

Elderly Persons Housing Policy

Adopted – Full Council 24 November 2000

HOUSING POLICY

“outcome sought”

Appropriate housing is fundamental to the success of the Queenstown Lakes District, both economically and socially. Appropriate housing is housing which meets the needs of the user, both in terms of its design and cost.

To achieve that the council believes:

- A provision of housing is fundamentally and foremost the responsibility of the private sector.
- Housing assistance is the function of Central Government, either through state housing or income assistance.
- The housing market in the Queenstown Lakes District is generally satisfactory, between the private sector and government assistance. There is currently no evidence of major problems that have arisen in some other international resorts (eg seasonal workers living in their vehicles) this is not to say that housing is “easy to get”. Due to Queenstown economic cycles, and the seasonal nature of some employment, availability, quality and price of housing may fluctuate. However, this largely indicates that at peak times the available housing stock is being fully utilised.
- There are two categories of housing where there is currently debate:
 - Elderly persons housing. Despite some indications that the private sector is responding to the demand for specifically designed housing for the elderly, there is evidence that there is not currently enough stock for the elderly who want to remain in the community
 - Affordable staff housing.
- Employee housing is seen primarily as the responsibility of, and potentially a competitive benefit for, employers. The council may be able to assist in the ways discussed in this policy.
- Elderly persons housing has traditionally been seen as a core function of the council. The council currently provides a small number of units in the district, constructed at a time when the government provided 3.5 % concessionary interest rates to encourage council involvement.
- The council will consider supporting housing initiative which:
 - Are begun by initiatives from the community
 - Are essentially charitable or non profit in nature
 - Where the ongoing management of the facility will not be councils responsibility
 - Where the councils contribution is a proportionally small but significant support to the community organisation taking the leadership on the project.

- Have the support of the appropriate government agencies (eg WINZ or housing NZ), and of local agencies that have an interest in housing.
- The forms of support which the council may be able to provide are:
 - Providing land, obtained by way of reserves contribution, in the way now being sought by the Abbeyfield Trust
 - Support and encouragement, in a variety of ways, assist organisations through processes in the resource management act.
 - Being a vehicle for organisations to access central government funds. The council is currently the “patron” of the Queenstown Safer Community council allowing that body to obtain government funding.
 - Cash grants from ratepayers funds for capital purposes or to cover operating deficits, are not seen as appropriate
 - Providing access to council facilities eg: Stanley St Council Chamber, and council support to the lead agency in presenting its proposals to other parties.

THE ABBEYFIELD PROPOSAL

The Abbeyfield proposal is broadly described as “flating for the elderly”. This ably describes the design of the premises and the expectations of the participants, and the level of support provided. It is covered in greater detail in the attached feasibility study. A plan of a typical unit and a site plan for Frankton are also attached.

The location for the current facility is shown on the attached map. The land is available from Remarkables Park Ltd by way of reserves contribution. This would become a credit (approx value \$250,000) against future development in the Remarkables Park zone. The facility proposed by Abbeyfield sits well on site and would give the occupants good access to the New World supermarket, Warehouse and related facilities in that area.

The attached feasibility study from Mr Macalister indicates the cost of an Abbeyfield facility and how it is to be funded. The attention of councillors is drawn to the substantial contribution from the Queenstown housing trust. Until recently these funds were held in trust by the Council.

Councillors should also be aware that the Abbeyfield Trust aims to use the cashflow from the Frankton development to make other Abbeyfield developments viable. The next likely facility would be built in Arrowtown. By providing the land, the council will play a major part in achieving the cashflow necessary to allow the Trust to progress future facilities.

The Abbeyfield concept is that tenants typically pay \$225 per week for their accommodation, two meals per day and live in support. The council currently provides six elderly persons housing units in Arrowtown. Since they were built standards for elderly persons housing have grown considerably. In the future the Council may be asked to consider the future of its Arrowtown units in light of the Abbeyfield project. Our current units might become the site for a new facility, or alternatively part of the funding of a facility on another site. If and when those discussions proceed, the accommodation of our existing elderly tenants will be the primary consideration.

YOUNG WORKER ACCOMODATION

Broadly speaking, the Abbeyfield approach could also be a model suitable for young workers in the tourism industry in Queenstown, particularly those starting their first jobs away from home. There appears to be some interest among Queenstown employers in pursuing this type of facility and the Council should be represented in those discussions.