

**BEFORE THE QUEENSTOWN LAKES
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act
1991 (the “Act”)

AND

IN THE MATTER of the Queenstown Lakes Proposed
District Plan

Statement of Evidence of

Sarah Burdon #2407

24 August 2018

1 Introduction

- 1.1 My name is Sarah Burdon. I hold the qualifications of a Bachelor of Technology (Eco-Tourism) from The Flinders University of South Australia.
- 1.2 My husband Richard, grew up in the Wanaka region and is 3rd Generation farmer. I have been in the region for 18 years. We have two children. In 2009 we bought the Lake Hawea Holiday Park – “The Camp”. We are passionate about sustainability and providing opportunities for the future generations.
- 1.3 The Burdon’s aim is to continue to develop an Eco Camp providing a range of accommodation options for the visitors to Lake Hawea.

2 Scope of Evidence

- 2.1 This evidence has been prepared in support of Proposed District Plan Stage 2 submission #2407 (Glen Dene Ltd and Sarah Burdon) in relation to the zoning of land around the Lake Hawea Holiday Park.
- 2.2 In this evidence I will cover:
 - History
 - The Lease and Motor Park Designation
 - Current Development Process
 - Council 10 Year Plans
 - Accommodation Demand
 - The Future

3. History

- 3.1 The camp ground was established by the Cotter Family in 1971. The land was undeveloped and weed covered at the commencement of the lease. The Cotters planted the trees, maintained the grounds and built all the buildings and put in all the services.
- 3.2 The Reserve came under the control of the QLDC in 1989. There is no Reserve Management Plan for The Camp.
- 3.3 The Burdons purchased The Camp from the Cotters in 2009 which included all the buildings, facilities and services and the camp lease which expires in 2037.

- 3.4 Purchased in the economic downturn we have spent the last 9 years slowly improving the grounds, and general maintenance on buildings and have updated all the booking systems. The biggest issue has been with regards to seasonality and developing the camp further.

4. The Lease and Motor Park Designation

- 4.1 The lessee is responsible for the provision of camp ground assets without assistance from QLDC.
- 4.2 None of the assets located on the leased land, with the exception of the trees are owned by Council. While Council acknowledge that the majority of the trees have been established by the lessee as they establish they became a fixed asset of the land.
- 4.3 The Camp operates under the Motor Park Designation which states: *"a single building shall not exceed 600m² in total floor area. The combined total of all buildings on site shall not exceed a maximum of 40% of the total site area for motor parks. These standards are exclusive of play equipment."*
- 4.4 The lease requires *"That the lessee shall during the term of this lease erect further cabins on the land as finance is available and demand warrants"*. In recent years growth has been exponential and the demand now warrants more accommodation which is prevalent over the whole QLDC.

5. Current Development Process

- 5.1 Initially, when the lessee wanted to put buildings in the designation we went through APL who applied through the Council outline plan of approval process and then once approved by the Wanaka Community Board then the lessee would apply for a building consent.
- 5.2 Since then the lessee now also has to also apply for a Resource Consent from Council. Recently we applied to put in some extra accommodation, glamping platforms for tents, extensions to existing ablution block and to put in a recreational dome for campers to use during inclement weather. This process was lengthy and expensive.
- 5.4 The lessee was required to get approval from the QLDC (Wanaka Community board) which is a process in itself. A full set of concept plans had to be supplied.

Once they received approval from the Council we then applied for resource consent. During the resource consent process The Camp was not considered as a commercial operation and the landscape architects would not acknowledge The Camp land as being anything but ONL. This has huge repercussions because the landscape architects are trying to follow the rules but are not seeing what has been there for the last 46 years or the future but are seeing it as a bare piece of land. We then need to apply for a building consent. Any plan changes to the original concept plan need to go back to council for further approval. This process is required if we want to put in a storage shed, an office, ablution block, glamping deck, staff accommodation etc. It has been extremely expensive and time consuming. The process is a huge deterrent and discourages further development in the park.

- 5.5 The added cost to the buildings to go through this process makes the buildings very expensive in an area where we are already facing exorbitant building costs.

6.0 Council 10 Year Plans

- 6.1 We have submitted on a number of Council's Ten Year Plans over the years and the main points were raised with regards to the district campgrounds:

- 6.2 The plans over the years have included statements like:

- *“Tourism is critical to the economic success of the Queenstown Lakes District and it is equally critical that we hit the right balance between meeting the expectations of our community and visitors and ensuring this plan is affordable.”* (2018-2028 Ten Year Plan)
- *“this type of quality short-term camping accommodation is available to support the district economy and growth”* (2015-2025 10 Year Plan)
- The council is involved in this activity to provide maximum possible return and benefit for the community (2012-22 10 Year Plan)
- Ensure that a full range of accommodation options are available to domestic and international visitors by providing camping options close to major populated centres (2012-22 10 Year Plan)
- Without causing cost to the ratepayer (2012-22 10 Year Plan)

7.0 Accommodation Demand

- 7.1 The QLDC region is without doubt one of the fastest growing areas for tourism and the increase in visitor numbers experienced by The Camp over the last couple of years has been exponential. The speed at which this has happened also relates to the increase demand for facilities and more accommodation in the areas and also the increase in freedom camping throughout the area and the increase in waste deposited in our surrounds. It is predicted that these numbers will continue to increase.
- 7.2 Demand warrants further accommodation to be provided in The Camp, but with this we also require more facilities and service buildings, staff accommodation etc. The current consenting process is not feasible for future development especially when keeping the accommodation to an affordable level.

8.0 The Future

- 8.1 The future is that the Burdons have 20 years of their lease remaining. We are passionate about the area and especially The Camp and the area surrounding the holiday park. We would like to maximise the time we have left in the lease and take the opportunity to further improve The Camp's services, accommodation, facilities and hospitality offerings. To do this requires more buildings and facilities.
- 8.2 We see the Camp and surrounding private land as a parcel of land which should be considered as a whole as this will provide a better offering to their guests and extend their experience further. The total area needs to be looked at as it is close to the township, and boundaries the lake and the highway. There is plenty of room for growth and the area can easily absorb more buildings and accommodation options. The area will be instrumental in providing visitor accommodation to the growing numbers associated with increased visitor numbers to the area. With little other provisions for visitor accommodation in Lake Hawea The Camp can provide this option. The 10 year plans support growth in the tourism sector and so should the District Plan.
- 8.3 Without further development we do not believe that The Camp will be sustainable in the future as it needs to operate throughout the seasons. It is already running a full capacity over the summer months and the demand is for more facilities and for affordable accommodation options. The costs and the

red tape need to be reduced and the zoning needs to allow for this type of development to occur. It is not new, The Camp is 46 year old, it is an existing campground and with incorporating the surround land it has room to grow and provide accommodation for visitors and locals continuing into the future so that they can enjoy a getaway and the great outdoors.

- 8.4 We would like to see the underlying zoning of the Council owned component of campground amended to Open Space and Recreation zone Community Purpose – Campground subzone. The same Open Space and Recreation zone Community Purpose – Campground subzone is also sought for the Glen Dene Ltd land to the North of the Campground (Lot 1 DP 418972).
- 8.5 This is at little or no cost to the ratepayer to this change but the benefits to the community and the visitors to the area would be huge.