporadic and ad hoc residential activity.

Mr Young appearing on behalf of Remarkables Park Ltd acknowledged that urban growth boundaries can be an effective planning tool. What was controversial, however, was the failure to clearly identify the location of the boundaries without that he considered that a meaningful assessment of the Policy elements could not be made. As it stood, Plan Change 30 was said to be not dependent on future plan changes and if that was so it could not specify a method that required future plan changes. Even more concerning, he said was the reference to “de facto boundaries”. This made it appear as if Plan Change 30 was a holding phase with no clear intention or outcome. The principle of integrated management would require the identification of urban boundaries within Plan Change 30, he said.

The hearing Resumed on Monday 9th April with a presentation by Dame Elizabeth Hanan, a long time resident of the rural area west of Arrowtown. In her view, it was “timely and almost too late to manage the scale and location of growth and prevent urban sprawl over the whole (Wakatipu) basin and protect rural landscapes”. She considered that containing urban development within clear boundaries would safeguard the rural nature and character of the district. Dame Elizabeth supported confining 85% of the urban growth to Queenstown and Wanaka. She supported the plan change.

Mr John Hanan also supported the plan change including confining 85% of the urban growth to the two main centres and their intensification without much lateral expansion.

Mr Goldsmith then returned having examined the plan change document with a view to finding a way to retain the urban growth boundary technique without the elements that so

concerned his clients. Notably, he no longer sought withdrawal of the plan change. He found the Hannan's submissions illuminating because they were not clear as to whether the plan change was urban or rural in its basis. He noted that the Hannan property had recently been connected to the urban water supply which demonstrated the folly of not using utility delivery as one means of controlling urban spread. Extending urban utilities ultimately put a strain on policies designed to contain urban growth. He questioned the need for and the reasoning behind the proposal to restrict 85% of urban growth to the two main centres and felt that the proposal to revise that to 75% in the section 42A report was similarly not rationally based. He felt that the recommended revision merely indicated an acknowledgement that there was no sound basis for these figures. He felt it was a stab in the dark. He considered that the definition of urban growth was vague. While he considered the assessment matters in the plan change could work with a tighter definition of urban growth, he reminded us that district plans did not and should not contain assessment matters for non-complying activities. We are bound to agree with this. Mr Goldsmith presented us with an edited version of the plan change which he said would satisfy his clients.

Mr Gordon explained that his client submitters had interests in and about the Arrowtown corner of the Whakatipu Basin. They supported the basic objective of Plan Change 30 but they had concerns about its successful implementation. Principal among their concerns was the use of statistical goals and the proposed allocation of only 15% of urban growth to centres other than Queenstown and Wanaka. Such a target he said could not be justified. Dr Fairgray whose report was attached to John Edmonds evidence identified a number of flaws and showed that the statistical information used by the Council had not been tested. While his clients supported the recommendation of a shift to a 75/25% ratio this still remained unsupportable. He considered that if a statistical approach was to be adopted and, if it could be supported, at least 30-35% of urban growth should be able to be provided for outside the two main centres.

Mr Gordon was also critical of the focussing on a five year land supply even when linked to staged development because it failed to reflect an appropriately long term view and urban boundaries would have to reset again and again. He considered that proposed Policies 7.1 to 7.6 and proposed Policy 7.11 should be withdrawn and proposed Policies

7.4, 7.5 and 7.6 should be amended. Mr Gordon drew support from the evidence of Mr Edmonds and Dr Fairgray.

Mr Edmonds addressed the perceived lack of need for the Plan Change bearing in mind the constraints already in place. He questioned the statistical basis behind some of the measures and he saw no need for a settlement hierarchy. He attached a report from Dr Fairgray outlining these concerns. He adopted the evidence of Messrs Brown, Ferguson and Vivian. Mr Edmonds provided various snapshots from the District Plan to indicate that it contained adequate measures for controlling urban growth. He traversed other constraints such as the provision of infrastructure and topography. He felt that many of the cases and reports (including the Growth Management Strategy) cited as justifying the Plan Change were not relevant. There was a danger in planning by numbers, he said especially when some of the numbers came from untested documents. Specific targets should be avoided. He indicated that Plan Change 30 could proceed in a modified form largely retaining Objective 7 and Policies 7.7 to 7.10 with deletion of the last 4 words.

Mr Allan Dippie is the Managing Director of Willowridge Developments Ltd, a property development company. He explained that his company had hitherto been primarily concerned with development of residentially zoned land but lack of supply of such land has resulted in development of Rural Residential and Rural Lifestyle land at a higher density than allowed for in the District Plan – such as Meadowstone in Wanaka. It was involved in the Three Parks Plan Change (Plan Change 16). In his company's experience, the Rural Zone was a sufficient deterrent to urban development and there was no need for further controls. He had reservations about the proposed 85/15% split because there was a significant demand for people to live in centres away from Queenstown and Wanaka. He was concerned about the setting of de facto boundaries unless the rural living zone areas were included within them. He considered that attempting to artificially control the sequence of development was flawed and would lead to inefficient planning outcomes.

Ms Alison Noble reinforced Mr Dippie's view from a planning point of view in relation to the proposed statistical split of urban growth, the de facto boundaries and the proposed sequential approach. She considered that the plan change would not achieve the purpose of the Resource Management Act.

Mr Castiglione appeared on behalf of the Boxer Hill Trust. The Trust had no plans for development but there was a concern that the plan change removed an opportunity to achieve sustainable management. He considered that there was no need to change the District Plan and that establishing urban boundaries was not justified.

Mr Kyle provided planning evidence for the Boxer Hill Trust. He believed the section 32 evaluation overstated the nature and severity of the problems related to urban growth. He traversed those elements of the District Plan directed at managing urban growth issues. These were among the most protective in the country and were sufficient without the need for change. The existing measures met with high community satisfaction. There was no need he said to provide direction as to where longer term future growth should be located and therefore no need to pre-determine urban growth boundaries. The current approach in the district Plan had worked well he opined and it was important to retain diversity of opportunity rather than pushing people into pre-determined urban areas where higher densities can cause social problems. Mr Kyle considered that the section 32 assessment was flawed and did not provide sufficient evidence to support the use of urban boundaries as proposed.

Mr Rushworth, in response, acknowledged that the submissions had helped to identify the more difficult aspects of the plan change. He had not been persuaded that the plan change was unnecessary, however. He considered that some sort of settlement hierarchy is needed and that this was not provided in the District Plan. A hierarchy produces a statutory basis for growth management strategies and gives more clarity around future growth proposals.

DISCUSSION

The Issues:

A. *Should the plan change be abandoned?*

Those submitters in opposition generally started with the proposition that the Plan Change did not do anything that was not covered by the zoning and policy provisions that are already in the District Plan. Their view was that it should simply be abandoned and that

business should carry on as usual. We find that there is some truth in their assertions in that there is much more in the plan change than is necessary to provide a workable policy basis for establishing urban growth boundaries where they are needed. We are grateful for the fact that Mr Goldsmith identified that in principle. He identified a means of keeping the concept alive by stripping it of its unnecessary or less necessary elements which caused submitters a lot of concern.

We think that establishing firm urban growth boundaries in particular circumstances for some settlements can be a useful tool for protecting sensitive landscape, providing an indication of areas that can be serviced with public infrastructure, avoid hazards, cope with reverse sensitivity and are therefore suitable for future urban development. Conversely, there may well be some urban areas where further spread is environmentally unacceptable. In these cases, an urban growth boundary can be put in place to say enough is enough. Policy provisions can be put in place on which future plan changes could be based without many of the peripheral provisions that have been subject to criticism. Additionally, we believe that with such alteration, these provisions need not be accompanied by the imposition of urban growth boundaries in the interest of integrated management.

B. *Do we need a hierarchy of settlement with specific allocations of growth – the 85/15% or 75/25% apportionment?*

The statistical basis has been questioned and there is always the possibility that in future it may be desirable to accommodate more growth in some of the smaller settlements for environmental reasons. We think it is inevitable that the majority of growth will continue to occur in Queenstown/Frankton and Wanaka and that is best to continue. However, to apportion growth percentage wise is likely to be too rigid and it would lead to the need for a rather complex monitoring system. We think it is enough to have a policy of encouraging a majority of the growth to locate in the two main centres and if urban growth boundaries are to be established around those towns some account can be taken of that policy. Likewise should it prove desirable to impose an urban growth boundary in relation to one of the smaller settlements, that could be one of several factors to take into account.

C. *Why should we have de facto boundaries?*

The main reason for this seems to be to maintain a consistent approach across the whole district. However, we think this is far too rigid and that urban growth boundaries are not and will not be necessary for all settlements. Each one should be subject to specific justification via the plan change mechanism

This is one of the most criticised parts of Plan Change 30, yet it is not essential for its survival. The criticism is founded on the fact that it simply imposes a constraint on any further lateral growth of any settlement without any appropriate study of the unique circumstances which may be involved. If urban growth boundaries are imposed in a unilateral way without a study of the particular needs of any settlement or specific consultation with its community, mismatches are bound to occur. Furthermore in some cases there may well be an immediate need to review the urban boundary by means of another plan change. This would be inefficient.

On reflection, we think it best not to impose de facto urban growth boundaries. The core policy elements of Plan Change 30 can then be placed to enable the Council in individual cases to impose urban growth boundaries by means of plan changes based exclusively on studies and consultation relative to the urban area involved. Inevitably some urban areas will need urban growth boundaries for a variety of reasons and others may not. Hence we recommend this element is removed from the plan change.

D. *Do there need to be guidelines for urban growth outside an urban growth boundary in exceptional circumstances?*

We think not; no guidelines are necessary for non-complying activities and an urban growth boundary is not expected to be overcome except by plan change application. We recommend that this element be removed from the Plan Change

E. *Does the plan change represent an appropriate response in terms of Part 2 of the Act?*

Some submitters think not and we agree that a number of things are not clear. For this reason we recommend some additional work on definitions and some further references to Part 2 provisions. In particular, we recommend a new definition of urban development

and urban growth boundary and the deletion of the proposed definitions of urban growth and urban zones.

F. *Section 32 considerations have been the concern of some submitters.*

Many submitters sought the withdrawal of the Plan Change in particular because of one of the methods – the de facto boundary. We agree that that approach is not the most appropriate way to achieve the purpose of the Act. In particular, the efficiency of requiring an immediate plan change to overcome a de facto boundary in some locations would be inefficient. Likewise we might say the same for the imposition of a strict hierarchy of settlements based on a statistical split of 85/15% or even 75/25%. It is clear that the majority of growth will continue to concentrate on Wanaka and Queenstown without the need for any regulation. With the removal of such elements, the challenge in terms of section 32 must diminish. The plan change in terms of methodology becomes a policy matter only and the real interest will be in the translation of that policy into rules in the form of urban growth boundaries.

When reflecting on what we have heard through the hearing process, we have concluded that the greatest concern is over peripheral issues which have diverted attention of the central purpose of the Plan Change – that of establishing a policy base for the urban growth boundary as a resource management method.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the above discussion and the reasons given, we recommend the plan change be reduced to a much simpler form which allows for a much more flexible approach. This form should not call a halt to all lateral urban expansion but should provide a policy basis for the imposition of urban growth boundaries where and when they are needed for various environmental reasons. Our recommendation therefore is that Plan Change 30 not be withdrawn nor that it be retained as notified but that it should be modified in the terms described above. Our recommended version with tracked changes is attached as Appendix 1. Our recommendations in relation to each submitter/further submitter are attached as Appendix 2.

MHG Macleod
Commissioners

L A Cocks

M J G Garland

Date: