

**BEFORE THE INDEPENDENT HEARINGS PANEL  
IN QUEENSTOWN**

**IN THE MATTER** of the Resource  
Management Act 1991

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER** Inclusionary Housing  
Variation to the  
Queenstown Lakes  
Proposed District Plan

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**EVIDENCE OF CHARLOTTE LEE  
ON BEHALF OF QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**INCLUSIONARY HOUSING VARIATION TO THE PROPOSED DISTRICT PLAN**

**14 November 2023**

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**Appendix 1: Social Impact Assessment Proposed Inclusionary Housing Plan Variation (13 November 2023)**

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND PROFESSIONAL DETAILS

- 1.1** My full name is Charlotte Emily Lee, I am employed at Beca Limited as a Senior Associate – Social Outcomes. I have been in this position since January 2022, prior to this I worked in London.
- 1.2** I hold the qualifications of Bachelor of Arts and Master of Regional and Resource Planning from the University of Otago, and a Master of Science from the London School of Economics and Political Science. I am a Full Member of the New Zealand Planning Institute (MNZPI) and a Chartered Town Planner of the Royal Town Planning Institute (MRTPI) (UK). I have worked for consultancies in New Zealand and the United Kingdom, and for the UK Civil Service, in town planning and social impact roles since 2006.
- 1.3** I have prepared or was otherwise involved (as specified) in undertaking Social Impact Assessments (**SIA**) for a number of infrastructure and land use proposals in New Zealand, including the following:
- (a) Transmission Gully (lead author) Notice of Requirement, for Waka Kotahi New Zealand Transport Agency.
  - (b) Ruakura Inland Port (lead author) Private Plan Change (industrial park and medium density residential), for Tainui Group Holdings Ltd.
  - (c) City Rail Link (co-author) Notices of Requirement, for Auckland Transport.
  - (d) Technical Reviewer – Social Impact Review for Arohata Prison (proposed residential intensification), for Ara Poutama Aotearoa Department of Corrections.
  - (e) Technical Reviewer - Te Tupu Ngātahi (Supporting Growth Alliance) North Projects (route protection of 13 future strategic transport corridors: Albany to Ōrewa and via the growth areas of Dairy Flat, Silverdale West / Milldale, Wainui East, and Redvale), Notices of Requirement, for Auckland Transport and Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency [about to be lodged].
  - (f) Technical Reviewer - Te Tupu Ngātahi (Supporting Growth Alliance) South Frequent Transit Network (FTN) Project (route protection for the operation of high-quality FTN bus services along the Great South Road

FTN, and the Takaanini FTN), Notices of Requirement, for Auckland Transport and Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency [about to be lodged].

## **2. CODE OF CONDUCT**

**2.1** While I acknowledge this is a Council hearing, I confirm that I have read and am familiar with the Code of Conduct for Expert Witness contained in the Environment Court Practice Note 2014, and that I agree to comply with it. My qualifications as an expert are set out above. Other than where I state that I am relying on the advice of another person, I confirm that the issues addressed in this statement of evidence are within my area of expertise. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions that I express.

## **3. SCOPE AND SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE**

**3.1** My evidence addresses the social impact of the Inclusionary Housing Variation and is structured as follows:

- (a) Explanation of the SIA Methodology
- (b) Summary of key SIA findings
- (c) My comments on submissions

**3.2** The SIA has been prepared to understand the potential social impacts (both positive and negative) of the Plan Variation. My evidence summarises the SIA. In addition to this, I have considered impacts raised by the community in submissions.

**3.3** I was a co-author of the SIA with Amelia Linzey. I led the work underlying the report, supported by my social impact team. Ms Linzey supervised the assessment process and was the specialist reviewer. This evidence is mine.

## **4. SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY**

**4.1** The full description of the SIA methodology is available in section 2 of my report, this is a summary of that section of the report.

**4.2** The social impact assessment set out to understand the potential social impacts (both positive and negative) of the Inclusionary Housing Variation. To enable this assessment the following work was undertaken:

- (a) Scoping the proposed project, the communities of interest and context of the proposal.
- (b) Gathering information on the community and proposal, including submissions on the Variation.
- (c) Profiling the social environment to gain an understanding of the communities likely to be affected.
- (d) Engaging with the community and stakeholders through an online survey and semi-structured interviews.
- (e) Identifying, analysing, and assessing potential social impacts and potential mitigation measures.

**4.3** Impacts identified through an SIA can be either positive or negative, on the basis of whether the anticipated social consequences will either enhance or detract from community values, social processes or social infrastructure. Specifically, we assess whether the Inclusionary Housing Variation:

- (a) Improves existing conditions – reducing overall problem: Positive impact
- (b) Maintains the status quo – does not improve the existing impact nor makes it worse: Negligible impact
- (c) Exacerbates existing conditions – negatively contributes to the existing social environment further exacerbating the issue: Negative impact

**4.4** In order to evaluate the potential social impacts our assessment takes the following approach. For each potential social impact area (as set out in section 2 of my report) we:

- (a) Provide the community’s experiences and reported impacts of the current situation (a lack of affordable housing provision).
- (b) Assess the potential change to the current situation as a result of the Inclusionary Housing Variation.

**4.5** Potential changes to the current situation may be experienced differently by different groups in the Queenstown Lakes District (QLD or the District); for example, those who are able to access affordable housing are likely to experience

different impacts than those living in the wider community more generally. As such, our assessment considers impacts experienced at the QLD community level, and at the individual/ family level, and an overall impact rating is then given.

**4.6** The methodology used for the SIA is based on the matters provided for in the International Association of Impact Assessment (IAIA) Social Impact Guidelines (IAIA, 2015). It draws from this framework and identifies the specific social context matters considered relevant to this assessment. The IAIA describes social impacts as impact on one or more of a series of social ‘domains’. It also identifies that impacts are inherently and inextricably interconnected, and that change in any of these domains can lead to changes in the other domains.

**4.7** The SIA assessed social impacts on these domains:

- (a) Way of life – how people ‘live, work, play’ and interact with one another on a day-to-day basis.
- (b) Community – community cohesion, stability, services, and facilities.
- (c) Political systems - the extent of which people are able to participate in decisions that affect their lives, the level of democratisation that is taking place, and the resources provided for this purpose.
- (d) Quality of the environment – people’s well-being (related to changes to the environment), sense of place and identity and changes to the amenity of living environments and character of communities.
- (e) Health and wellbeing – health is a state of complete physical, mental, social and spiritual wellbeing.
- (f) Personal and property rights – whether people are economically affected or experience personal disadvantage which may include a violation of their civil liberties. Includes the community’s concerns for decreasing property values.
- (g) Fears and aspirations – community’s perceived safety, fears about the future of their community, and their aspirations for their future and the future of their children.

## 5. SOCIAL IMPACT FINDINGS

- 5.1 In this part of my evidence, I summarise the SIA. For each potential social impact domain (as set out in section 2 of the SIA) I:
- (a) Provide the community's experiences and reported impacts of the current situation (a lack of affordable housing provision).
  - (b) Assess the potential change to the current situation as a result proposed Plan Variation.

- 5.2 The Variation would provide an ongoing funding stream to the QLCHT. Overall, I conclude, based on the SIA, that, as a result of the Inclusionary Housing Variation and an increase of retained affordable housing, there are likely to be low positive impacts on people's way of life, political systems, the quality of the environment, and health and wellbeing. A moderate positive impact is likely for people's personal and property rights, community cohesion and character, and people's fears and aspirations due to the likely increase in affordable housing, providing opportunities for residents of all ages, backgrounds, and income levels to remain, contribute to and feel a sense of belonging to the district. This can contribute to the vibrancy and wellbeing of the community.

### **Way of life**

- 5.3 It was reported in the interviews that there are parts of the community that are having to change between places providing temporary accommodation, due to changes to rental accommodation provision and/or a lack of short-term affordable housing, and that there are people 'rough sleeping' in parts of the district. Several people interviewed commented that employers were finding it difficult to attract and retain employees in the area due to the high cost of living and a lack of affordable housing.
- 5.4 Those interviewed commented that not having a stable living environment 'spills over into other parts of life', such as performing at work, impacting the ability for people to retain employment. It was noted that if the market is left as it is, the shortage of workers is likely to impact the ability for businesses to be able to operate in the QLD, and for the community to access the goods and services these businesses provide.

- 5.5** In terms of potential changes and impacts to the way of life of residents as a result of the Inclusionary Housing Variation, this will be dependent on the location of new affordable houses, and the proximity of these to goods, services, employment, community facilities and other opportunities. This is because the proximity of these destinations influences how people carry out their day-to-day activities. To date, the majority of the affordable developments that the Queenstown Lakes Community Housing Trust (**QLCHT**) has created are in locations which are in close proximity to amenities. It is assumed that this will continue given the positive feedback the trust has received on the housing it provides.
- 5.6** Several interview participants identified that a number of businesses provide accommodation for workers, noting both the positive and negative potential impacts. It does help to house workers, particularly those from service industries or who come for seasonal work, who are currently highly impacted by the lack of affordable housing provision. However, there are potential risks of having accommodation tied to employment contracts, and the social impacts of “living with who you work with”, which can be problematic for all parties if relationships break down. One interviewee outlined that these negative effects used to be more prevalent, as there is now increased knowledge of service agreements, instead of traditional residential tenancy agreements, which provide accommodation for the duration of employment. This helps provide more security for both parties.
- 5.7** Several developers commented in the interviews about the importance of providing supporting public transport infrastructure to new residential developments, including those providing affordable housing, so that the number of private vehicles on the roading network in the QLD does not increase significantly. Although the transport requirements are outside the scope of this plan change, there are existing policies and planning rules in the district plan which are likely to manage these impacts. These impacts will need to be assessed in accordance with the scale and location of any affordable housing and would be influenced by other provisions in the Proposed District Plan.
- 5.8** At the QLD community level, there is likely to be a low positive impact. It is unlikely to have a substantial impact on business operations in the short-term, but this may



change over time depending on the extent of affordable housing which are provided through the scheme and/or the availability of more affordable housing generally within the QLD.

**5.9** At the individual / family level, a low-moderate positive impact is likely for those residents that are able to access affordable housing, particularly where it is located in areas favourable for accessing other goods, services, community facilities and other destinations that positively contribute to 'way of life'.

**5.10** Overall, there is likely to be a low positive impact on people's way of life in the QLD.

### **Community cohesion and character**

**5.11** During the interviews, people reported that the lack of affordable housing is having an impact on the existing social cohesion and character, with only those who can afford to live in the district being able to stay/settle permanently. People commented on friends frequently leaving, and the difficulty of maintaining strong connections in a more transient community. This particularly impacted younger populations who highlighted that when people want to 'settle down, buy a house and have kids' there are limited affordable housing options and people leave the area.

**5.12** Of the community survey respondents, 92% agreed that housing affordability is impacting the community. The value of a community including people from different income brackets was a strong theme commented on by most interviewees. This included the importance of 'community vibrancy' and how this is created by having diverse communities, where there are interactions and connections between people from different backgrounds.

**5.13** A lack of housing affordability is also impacting the operation of integral services and facilities. Key workers (nurses, teachers, healthcare professionals) are finding it difficult to find and retain accommodation, particularly those who are renting. For example, the Ministry of Education provides housing for some teachers and there is always a wait-list. One interviewee noted that 'Everyone wants and needs service workers, but they are being priced out of the market'. Due to this issue, the QLCHT now has a specific waiting list for key workers.

- 5.14** The lack of affordable rental accommodation appears to be impacting more transient parts of the community and workers within the tourism industry and supporting sectors such as hospitality. People identified this as being linked to property owners preferring to rent properties for nightly stays on Air BnB or other home-sharing platforms, rather than providing longer term rental accommodation. This appears to be disproportionately impacting those who rent, which is 38% of the population in the QLD, particularly those who have lower incomes and therefore tighter budgets for rental accommodation.
- 5.15** As a result of the Variation, it is likely that more people will be able to access affordable housing via the **QLCHT**. As QLCHT provides a range of housing across a continuum, when accessing these services people will get a choice about the type of affordable housing that may be best for them and their family. It is also understood that the future housing portfolio is also likely to include housing for people to live alone and from a range of different incomes, ages, and backgrounds.
- 5.16** The Variation would provide greater certainty over the future funding of QLCHT developments and potentially other new community housing providers (should they wish to enter the market). This certainty is likely to positively influence the willingness of people to stay in the area, leading to a less transient community, particularly for key workers who are understood to be prioritised on the waitlist. The Variation would assist eligible residents wanting to stay in the area.
- 5.17** There are also likely to be indirect benefits for others; that is, those who are not able to access QLCHT housing immediately (i.e., they are waitlisted) or because they are ineligible. An increased provision of affordable housing in the QLD as a result of the Variation has the potential to free up other (open market) housing options, resulting in more accommodation choice than at present.
- 5.18** However, it is noted that given the scale of the lack of affordable housing and rental accommodation in the District, and the numbers of people who come to the area for seasonal work, there is still likely to be transiency in the District, impacting community cohesion.

- 5.19** The developments completed to date by the QLCHT have been integrated into existing communities and developments, and will be retained as a community asset. Given this track-record, it is likely that the residents of future developments will have an increased sense of place and belonging because of the financial contribution/land obtained through the proposed change to the planning process which will enable QLCHT to create more developments.
- 5.20** At the QLD community level, there is likely to be a moderate positive impact, as the willingness of people of all backgrounds to stay in the area may increase, in the longer term reducing some of the transiency of the community, particularly for key workers. As discussed, this adds to the vibrancy of the area, and people's socioeconomic wellbeing. At the individual / family level, a high positive impact is likely for those residents that are able to access affordable housing, particularly for key workers prioritised on waiting lists.
- 5.21** Overall, there is likely to be a moderate positive impact on community cohesion and character as there will be greater access to affordable housing, providing opportunities for residents of all ages and backgrounds to remain, contribute to and feel a sense of belonging to the district.

#### **Political systems**

- 5.22** This domain explores the extent to which people are able to participate in decisions that affect their lives. Those interviewed, particularly those representing organisations that undertake community outreach such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, Happiness House, and the Salvation Army, commented that only some people in the community (who own their own home) have choice, certainty, and control over their living situation. Interview respondents commented on feeling 'powerless' and having a comparative 'lack of choice' about their future opportunities, as lot of it was linked to having an affordable and stable living environment.
- 5.23** Kāinga Ora does not have an extensive presence in the district, managing 13 rental properties in the Queenstown Lakes District. It was also noted in an interview with Kāinga Ora that it does not have plans to build more properties in Queenstown Lakes. This was confirmed by numerous interview participants who noted that

people do not put themselves on the central government (Ministry of Social Development) housing waiting lists as they know there are limited housing options available in the district. Instead, people use the QLCHT waitlist, as indicated by there currently being 1,093 people on this waitlist. It was also noted by several interviewees that the QLCHT eligibility criteria are quite strict, with one commenting “it only helps a small number of people... there needs to be something for non-residents too”. Therefore, there is likely to be a lack of affordable housing assistance for people to access the support they need.

**5.24** 19% of survey respondents stated they were signed up with organisations for housing support, the majority (62% of those that answered yes) stating they had signed up to the QLCHT. Other answers included Facebook, the Queenstown Housing Initiative, and Happiness House. 37% of those that answered that they do need assistance, noted that they do not know which organisations offer support and/or how to access it.

**5.25** As a result of the Inclusionary Housing Variation, it is likely that more people will be able to access affordable housing via the QLCHT. As QLCHT provides a range of housing across a continuum, when accessing these services people will get a choice about the type of affordable housing that may be best for them and their family. In addition to this, QLCHT provides some wrap around support services, connecting tenants with other support agencies such as health care for those in the Senior Housing rental programme.

**5.26** There is also potential that more people will be able to access housing, outside of QLCHT provision. That is, those who are not able to access QLCHT housing immediately (i.e., they are waitlisted) or because they are ineligible. As identified above, an increased provision of affordable housing in the QLD as a result of the Variation has the potential to free up other (open market) housing options, resulting in more accommodation choice than at present.

**5.27** Despite this policy intervention, decision-making about housing in the QLD area remains primarily with existing organisations, and with people who already own and develop property. Several interviewees commented on the disconnect between local and central government in terms of housing affordability and

potential opportunities for interventions to provide more affordable housing. One central government interviewee outlined that there does not appear to be a need for public housing because there is a lack of data to support it. The waiting lists are small and although the demand does appear to be significant, a lot of that is for seasonal workers and non-residents, so these people are not eligible for QLCHT housing, nor are captured in the data and therefore not catered for by government.

**5.28** Therefore, there is likely to be a change for people accessing housing through QLCHT (or another community housing provider), through the provision of more retained affordable housing options. However, in terms of ‘housing decision makers’, the key players in the housing and rental market are most likely to remain similar to the status quo.

**5.29** Overall, there is likely to be a low positive impact on political systems. At the QLD community level, there is likely to be a very low (negligible) impact on political systems. For the individual/ family level, this exposure and support is likely to have a low positive impact on people’s ability to understand and participate in other decisions about their lives, equipping them with an enhanced understanding of additional services they could potentially access. It is acknowledged that the impacts for those who are able to access this housing have the potential to be significant; however, the high demand for this housing and the QLCHT eligibility criteria as it stands means that the extent of the impact (i.e., the number of people impacted) will be relatively small, compared to the QLD community as a whole.

#### **Quality of the environment**

**5.30** Comments were made in the interviews that an impact of a lack of affordable housing options has resulted in people living in cars, vans, and tents, in areas that are not designed for this in the long term, and that this does have an effect on the quality of the environment. One comment noted that although the housing stock is expensive, it does not necessarily translate to a higher quality of housing; the demand is high so people will live in whatever accommodation they can find, including vehicles or tents, or in cold or overcrowded housing.

**5.31** It is noted that most housing will still be in private ownership. This housing is governed by building standards, including healthy homes standards, but the quality

of the home and its environment is dictated by the owner/landlord. For people living in privately owned homes, the quality of these homes is unlikely to change.

**5.32** However, those who are able to access the affordable housing facilitated by the Inclusionary Housing Variation are likely to have improvements to the quality of their living environment, which can contribute to an increased sense of place. Although it is not clear where any new affordable housing provision will be located, QLCHT developments to date, and those in the pipeline, are on attractive sites in desirable locations (Queenstown, Arrowtown, Wānaka, Lake Hāwea), and are increasingly included as part of mixed tenure developments. The houses are well-designed and of a good quality. More people will be able to access this housing than do currently, and this could contribute to a higher quality housing environment, including by helping to reduce the number of people living in cars, vans and tents in areas that are not designed to support this.

**5.33** At the QLD community level, there is likely to be a low positive impact on the quality of the environment. In the short term, there is unlikely to be a substantial impact for those living in privately owned housing but depending on the extent of affordable housing provided through the scheme, this may help to contribute to the overall quality of the housing stock and built environment in the Queenstown Lakes area. At the individual / family level, a high positive impact is likely for those residents accessing affordable housing who will live in well-designed, good quality homes, on attractive sites in desirable locations.

**5.34** Overall, there is likely to be a low positive impact on the quality of the environment in the QLD.

#### **Health and wellbeing**

**5.35** Community survey respondents were asked to comment on how they felt about their housing situation. Sentiment analysis of these responses found that 75% of respondents felt negatively about their housing situation and/or the district's housing situation more generally. Many respondents described their and/or the district's housing situation as "terrible" or "dire". Approximately 12% of respondents commented on the negative impact on their mental health and

wellbeing, with many people commenting that they are “anxious”, “worried” and/or “stressed”.

- 5.36** The interview participants all reported stress as an impact of limited affordable housing provision. It was reported that this seems to be most prevalent for those who are unable to find or retain affordable housing in the area. Comments were given that it is very stressful constantly to be searching for housing, especially when this is compounded by the stress of living in unstable accommodation, while they search. For example, interviewees noted that this could include living in cars, vans, or tents, of which there are an increasing number, but also other difficult living situations, such as remaining in a home after a relationship has broken down because there are insufficient alternative options. These examples are likely to be very stressful, especially as there is no defined end-period for the living situation, given the lack of affordable housing on offer.
- 5.37** Even when affordable housing is secured, it was noted that stress can be experienced when retention of that home is not certain. One example given was of a family renting a property owned by someone overseas, who was known to travel to the area for the ski season. This left a lot of stress and uncertainty around whether the property owner would reclaim their home on their return. Similarly, approximately 37% of community survey respondents commented on the negative impact of Airbnb on housing in the district. Stress from financial hardship as a result of high rents was also noted for those in housing. One social service provider commented that they are now seeing some of their own staff accessing their services, particularly the foodbank.
- 5.38** Several interview participants reported that stress and anxiety can come when a family sized home cannot be found, meaning that families are separated for uncertain lengths of time, leading to stress on family relationships. This lack of family homes was discussed by one social service provider who employs a number of international workers as a key problem for their organisation; it causes stress and anxiety for the worker, their family, and can also have an impact on the retention of staff. They noted that they lose a lot of staff to other parts of New Zealand, where accommodation is cheaper and more plentiful. One comment

made was that this is not a housing market, but a 'room market', whereby it is very difficult to find whole houses to rent.

- 5.39** Potential health impacts were also identified, particularly in relation to those people living in un-fit for purpose or unstable accommodation, including in cars, vans, tents and in cold and/or overcrowded housing. Living in these conditions can result in physical health impacts, including respiratory conditions or injury, as well as mental health impacts, including anxiety.
- 5.40** Those who are able to access affordable housing as a result of the Inclusionary Housing Variation are likely to see a reduction in the stress and anxiety associated with constantly seeking or retaining a home. While there are likely to still be wait-lists, an increase in affordable housing supply means that wait times are likely to be shorter. This may result in more feelings of hope that a place in a QLCHT house is a possibility.
- 5.41** There are also potential wellbeing benefits as a result of the location of the retained affordable housing. That is, housing that is easily accessible to services, including employment and education opportunities, has the potential to reduce stress associated with a long commute or the financial pressure of being reliant on private vehicle, if there are no public transport alternatives.
- 5.42** From a health perspective, the affordable QLCHT housing stock is likely to be of a higher quality (as detailed above) and, therefore, less likely to cause physical health impacts. QLCHT policies (including regular inspections) prevent overcrowding or illegal housing practices. QLCHT housing stock is compact, to help maintain affordability, but is available in a variety of sizes and can accommodate families.
- 5.43** At the QLD community level, there is likely to be a low positive impact. In the short-term, there is unlikely to be a substantial change for those living in privately owned housing but depending on the extent of affordable housing provided through the scheme, this may increase feelings of hope that a place in a QLCHT house is a possibility.



**5.44** At the individual / family level, for those residents accessing affordable housing, there is likely to be a moderate positive impact on health and wellbeing, as the housing stock is of a good quality and subject to quality regulations and policy.

**5.45** Overall, there is likely to be a low positive impact on health and wellbeing in the Queenstown Lakes District.

**Personal and property rights**

**5.46** This relates to whether people are economically affected or experience personal disadvantage which may include a violation, or a perceived violation, of their personal and property rights.

**5.47** In New Zealand, It is noted that the RMA provides the scope for both central government and local authorities to impose planning controls on private property, primarily via regional and district plans; the focus of which is on the public interest (i.e., the management of potential effects, including social, cultural, and physical environmental effects).

**5.48** Interviewees noted recent changes in tenancy law that they believe are disincentivising landlords to rent their properties longer-term, and instead encouraging them to list properties as Airbnb / as short term rentals, which provide comparable levels of income over a shorter duration of tenancy. This is supported by a 49% reduction in rental listing in the district from December 2021 - December 2022 (Patterson, 2022). Interview participants also noted the large number of vacant properties in the district. It was agreed that both of these factors are contributing to an increased demand for housing and driving up property prices.

**5.49** There are some employers in the area who have bought property for their employees. Several interview participants discussed this, noting both the positive and negative potential impacts. One interviewee outlined that these negative effects (such as having accommodation tied to employment contracts) used to be more prevalent, as there is now increased knowledge of service agreements, instead of traditional residential tenancy agreements, which provide accommodation for the duration of employment. This helps provide more security for both parties.

- 5.50** Although increased property prices are, on paper, positive for the property owner, an interview participant noted that increased prices may make it difficult for some existing homeowners to afford rising property rates. This may be particularly the case for older people who are no longer working. This is compounded by a lack of smaller, affordable options they could move to.
- 5.51** All of the developers interviewed (5) reported that the anticipated costs associated with the Inclusionary Housing Variation (the financial contribution required) would make many projects unviable, and they would consider stopping development in the area, including ceasing to continue building out their proposed pipeline. They note the impact of this would be a reduction in supply of affordable housing in the area, exacerbating homelessness and the issues employers have with attracting and retaining staff. They also consider this would stop other developers entering the market. It is noted that this is reported as an anticipatory effect, and this potential change in behaviour was not confirmed by any actions these developers had taken to date. Most notably, this includes any decisions or actions made by developers after Plan Change 24 was notified in 2007, the first formal provisions to enable affordable housing in the district, or after the Special Housing Areas were introduced. That is, development has continued to occur in the district since the introduction of these measures, despite objections from developers.
- 5.52** Similarly, this impact was noted by an interview participant, planning to build their first home. They stated that the Inclusionary Housing Variation would compromise their ability to build, and the timeframes in which it could be built, as the financial contribution required would make the project unaffordable in the shorter term. The affordable housing contribution would also be required in instances where new houses are to be built on lots that have not already been subject to the contribution; for example, building on a vacant lot that was created before the proposed rules came into effect. This has the potential to ‘catch people out’, increasing costs for developers, or extending timeframes for development.
- 5.53** One interview participant noted that buying a house is not a human right, but that access to warm, dry, affordable accommodation is. They also stated that this means the Queenstown Lakes housing crisis is mostly around rental provision.

Those who are able to access affordable housing, including those that are provided housing as a result of increased provision provided by the Inclusionary Housing Variation, will have this basic human right met.

**5.54** At the QLD community level, there is expected to be a very low (negligible) impact, as it is unlikely to have a discernible impact for those living in privately owned housing. Anticipatory effects of the Proposed Plan Variation, including a cessation of development, are noted by developers and individuals looking to subdivide and/or build in the area, including first home builders. Although we note the potential impacts of a slowing or cessation of development for the purposes of this assessment, an analysis on the likelihood of this occurring is outside the scope of the report and this evidence.

**5.55** At the individual / family level, it is noted that there are likely to be high moderate positive impacts on personal and property rights for those residents that are able to access (rent or own) warm, dry, and affordable housing as a result of the proposed Plan Variation. It is acknowledged that the impacts for those who are able to access this housing are likely to be significant; however as discussed above, the high demand for this housing and the QLCHT eligibility criteria as it stands means that the extent of the impact (i.e., the number of people impacted) will be relatively small, compared to the QLD community as a whole.

**5.56** Overall, there is likely to be a moderate positive impact on people's personal and property rights.

#### **Fears and aspirations**

**5.57** Reported impacts relating to the lack of affordable housing provision are in relation to safety issues and fears (perceived and realised), as well as individual and community aspirations.

**5.58** A number of people expressed concern for the future community. Comments were made that it is important for a community to include people from different income brackets and backgrounds, and concern was expressed that the lack of affordable housing provision is altering the area's community fabric.

- 5.59** The interviews also identified a number of safety issues associated with a lack of affordable housing provision. A social services provider discussed the potential for safety issues to arise as a result of people having to live in difficult circumstances because there was a lack of affordable housing alternatives; for example, people continuing to live in homes where a relationship had broken down, or there had been violence. A number of interviewees also discussed the safety issues associated with living in unhealthy / un-fit for purpose accommodation, such as overcrowded homes.
- 5.60** It was noted by several interviewees that there has been some prejudice towards international renters. This may bring safety concerns, or feelings of intimidation for individuals and for the wider migrant community.
- 5.61** In terms of concerns for the future of the community, an increased supply of affordable housing is likely to improve impacts on social cohesion (discussed in section 8.2 of the SIA), providing opportunities for residents of all ages and backgrounds to remain in and contribute to the area.
- 5.62** From a safety perspective, an increased supply of good quality, affordable housing options, would help to reduce the number of people living in difficult or unsafe environments, or increase hope for people that there is a viable opportunity for a new home in the future.
- 5.63** At the QLD community level, there is likely to be a low positive impact. In the short-term, there is unlikely to be a substantial change for those living in privately owned housing, but depending on the extent of housing provided through the scheme, this may increase feelings of hope that a place in an affordable house is a possibility. At the individual/ family level, a high positive impact is likely for those residents accessing good quality, safe, affordable housing. Overall, there is likely to be a moderate positive impact on fears and aspirations in the QLD.

## **6. RESPONSE TO SUBMISSIONS**

- 6.1** 181 submissions were received on the Proposed Variation. I have reviewed the submissions and identified themes of relevance to the SIA, from those who were

supportive, and from those who were opposed. This is included in the SIA report in section 3.2.5.

- 6.2** In this evidence, I will identify a selection of themes that have arisen relevant to social impacts and, where relevant, I will address specific submissions.

**Potential positive social impacts**

- 6.3** Submissions on the potential positive social impacts of the Variation related to wellbeing, the retention of key workers, and community cohesion and character.

- 6.4** With regard to wellbeing, there are submissions that identify the impacts of housing unaffordability on community and intergenerational wellbeing. Ahana Goormachtigh of Te Whatu Ora National Public Health Service – Southern identifies that unaffordable housing has negative impacts on physical and mental wellbeing. The submission outlines that the Variation meets the expectations of public health in supporting an equitable outcome for low and middle income households in the QLD. I have reviewed the submission, including the support for affordable housing in locations that also increases equitable access to resources such as education, public transport, and other facilities. I agree with this, and the SIA has identified that to date, the majority of the affordable developments that QLCHT has created are in locations which are in close proximity to amenities. It is assumed that this will continue, given the positive feedback the Trust has received on the housing it provides.

- 6.5** In terms of key workers, submission points note the importance of key workers to the community and support provisions that provide housing for low and modest income households. I agree with this, and the SIA identifies that the proposed Plan Variation provides greater certainty over the future development plans of the QLCHT and potentially other new community housing providers (should they wish to enter the market), and this certainty is likely to positively influence the willingness of people to stay in the area, leading to a less transient community, particularly for key workers who are understood to be prioritised on the waitlist.

- 6.6** In terms of community cohesion and character, there are submissions that identify the unique characteristics of the QLD, including its attractiveness and community

character. This includes submission points that note that the community is an inclusive one with a mix of residents from all socio economic backgrounds, and that the Variation is an important tool to make sure that housing is reasonably affordable so that this diverse community can be maintained. I support this, and the SIA identifies that the value of a community including people from different income brackets was a strong theme commented on by most interviewees. This included the importance of 'community vibrancy' and how this is created by having diverse communities, where there are interactions and connections between people from different backgrounds.

### **Potential negative social impacts**

- 6.7** Submissions on the potential negative social impacts of the Variation predominantly related to its financial cost.
  
- 6.8** Concerns on the additional costs were raised by submitters, particularly for those trying to build or buy their first home. Submitters commented that the financial contribution could compromise a new build or subdivision project, or that people might sacrifice elements of the project so that it is more affordable. These matters have been acknowledged and assessed in the SIA (section 8.6.2). I acknowledge that this has the potential to increase costs for developers, or extend timeframes for development, but I note that these are anticipatory effects of the Proposed Plan Variation. An analysis on the likelihood of this occurring is outside the scope of the report and this evidence.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

- 7.1** This SIA concludes that there is likely to be low positive impacts on people's way of life, political systems, the quality of the environment, and health and wellbeing,
  
- 7.2** A moderate positive impact is likely for people's personal and property rights, community cohesion and character, and people's fears and aspirations. This is due to the likely increase in affordable housing, providing opportunities for residents of all ages, backgrounds, and income levels to remain, contribute to and feel a sense of belonging to the district. This can contribute to the vibrancy and wellbeing of the community. QLCHT provides a range of housing across a continuum, so the

Variation has the potential to support a range of people across the housing spectrum.

- 7.3** From analysing the potential social changes and impacts, the following observations are made which could be explored further by QLDC. Some of these may have the potential to alter the extent of the impact.
- 7.4** There are some additional forms of housing that could be considered for addition to the list of exemptions in section 3 of the proposed provisions. These are accessible housing and Papakāinga as they fulfil particular needs in the community. Housing developed by iwi in partnership with the Crown may also be a possible exemption if affordable housing provision is already incorporated within the development plans.
- 7.5** For the purposes of this assessment, it has been assumed that the eligibility criteria for housing assistance from QLCHT will not change as a result of the Inclusionary Housing Plan Change. We also note the existing high waiting list for affordable homes (1,093). It is observed, therefore, that the positive impacts for those who are able to access this housing are likely to be significant; however as discussed, the high demand for this housing and the QLCHT eligibility criteria as it stands means that the extent of the impact (i.e., the number of people impacted) will be relatively small, compared to the QLD community as a whole. This has been considered in describing the scale of the impact. Revisions to the eligibility criteria may alter the extent of impacts.
- 7.6** Developers and individuals looking to subdivide and/or build in the area, including first home builders, have identified potential risks and impacts of the proposed Plan Change, including a cessation of development, which could lead to a reduction in the supply of housing in the area, exacerbating homelessness and the issues employers have with attracting and retaining staff. For the purposes of this evidence, this is noted an anticipated impact, but an analysis on the likelihood of this occurring is outside the scope of the report and my evidence.



**Charlotte Lee**

**14 November 2023**



**APPENDIX 1**

**Social Impact Assessment Proposed Inclusionary Housing Plan Variation (13 November  
2023)**



# Social Impact Assessment

## Proposed Inclusionary Housing Plan Variation

Prepared for Queenstown Lakes District Council

Prepared by Beca Limited

13 November 2023



**make  
everyday  
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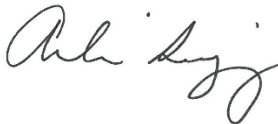
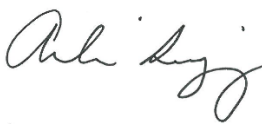
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2	Charlotte Lee	Final issued for client comment	25 October 2023
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## Document Acceptance

Action	Name	Signed	Date
Prepared by	Corinne Marti, Charlotte Lee		8 November 2023
Reviewed by	Amelia Linzey		13 November 2023
Approved by	Amelia Linzey		13 November 2023
on behalf of	Beca Limited		

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## Executive Summary

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Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) have notified and sought submissions on the proposed Inclusionary Housing Plan Variation. Beca have been contracted to undertake a Social Impact Assessment to understand the potential social impacts (both positive and negative) of the Plan Variation.

Introducing Inclusionary Housing provisions in the proposed District Plan is to help more people to access affordable housing in the district. The proposal would require most new residential subdivisions, developments, and redevelopments to pay an 'affordable housing financial contribution'. The contributions would be collected by QLDC and provided to the Queenstown Lakes Community Housing Trust (QLCHT) or another registered Community Housing Provider (CHP).

Specifically, this SIA assesses if the Plan Variation improves existing conditions (positive impact), maintains the status quo (negligible impact), or exacerbates existing conditions (negative impact).

The SIA involved desk-top research to analyse existing information about housing affordability and the proposed Plan Variation, including a literature review and development of a community profile. In September and October 2023 stakeholder interviews were undertaken with individuals and organisations in-person in Queenstown and Wānaka as well as online. An online community survey was undertaken from the 4th September – 16th October 2023.

This SIA concludes that there is likely to be **low positive impacts** on people's way of life, political systems, the quality of the environment, and health and wellbeing, A **moderate positive impact** is likely for people's personal and property rights, community cohesion and character, and people's fears and aspirations due to the likely increase in affordable housing, providing opportunities for residents of all ages, backgrounds, and income levels to remain, contribute to and feel a sense of belonging to the district. This can contribute to the vibrancy and wellbeing of the community.

The SIA concludes with a number of observations that could be explored further by QLDC:

- There are some additional forms of housing that could be expressly added to the list of exemptions in section 3 of the proposed provisions: Papakāinga and accessible housing as they fulfil particular needs in the community. Housing developed by iwi in partnership with the Crown may also be eligible for exemption, if affordable housing provision is already incorporated within the development plans.
- For the purposes of this assessment, it has been assumed that the eligibility criteria for housing assistance from QLCHT will not change as a result of the Inclusionary Housing Plan Variation. We also note the existing high waiting list for affordable homes (1,093). It is observed, therefore, that the positive impacts for those who are able to access this housing are likely to be significant; however as discussed, the high demand for this housing and the QLCHT eligibility criteria as it stands means that the extent of the impact (i.e., the number of people impacted) will be relatively small, compared to the QLDC community as a whole. This has been considered in describing the scale of the impact. Revisions to the eligibility criteria may alter the extent of impacts.
- Developers and individuals looking to subdivide and/or build in the area, including first home builders, have identified potential risks and impacts of the proposed Plan Variation, including a cessation of development, which could lead to a reduction in the supply of housing in the area, exacerbating homelessness and the issues employers have with attracting and retaining staff. For the purposes of this report, this is noted an anticipated impact, but an analysis on the likelihood of this occurring is outside the scope of this report and has been explored further in the economic assessment.

# 1 Introduction

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## 1.1 Introduction

Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) are proposing to introduce Inclusionary Housing provisions into the proposed District Plan to help more people access affordable housing in the district. The proposal would require most new residential subdivisions, developments, and redevelopments to pay an 'affordable housing financial contribution'. The contributions would be collected by QLDC and provided to the Queenstown Lakes Community Housing Trust (QLCHT) or another registered Community Housing Provider (CHP).

QLDC have notified and sought submissions on the proposed changes to the District Plan. Beca have been contracted to provide services to understand the potential social impacts (both positive and negative) of the proposed Inclusionary Housing Plan Variation (the Plan Variation). Social Impact Assessment is the most common framework used in New Zealand and internationally to analyse, monitor and manage the potential social consequences of development.

The Social Impact Assessment method has been completed in two stages:

- Part A – Social Impact Assessment Scoping Report
- Part B – Social Impact Assessment Report.

This document is the **Social Impact Assessment Report (SIA Report)**. The purpose of this report is to further analyse the potential scope of social impacts identified in Part A. This involves:

- **Review of the existing information** which has informed the proposed Plan Variation
- A **literature review** of the potential social impacts of housing affordability, including a review of media coverage
- Desktop analysis and creation of **community profiles** to gain understanding of the communities likely to be impacted
- **Impact identification** to define the likely social domains of concern
- **Community consultation and stakeholder engagement** to understand perspectives on affordable housing and the Plan Variation from a cross-section of the community
- **Impact assessment** based on the likely social changes and impacts that will likely result from the proposed changes
- Providing **recommendations and conclusions**.

The SIA Report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 – Social Impact Assessment Methodology
- Chapter 3 – Scope of the Plan Variation
- Chapter 4 – Relevant Policies and Plans
- Chapter 5 – Literature Review
- Chapter 6 – Community Profiles
- Chapter 7 – Assumptions
- Chapter 8 – Assessment of Social Impacts
- Chapter 9 – Potential Measures to Remedy and Mitigate Adverse Effects
- Chapter 10 – Conclusion and Recommendations

## 2 Social Impact Assessment Methodology

### 2.1 Social Impact Assessment Framework

Social Impact Assessment (SIA) is the most common framework used in New Zealand and internationally to analyse, monitor and manage the potential social consequences of development. The methodology used for this SIA Report is based on the matters provided for in the International Association of Impact Assessment (IAIA) Social Impact Guidelines (IAIA, 2015). It draws from this framework and identifies the specific social context matters considered relevant to this assessment.

The IAIA defines a SIA as:

*'...the process of analysing, monitoring, and managing the intended and unintended social consequences, both positive and negative, of planned interventions (policies, programs, plans, projects) and any social change processes invoked by those interventions.'*

The International Association of Impact Assessment describes social impacts as impact on one or more of the following:

- **people's way of life** – how they live, work, play and interact with one another on a day-to-day basis.
- **their culture** – their shared beliefs, customs, values and language or dialect.
- **their community** – its cohesion, stability, character, services and facilities.
- **their political systems** – the extent of which people are able to participate in decisions that affect their lives, the level of democratisation that is taking place, and the resources provided for this purpose.
- **their environment** – the quality of the air and water people use; availability and quality of the food that they eat, the level of hazard of risk, dust and noise they are exposed to; the adequacy of sanitation, their physical safety, and their access to and control over resources.
- **their health and wellbeing** – health is a state of complete physical, mental, social and spiritual wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.
- **their personal and property rights** – particularly whether people are economically affected or experience personal disadvantage which may include a violation of their civil liberties.
- **their fears and aspirations** – their perceptions about their safety, their fears about the future of their community, and their aspirations for their future and the future of their children.

### 2.2 Defining the affected area

The affected area is the local authority jurisdiction of Queenstown Lakes District Council. The Proposed Plan Variation will apply district-wide, with the exception of several listed locations, where pre-existing agreements to provide affordable housing contributions have already been made with developers.

It is noted that potential impacts may be experienced differently by different groups in the Queenstown Lakes area; for example, those who are able to access affordable housing compared with those living in the wider community more generally. As such, this SIA assesses impacts experienced at the District's community level, and at the individual/ family level.



## 2.3 Social Impact Assessment Scale

Impacts identified through an SIA can be either positive or negative, based on whether the anticipated social consequences will either enhance or detract from community values, social processes, or social infrastructure. Specifically, we assess if the proposed Plan Variation:

- Improves existing conditions – reducing overall impact (**positive impact**)
- Maintains the status quo – does not improve the existing impact nor makes it worse (**negligible impact**)
- Exacerbates existing conditions – negatively contributes to the existing environment further exacerbating the issue (**negative impact**).

The scale of each impact can be identified as very low, low, moderate, high, or very high. When determining the likely scale of an impact, consideration is given to the likelihood, duration, distribution, and scale of the impact relative to the existing and/or future environment (i.e., the magnitude of change from the existing or proposed future condition).

It is important to note that all factors (i.e., duration, likelihood, severity, and extent) are considered both individually and in terms of how they collectively impact the community. For example, an activity with a short-term duration would likely be assessed as low impact but could be increased to moderate if the impact was deemed to be severe during this short-term period.

There is not a set matrix for each rating, but the following provides some guidance:

- **Very low**
  - Short term temporary duration (e.g., weeks/ months)
  - Small extent of impact on the community being considered (e.g., less than 10% of community is affected); and
  - Very low or negligible severity of impact (the degree of change anticipated to the community system, process or value identified at the community level)
- **Low**
  - Transitional duration (e.g., months or for specific periods of activity).
  - Small to medium extent of impact on a community (e.g., between 10% and up to 50% of a community impacted – factoring severity); and
  - Low level of severity of impact (e.g., there is low degree to which it will affect the community systems, processes and values identified in the profile).
- **Moderate:**
  - Transitional to long-term duration (e.g., impacts that will extend over months to years).
  - Medium scale or extent of impact for community (e.g., likely to impact half or more of an identified community extent); and
  - Low to moderate level of severity of impact.
- **High:**
  - Long-term duration (e.g., years to permanent impact).
  - Medium to large scale extent of impact for community (e.g., likely to impact more than half of an identified community extent); and

- Moderate to high level of severity of impact (the degree to which it will affect the community systems, processes and values identified in the profile).
- **Very High:**
  - Long-term duration (e.g., more likely to be permanent).
  - Large extent or scale of impact for community (e.g., most of a community is likely to experience this impact; and
  - Significant severity (e.g., likely to result in major change to the community system, process or value identified in the community profile).

## 2.4 Social Impact Assessment Method

The methodology adopted for this SIA Report (using the IAIA framework as guidance) has been developed to identify and predict the key social impacts of the proposal to introduce Inclusionary Housing rules into the QLDC District Plan. The steps for this method are outlined below.

### 2.4.1 Step 1: Scoping and Context

To obtain an understanding of what is proposed, the preliminary 'social area of influence' (the affected area) of the proposed change, and the likely impacted, and beneficiary communities and stakeholders were identified.

### 2.4.2 Step 2: Information Gathering

The process of gathering information for profiling and assessment was as follows:

1. Desktop research
2. Review of evidence to support the proposed Plan Variation
3. Review of submissions on the proposed Plan Variation
4. Review of existing policy, strategies and plans concerning housing affordability
5. Literature and media review (newspaper articles and media releases) of housing affordability issues in the Queenstown Lakes area and overseas examples of inclusionary zoning implementation, and any resulting outcomes.

### 2.4.3 Step 3: Community profiling

To gain an understanding of the communities likely to be affected a community profile was created. The community profile was compiled using the following data sources:

- Statistical data from the 2018 Census of Population and Dwellings and 2018 New Zealand Deprivation Index
- QLDC plans, strategies and reports (e.g., the Proposed District Plan, Queenstown Lakes Spatial Plan, Queenstown Lakes Homes Strategy 2021-2031)
- Economic data and reports (e.g. Infometrics Regional Economic Profile, Cordell Building Indices Construction Cost Index, Ministry for Business, Innovation & Employment 'Destination Queenstown' Summary Report)
- Housing data and reports (e.g., Market Economics Consulting Housing Development Capacity Assessment, Ministry of Social Development Social Housing register)
- Education data from Education Counts (Ministry of Education Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga).

#### 2.4.4 Step 4: Stakeholder engagement and community consultation

In September and October 2023 stakeholder interviews were undertaken with individuals and organisations in-person in Queenstown and Wānaka as well as online. These interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner and explored existing housing affordability, the social consequences of housing affordability (and/or lack thereof), as well as constraints and potential opportunities for affordable housing provision in the QLDC area.

Over 25 interviews were undertaken with the following organisations/individuals:

- Older people
- Young people (approximately between the ages of 18 and 30)
- Renters
- Developers
- Staff in Queenstown Lakes District Council involved in planning policy, housing, and community outreach
- Community organisations – such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, Community Networks Wānaka and Wānaka Chamber of Commerce
- Queenstown Housing Initiative
- Healthcare professionals
- Schools – both secondary and primary
- The Ministry of Education Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga
- Te Whatu Ora Health New Zealand
- Kāinga Ora
- Queenstown Lakes Community Housing Trust
- National housing trusts and development agencies including Ngāi Tahu Property.

An online community survey was undertaken from the 4<sup>th</sup> September – 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023. The questions asked in this survey explored the community's perceptions of housing supply and affordability in Queenstown, the barriers and opportunities of renting or owning a home in the district, and their support for permanent affordable housing in the community (refer to the Appendix A for a copy of the questions). The survey was emailed to key organisations throughout the district as well as being promoted on Queenstown Lakes District Council's website and social media channels. There were 123 responses to the survey, of which 53% identified as renters, 33% own their own home, and 14% listed other: including housesitting, living with parents, living in hostels or in student accommodation. In terms of where respondents live, the following locations were supplied:

- Queenstown/ Whakatipu: 57.7%
- Frankton: 13.8%
- Wānaka/ Upper Clutha: 12.2%
- Arrowtown: 7.3%
- Hāwea: 2.4%
- Kingston: 1.6%
- Luggate: 0.8%

- Elsewhere in Aotearoa New Zealand: 4%

#### **2.4.5 Step 5: Impact identification**

An SIA Scoping Report was completed in September 2023 and comprised of Steps 1-3 above. It also informed Step 4 'Stakeholder engagement and community consultation'. The report identified the social domains to be explored during community and stakeholder engagement, and assessed within this SIA Report.

#### **2.4.6 Step 6: Assessment of Social Impacts**

The collected information (including community and stakeholder engagement) was reviewed and the social domains of concern for assessment confirmed. Through analysis, the social changes and impacts that will likely result from the Plan Variation were determined. The potential magnitude of impacts was determined using the methodology described in section 2.2.

#### **2.4.7 Step 7: Recommendations**

Based on the findings of Step 6: Assessment of Social Impacts, the SIA provides observations and recommendations for further exploration by QLDC.

## 3 Scope of the Proposed Plan Variation

### 3.1 Scope of the Proposed Plan Variation

The following sets out the scope of the notified planning provisions in the Plan Variation. These provisions are supported by a Section 32 Report (QLDC, 2023a) and numerous other assessments including a Valuation Report, Economic Assessment and reporting detailing issues and options for affordable housing.

An affordable Housing Financial Contribution shall be provided to the QLDC as follows:

1) *Subdivisions:*

- a) *Residential subdivisions within urban growth boundaries or other Residential Zones outside urban growth boundaries:*
  - i) *resulting in more than 1 but less than 20 new lots: a monetary contribution shall be paid to the Council equal to 5% of the estimated sales value of serviced lots; or*
  - ii) *resulting in 20 or more lots: a contribution of land comprising 5% of serviced lots transferred for no monetary or other consideration to the Council.*
- b) *Residential subdivisions in a Settlement Zone, Rural-Residential Zone, Wakatipu Basin Rural Amenity Zone Lifestyle Precinct or Special Zone:*
  - i) *a monetary contribution shall be paid to the Council equal to 1.0% of the estimated sales value of the lots created.*

2) *Development:*

- a) *Residential floorspace for any new or relocated units on lots that have not been subject to a financial contribution under 1 (a) above: A monetary contribution shall be paid to the Council equal to the lesser of:*
  - i) *2.0% of the estimated sales value of the additional units, or*
  - ii) *\$150 per sqm of the net increase in residential floorspace.*
- b) *Residential floorspace for any new or relocated units on lots that have not been subject to a monetary contribution under 1 (b) above: A monetary contribution shall be paid to the Council equal to:*
  - i) *\$75 per sqm of the net increase in residential floorspace.*
  - ii) *for new residential floorspace on lots that have provided a monetary contribution under 1(a) above, a 'top up' monetary contribution shall be paid to the Council, equal to the formula (A) – (B):.*

*With (a) being the lesser of:*

*2.0% of the estimated sale value of the additional units, or*

*\$150 per sqm of the net increase in residential floorspace, and*

*(B) being the per lot contribution paid under 1(a).*

3) *Exemptions:*

*For the purposes of this standard, the following types of residential activities shall not be counted as contributing to the total number of residential units in a development, nor be counted towards fulfilling the requirement of 40.8.1:*

- a) *a Residential Flat*
- b) *social or affordable housing delivered by Kāinga Ora, a publicly owned urban regeneration company, the Council or a registered community housing provider that complies with the requirements of Schedule 40.1, where affordable housing comprises at least 10% of the dwelling units in the development; or*
- c) *a managed care unit in a Retirement Village or Rest Home (as defined by the Retirement Villages Act 2003 or the Health and Disability Act), or*
- d) *a residential unit located in a Zone that already contains affordable housing provisions in the district plan, or where previous agreements and affordable housing delivery with Council have satisfied objective 3.2.1.10 and 40.2.1 and their associated policies.*

In terms of the **area of influence** for the Proposed Plan Variation, it will apply in urban areas district-wide, with the exception of locations where pre-existing agreements to provide affordable housing contributions have already been made with developers in the form of stakeholder deeds.

Further details on the proposed provisions are provided in QLDC's Section 32 Report which has also been analysed below (QLDC, 2023a).

## 3.2 Evidence to support the Proposed Plan Variation

### 3.2.1 Summary of Submission: Draft Affordable Housing Initiative (2021)

This report provides a summary of the submissions received on the affordable housing component of the consultation undertaken over August and September 2021 for the QLDC draft Homes Strategy (discussed further in section 4) (Queenstown Lakes District Council, 2021a). The purpose of this report is to identify key issues for consideration in the Section 32 analysis and reporting for the proposed Inclusionary Zoning Plan Variation.

Public consultation (under the Local Government Act 2002) on the draft Homes Strategy and affordable housing initiative was held from 16 August to 26 September 2021. QLDC received 52 emailed submissions and 156 submissions through the Planning for Affordable Housing Survey. The emailed submissions were generally from lawyers representing property developers or land holders, while the survey responses tended to be from individuals or environmental or community groups.

QLDC developed four potential approaches to inclusionary zoning. The consultation sought feedback on which option was supported and invited general feedback as well as suggestions for improvement. The options were:

- Option 1: Update the District Plan to reduce and remove controls that affect affordability, and at the same time, negotiate with developers to provide retained affordable housing when Council is able
- Option 2: Update the District Plan to provide a bonus/incentive to developers for the provision of retained affordable housing
- Option 3: Update the District Plan to implement a mandatory requirement for developers to include some retained affordable housing – applied to new developments only
- Option 4: Update the District Plan to implement a mandatory contribution to include some retained affordable housing – applied to both new development and redevelopments, or
- None of the above.

Survey respondents generally favoured option 4 (71.2% of responses), followed by option 3 (10.3%), option 1 (7.1%), none of the above (6.4%), with option 2 as the least popular (4.5%). Respondents in favour of option 4

commented that it will help ensure there is a pipeline of affordable housing over the long term, and that the scheme should have an eligibility criterion i.e., income levels and/or a preference for first home buyers.

The following common themes emerged from the submissions:

- Mixture of support and opposition to inclusionary zoning.
- Possible unintended consequences such as development of greenfield land rather than existing land close to town and infrastructure due to costs, slowing housing supply.
- Concerns that it would potentially encourage development in areas outside the district and make housing more unaffordable for middle income earners.
- Affordable housing is a social policy issue better addressed by central government than under the Resource Management Act.
- Extent of any inclusionary zoning scheme needs justification, e.g., are Resort and Rural Visitor Zones to be included.
- Affordable housing concerns should be addressed through removing density controls and making it easier to undertake town house developments, tiny houses, etc.
- Insufficient analysis of options especially 1-3.
- Need to test the potential impact of inclusionary zoning on the supply of feasible capacity, particularly in the short to medium term.

### 3.2.2 Section 32 Evaluation for Inclusionary Housing (2022)

As required by Section 32 of the Resource Management Act (RMA), this report provides an assessment of proposed objectives, policies and methods that seek to increase the amount of affordable housing in Queenstown Lakes District. The Section 32 helps to demonstrate that the Plan Variation has been well-tested against the purpose of the RMA, and that the anticipated benefits of introducing new regulations outweigh the anticipated costs and risks.

Based on the Section 32 analysis, and associated assessments, the report determines that District Plan-based provisions relating to affordable housing will:

- Assist the Council to fulfil its statutory functions and responsibilities as required by the RMA.
- Provide a net benefit in terms of sustainable management of natural and physical resources in a way and at a rate that contribute to social, economic, and environmental wellbeing of the district. For example, creating more mixed-use communities, retaining key workers, broadening the range of housing options, supporting home ownership, and improving social and economic wellbeing, including educational and health outcomes and more resilient communities.

The report also determines that the provisions should be based on a financial contribution model whereby the main form of contribution is monetary to Council, which will then be used for the express purposes of supporting the delivery of affordable housing via the QLCHT.

### 3.2.3 Economic Assessment (2022)

Sense Partners was commissioned by QLDC to outline the broad economic costs and benefits of implementing an Inclusionary Zoning (inclusionary zoning) policy. The report outlines the pressing need for affordable housing in the district; the reduction of extreme housing stress for a cohort of the population has significant wider economic, social and wellbeing benefits. Key findings of the report include:



- The main concerns raised in international literature are around negative impact on housing supply, house prices, house size or quality; this analysis shows no perceptible impact on these factors. However, it emphasises the need for sufficient planned and feasible housing supply.
- Housing affordability is a \$1 billion problem in the District. That is roughly how much the district's incomes would need to increase by to make its house prices and rents as affordable as the national level (which itself is not very affordable).
- Housing affordability is a contributing factor in the District's very high labour turnover rate. This report estimates that the higher labour turnover rate is costing the local economy \$105m-\$200m a year. For each worker we can make more secure and stable in their home, community and work, the economic benefit is \$55,000 - \$110,000.
- This report estimates up to 1,000 inclusionary zoning homes may be delivered over the next 30 years; a conservative approach has been taken in valuing the economic benefits. This includes two house price impact scenarios:
  - The best case - there is no impact on one off impact on house prices. Analysis of QLDC's experience with inclusionary zoning does not show any discernible impact on house prices.
  - The worst case - assume a 1% one off increase in all house prices (existing and future house prices). This gives an immediate wealth boost to existing owners but adds cost to future home buyers (which is discounted back to today).
  - In the conservative best case, the total economic benefit is reported at \$101m. In the worst case, the total economic benefit would be \$3 million over 30 years discounted at 6%.
- The largest benefit is from improved labour market outcomes and stability (reduced turnover), which adds \$27 - \$53 million of economic benefits, discounted over 30 years at 6%. The report suggests modest positive economic benefits from improved mental health, education, and household bills. However, it suggests that there are likely to be larger associated wellbeing benefits (estimated to be as high as \$170 million) but these benefits are not a factor for consideration in this report.

### 3.2.4 Housing Needs Assessment (2019)

A Housing Needs Assessment was completed by Market Economics in 2019, to provide QLDC with clearer understanding of the housing needs of the community, and to inform the Homes Strategy and the Affordable Housing Chapter of the Proposed District Plan. For the purposes of this assessment, the report defines high level housing need as the number of dwellings required to accommodate households, on the basis of one dwelling per household.

The report sets out some of the key features of the Queenstown Lakes housing market, including that the district has a tourism-focused economy which generates some relative volatility in housing demand, especially from the medium-stay and seasonal workforce, that residential property values are very high, and that these high housing prices continue to generate considerable housing stress, especially for renter households.

The analysis suggests that the focus on policies relating to housing needs would be on approximately 3,000 households by 2028, and around 4,000 by 2048, compared to just over 2,050 in 2018. This assumes that the current economic structure of Queenstown Lakes continues into the long term, including its ongoing popularity for investment/holiday dwellings. That scale of need would represent 12 - 13% of total resident households by 2048, with requirements relating to both dwelling ownership, and dwelling rental.

The relatively high levels of housing stress have arisen from characteristics of the district's economy and housing market which are well established; this suggests that the "business as usual" future would see continuation of the relatively high degree of housing stress into the longer term. The report sets out



mitigating factors that could reduce this housing stress, including provisions through the District Plan, such as Inclusionary Housing. A review of existing economic and demographic structures in the district suggests that material improvement is most likely to come from these direct district plan provisions. Reliance of commercial market forces alone is unlikely to materially improve the situation.

### 3.2.5 Submissions on the Proposed Plan Variation

The Plan Variation was notified, pursuant to Schedule 1 RMA, on 13 October 2022. A Summary of Submissions was notified on 9 February 2023. 181 submissions were received.

Themes of relevance to this report, from those who were supportive of the proposed Plan Variation include:

- Unaffordable housing has impacts on wellbeing, including intergenerational wellbeing.
- The focus on key workers is important. Rising accommodation costs inhibits finding and retaining staff.
- Viewed as a useful tool to retain community demographic mix. This submitter noted that children in the district attend school together, regardless of their socioeconomic background.

Themes of relevance to this report, from those who were opposed to the Plan Variation include:

- Concerns on the additional costs, particularly for those trying to build or buy their first home. Submitters commented that the financial contribution could compromise a new build project, and that a first home build should be exempt. One submitter posited that it would preclude them from subdividing their property to assist their children in obtaining affordable housing.
- Other exemptions were also suggested, including that community-led housing projects should not be subject to the contribution or that it should be subject to reduced charges.
- Unintended consequences, including that people may sacrifice healthy factors for their new build, such as insulation, if they need to pay additional costs as a result of the Plan Variation.
- The Plan Variation is overly ambitious and too wide reaching. Conversely, comments were also received stating that the Plan Variation does not go far enough, and that it should extend to rules for developers about creating more housing choice (e.g., apartments and townhouses).
- Concerns that the Plan Variation is not focusing on the real housing issues of the district, including the number of vacant properties. Other comments were that QLDC should focus on increasing the supply of rental properties, not home ownership. Rental affordability is putting off people who want to work in Queenstown, but not necessarily buy.

## 4 Relevant Policies and Plans

Housing and housing unaffordability is one of the biggest challenges the Queenstown Lakes community faces, the root causes of which are complex and include housing supply, housing choice, housing availability, and quality. QLDC has been actively addressing affordable housing for many years, and since the early 2000s has undertaken steps to address housing challenges. This section sets out the strategic context for housing, providing detail on housing providers in the district and relevant QLDC housing and housing related policies and plans.

### 4.1 Resource Management Act 1991

The RMA requires the decision-making process to include consideration of the actual and potential effects of activities on the environment. The RMA definition of the environment in Section 2 includes:

- (a) Ecosystems and their constituent parts, including people and communities;
- (b) All natural and physical resources;
- (c) Amenity values; and
- (d) The social, economic, aesthetic, and cultural conditions which affect the matters stated in paragraphs (a) to (c) of this definition or which are affected by those matters.

This definition is central to defining the social impacts with respect to the environment. Other sections of the RMA such as Part 2, Section 5 are also integral to an assessment of social effects. Section 5 defines the purpose of the RMA: *to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources. Sustainable management means (emphasis added):*

- *“Managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources in a way, or at a rate, which enables **people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural wellbeing** and for their health and safety*

Section 7(c) states that (emphasis added):

- *“all persons exercising functions and powers under the Act... shall have particular regard to... the maintenance and enhancement of **amenity values.**”*

Schedule 4(2) states that any person preparing an assessment of the effects on the environment should consider the following matters (emphasis added):

- *“Any effect on those in the neighbourhood and, where relevant, the wider community **including any socio-economic and cultural effects.**”*

### 4.2 Housing provision in the Queenstown Lakes District

#### 4.2.1 Queenstown Lakes District Council

QLDC’s main influence on housing is through controls in planning, consenting and enforcement duties under the RMA and Building Act 2004, and the provision of infrastructure under the Local Government Act 2002.

QLDC has a small amount of residential housing which is owned for strategic investment reasons, as well as nine pensioner units. In addition, QLDC has a small amount of housing which was historically owned for other reasons (such as the Lakeview camping ground at the Lynch Block), which has evolved into being used as low-cost rentals.

#### 4.2.2 Queenstown Lakes Community Housing Trust

In 2007, QLDC facilitated the formation of the Queenstown Lakes Community Housing Trust (QLCHT), an independent, not for profit, community owned organisation. This is the main Community Housing Provider (CHP) in the district.

The QLCHT vision is to transform the lives of committed people in the district by providing them an opportunity to secure an affordable place to call home. QLCHT has a range of housing programmes, each designed to assist eligible low to moderate income households who are genuinely struggling to commit to the area because of the housing affordability issue. The types of housing provided by QLCHT are:

- **Public Housing:** QLCHT is the landlord, but housing is funded through the Ministry of Social Development.
- **Affordable Rental:** fixed term for 5 years, with rent based on either 80% of market rate or 30-35% of gross household income.
- **Senior Housing:** sits under either Affordable Rental or Public Housing Rental, depending on a household's financial position at time of application. Senior Housing tenancies do not have an end date; therefore, it is a home for life.
- **Rent Saver:** fixed term of 5 years where a savings incentive is applied, matched up to \$2,600 annually. QLCHT will put matched savings towards a secure home deposit.
- **Secure Home:** leasehold ownership tenure borne out of the Mayoral Housing Taskforce in 2017. Purchase price is solely developed from construction cost, with a 100-year land lease. Residents must remain in house for first 3 years and then can sell it back to QLCHT for a price determined by cost and inflation. Residents have to pay ground rent annually.

Basic eligibility criteria includes that the applicant must have lived in the Queenstown Lakes district for a minimum of six months and have made this your permanent home; at least one adult member of the household must hold New Zealand residency or New Zealand Citizenship; at least one member of the household must be working full-time (minimum 30 hours per week); and, the applicant must not own or have shares, in any property or land, anywhere in the world.

QLCHT has received funding through grants from central government and through ongoing contributions of land, buildings and/or funds from private local developers who have committed support for community housing as part of the upzoning process of their land. This process has been facilitated by QLDC through deeds negotiated with developers via private plan changes to the Operative District Plan, and through the Special Housing Area process. QLDC is also a funding/land source for the QLCHT; including annual grants as well as ad hoc contributions of land, such as the Jopp Street block in Arrowtown. The relationship between QLDC and QLCHT is governed by a Relationship Framework Agreement, which sets out how the two parties will work together to deliver affordable housing. It also sets the basis for how contributions from QLDC can be used by the QLCHT. To date, QLCHT has built and delivered a total of 8 housing developments on land received through inclusionary zoning processes.<sup>1</sup> As of September 2023, there are approximately 1,093 households on the QLCHT waitlist (QLCHT, 2023).

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<sup>1</sup> Between 2013 and 2022: 90 homes through private plan changes under the RMA, 19 through Special Housing Area processes.

### 4.2.3 Kāi Tahu

Kāi Tahu are takata whenua, the Queenstown Lakes district straddles both the Murihiku and Ōtākou Rūnaka. Council works closely with Aukaha Ltd and Te Ao Marama Inc. as representatives of Kāi Tahu rūnaka with interests in this district.

Kāi Tahu representatives are key partners in the Spatial Plan | Grow Well Whaiora Urban Growth Partnership, with central government, QLDC, and Otago Regional Council. A joint vision has been developed between these partners to create cohesive approach towards housing for the future in the Queenstown Lakes district. Outcomes sought by and for Kāi Tahu through this process are from its values framework and include that whānau can afford to live and work in the district, and that development enables ahi kā and intergenerational resilience.

From a commercial perspective, Kāi Tahu has a housing presence in central Queenstown through a Ngāi Tahu Properties development, Te Pā Tāhuna, which will offer medium density development of more than 300 homes including 100 Kiwibuild properties, in addition to a variety of other housing types.

### 4.2.4 Kāinga Ora

Kāinga Ora is the country's largest residential landlord, providing tenancy services to nearly 200,000 customers and their whānau, and owning nearly 69,000 public houses nationwide.

Kāinga Ora and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (MHUD) have complementary roles in housing and urban development. MHUD is responsible for leadership in the housing and urban development system, policy, monitoring and advising the Government on strategic direction. Kāinga Ora also works closely with the Ministry of Social Development, which is responsible for working with people who need housing, income and employment support and helping people access and sustain long-term accommodation, and help meet the cost of short-term, emergency accommodation.

At the time of writing, Kāinga Ora does not have an extensive presence in the District, managing 13 rental properties in the Queenstown Lakes Territorial Local Authority area (Kainga Ora, 2023).

## 4.3 Strategic Context

Since 2003, QLDC have used Inclusionary Housing, via Private Plan Changes and through Special Housing Areas, as a way of securing affordable housing contributions, negotiated with developers on a case-by-case basis. The key QLDC strategic documents for housing, including enabling inclusionary zoning, are set out as follows.

### 4.3.1 Housing our People in our Environment (HOPE) Strategy (2005)

The Housing our People in our Environment (HOPE) Strategy is notable as the first housing strategy for the district, setting out a range of actions that the Council and community should take to address issues of reducing housing affordability. The Strategy was informed by an affordable housing working party, consultation with developers, rental agencies, business people, and three background reports; focusing on the scale of affordability problems, and proposed goals and actions to manage the issues identified. The establishment of an independent Community Housing Trust was a key focus of this Strategy.

### 4.3.2 Mayoral Taskforce Report on Housing Affordability (2017)

In April 2017, a housing taskforce was established to investigate new ways of addressing housing availability and affordability in the district, with an emphasis on the needs of families and long-term residents.

The Taskforce was made up of representatives from interested groups, including QLDC and other local government representatives, land development organisations, community groups and central government. It focused on solutions that would deliver substantial amounts of affordable housing; both long-term rental and

forms of ownership that provide security of tenure. The report outlines a number of initiatives that the Taskforce recommends and/or investigated further.

One of these recommendations is to “provide more land, intensification and inclusionary zoning”. The Taskforce reached the view that it is beneficial to move towards a policy environment where there is a mandatory contribution towards affordable housing from new greenfield developments, and from other developments that intensify use of a site. It was also noted that building support across the community and development sector is important; it is more likely to succeed when it can combine a set of incentives for developments that result in a significant proportion of affordable housing.

#### 4.3.3 The Housing Accord (2017)

The Queenstown Lakes Housing Accord was agreement between the Government and QLDC. It recognised that a fully functioning housing market is essential to building strong and healthy communities, and in supporting a strong economy, and it sets out a commitment to work together to facilitate an increase in land and housing supply and improve housing affordability in the district.

The priority actions areas of the accord were to:

- Increase the supply of appropriate housing in Queenstown Lakes, including a commitment to recommend the establish of Special Housing Areas (SHAs), and to consider incentives such as the levying of development contributions and differential rating approaches.
- Implement the powers provided by the Special Housing Areas Act (2013) to work with developers, including a commitment to attain additional resource to respond to increased consent applications.
- Facilitate the development of surplus Crown and Council land into residential housing, including a commitment to inform the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) of any Crown land that would have the potential to be developed for residential housing.
- Development of a Lead Policy, which guides Council’s approach to SHAs. It includes general principles to guide decisions, criteria for assessment of potential SHAs including affordability, Development Deeds, minimum density requirements, and processes to recommend a SHA to the Minister.

The Housing Accord was largely retired by the Housing Accords and Special Housing Areas Act 2013.

#### 4.3.4 Queenstown Lakes Homes Strategy 2021-2031

The Homes Strategy 2021 was developed by QLDC officers with a focus on what QLDC and the Queenstown Lakes Community Housing Trust could do to improve housing affordability in the district. The strategic actions and policies outlined in the Strategy are built upon the foundations of the HOPE Strategy and the Mayoral Taskforce Report on housing affordability, as outlined above.

The Strategy considers current data, context, and the results of considerable targeted and public engagement. One key action in the Strategy is inclusionary zoning.

##### 4.3.4.1 Key local challenges

The Strategy identifies four key local themes in relation to this housing challenge: housing affordability, choice, quality, and government assistance. These are discussed in further detail below.

##### a. Affordability

Because affordability is relative, the most widely used measure is based upon household income before tax; spending 30-35% of a household’s pre-tax income on housing is considered affordable. Beyond this, households end up compromising space, food, healthcare, or other necessities to pay for their homes. Households on lower than average incomes are more vulnerable to this housing stress.

The Strategy sets out that over 83% of first-home buyers and 37% of renters in the district spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs. In a 2020 survey [QLDC, 2020] 26% of respondents reported needing to move due to unaffordable rent. This presents a risk, whereby families and workers cannot afford to live in the community. Census data also demonstrates that the number of households earning below \$70,000 per annum has fallen, whereas households earning in higher wage brackets have grown. Research has shown that the district is consistently one of the most expensive places in the country to live, in terms of housing affordability.

#### b. Choice

QLDC demand projections forecast continued population growth and is a focus of ongoing spatial planning work. With regards to housing, it is important to ensure that the types of houses being created are affordable and accessible for those that live and work in the district, particularly those that earn below median incomes.

The Queenstown Lakes Housing Development Capacity Assessment (2017) found that the district has enough zoned capacity to meet population projections over the next 30 years, but that there is a shortfall of capacity in the lower to medium band priced housing; residents looking for entry-level properties (to buy or rent) often struggle to find suitable homes. An updated capacity assessment was released in 2021 which indicated that Council's planning satisfies requirements of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development 2020 (NPS-UD) to provide at least sufficient development capacity to meet demand in the short, medium, and long term to 2050. However, there will be a shortfall of housing in price bands below \$500,000 (Market Economics Consulting, 2021).

In addition, the district is a popular holiday destination; there is significant interest for second homes and investment properties, with the 2018 Census finding that approximately 28% of housing in the district was unoccupied. There are also many properties on home letting sites such as Airbnb. This represents a significant and sustained shift in how housing supply is being used in the district.

The Strategy sets out a continuum of housing tenure; noting that government policy and investment settings tend to have the greatest impact in terms of housing choice.



Figure 1: Housing Tenure Continuum (page 19)

#### c. Quality

The QLDC 2019 Quality of Life survey shows that 15% of the population cannot adequately heat their homes sometimes or all the time. Many residents use electricity for heat, a proportion of which use secondary (high everyday usage) heating devices; high energy costs are a concern for many during the winter months.

Well-built, sustainable, and warm homes also impact affordability. Finding a home which is affordable and warm can be a challenge, particularly for people seeking homes in lower price brackets. Damp, cold, and draughty houses can contribute to poor health and lost productivity and can directly impact on the social and economic wellbeing of the community. In contrast, homes that perform well have wider benefits for health,



wellbeing and energy savings and can reduce demand for infrastructure and services and increase resilience. Healthy homes also support the climate and help to address the district's carbon footprint.

#### d. Government assistance

The government's investment in public housing is limited. One of the reasons is the criteria to qualify for public housing does not match the parts of the population most in need in the district. Anecdotally, over-employment is a greater indicator of hardship in Queenstown Lakes, with people working multiple jobs to make ends meet.

Another outcome of the housing challenge which can be less apparent in the district is transiency and homelessness. Data is lacking on this sector of the population, but anecdotal evidence points towards hidden challenges for the most vulnerable. Current options for those needing immediate housing assistance is limited, and having a transitional housing option available which is not reliant on commercial accommodation is important.

#### 4.3.4.2 Action plan and proposed outcomes

This strategy has four outcomes, designed to address the four key challenges of affordability, choice, quality, and government assistance. There is a particular focus on improved outcomes for low to moderate income individuals and households. These groups are identified through community feedback and the Housing Needs Assessment as being particularly at risk in the district.



Figure 2: Strategy Outcomes (page 23)

Consultation was undertaken on the draft Strategy and the housing provisions that could be incorporated into the District Plan (the 'planning for affordable homes initiative'). A summary of the submissions received forms part of the evidence for the proposed Plan Variation, further described in Section 4.2.1 of this report.

#### 4.3.5 Housing Capacity Assessment 2021

As a Tier 2 territorial authority under the NPS-UD, QLDC is required to complete a Housing Capacity Assessment every three years. The most recent Housing Capacity Assessment for QLDC was completed in 2021 and considers the projected demand for housing and the existing capacity of the District's residential land. It also provides an analysis on the housing market and the likely impact of planning rules and infrastructure programmes that are in place.

The analysis shows that the District as a whole has sufficient development capacity within the short (3 years), medium (10 years) and long-term (30 years), based on planning rules and infrastructure programmes. However, the market is not delivering, and is unlikely to deliver affordable housing for low-medium income households. The housing market's shortfall in affordable housing is significant and projected to worsen in the absence of any interventions.

Notably, the analysis found that there was a shortfall of housing in price bands below \$500,000 in 2020 (-2,350 affordable dwellings for first home buyers, with the majority of these households in rental accommodation). If there are no interventions by 2050 to help first home buyers, this housing affordability

shortfall is projected to increase to -6,960 affordable dwellings, affecting dwelling value bands up to \$1.19m (Queenstown Lakes District Council, 2021c).

The assessment recommends targeted efforts and initiatives to make the development of affordable dwellings feasible. Recommended initiatives include:

- Inclusionary zoning
- Further investment by Kāinga Ora to complement the broad-brush mechanisms like zoning and development controls in the District Plan; and
- Other measures to reduce building costs, complexity, and time delays.

#### 4.3.6 Queenstown Lakes Joint Housing Action Plan 2023-28

The Joint Housing Action Plan 2023-2028 (JHAP) was identified as a key priority in the Queenstown Lakes Spatial Plan 2021-2023, (further detailed in Section 3.2.6.1). The JHAP sits alongside the Homes Strategy 2021 and replaces the actions section in the Strategy<sup>2</sup>. Whilst not all the actions from the Strategy have been retained, a significant number of the Strategy actions are included in the JHAP. Importantly, the Kāi Tahu values framework has informed the decision making of the Grow Well | Whaiora Partnership, the direction of the Spatial Plan, and this Joint Housing Action Plan.

The JHAP<sup>3</sup> outlines that the Queenstown Lakes district is one of the fastest growing areas in Aotearoa New Zealand, but that housing affordability remains a key challenge; at the time of publication, the median cost of housing is currently at \$1.186 million in Queenstown, \$1.268 million in Wānaka and \$1.74 million in Arrowtown (Queenstown Lakes District, 2023d). The average rent is approximately \$566 per week, which is 9% above the national average. Coupled with below average incomes, the current average property value is 14 times the average household income, compared to the New Zealand average of 9.

The JHAP vision is for well-designed neighbourhoods and improved housing outcomes for homeowners and renters to develop thriving communities. To achieve this, the JHAP outlines an action plan and programme of work, oriented around nine solutions. These are informed and guided by two overarching objectives, four outcomes (see Figure 3 below), and eight measures of success.

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<sup>2</sup> A key difference between the JHAP and the Homes Strategy 2021 is that the former was developed in partnership with Central Government and the Queenstown Lakes Community Housing Trust, whereas the latter is a QLDC Strategy.



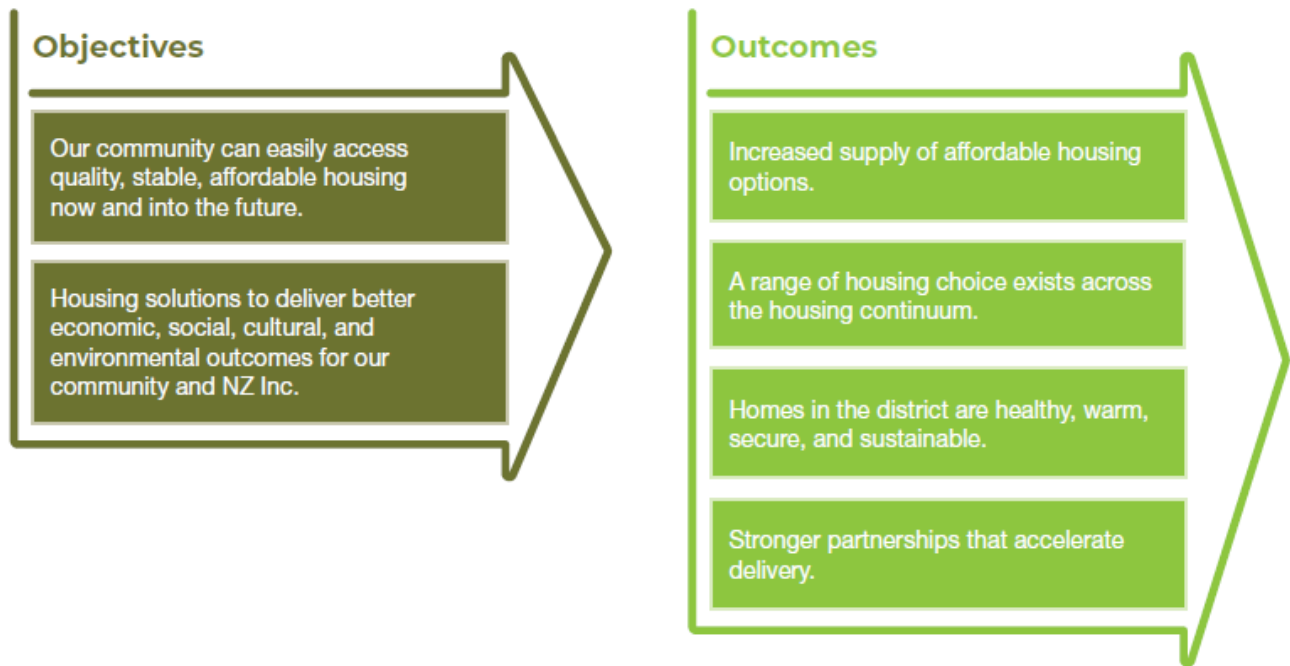


Figure 3: JHAP Objectives and Outcomes 2023-2028

The eight ‘Success Measures’ are defined as:

- Increased provision and housing choice by the Queenstown Lakes Community Housing Trust.
- Decreased income-to-housing cost ratio
- Increased choice of housing options
- Increased proportion of houses in the ‘lower value’ band across the housing continuum
- Increased stability of tenure across all ethnicities
- Increased number of houses within walkable catchments (within 600-800m of public transport, shops and services)
- Decrease in housing as a barrier to establishing businesses and to recruitment and retention of staff
- Increased sense of wellbeing in the community related to housing.

Implementing an inclusionary zoning plan change is a key action retained in the JHAP. The Grow Well Whaiora partners agreed in principle that inclusionary housing is part of the package of tools to increase the supply of affordable housing in Queenstown Lakes.

Public feedback on the JHAP closed on June 9th, 2023. 36 responses were received, as well as 11 responses to a quick poll. Public feedback on the JHAP was mixed; 42% of respondents Supported the JHAP, while 29% Opposed and 29% were Neutral. However, it is important to note that some of the submissions in support represented a large number of respondents (e.g., from the Queenstown Chamber of Commerce, and Mahi Queenstown Lakes (MahiQL)). In addition, the proposed solutions had at least 60% of respondents in support, and no solution had more than 23% of respondents opposed to it.

Respondents rated solution 5 “influence and incentivise developers to provide affordable housing” as the most important to them. 11 responses to the quick poll, eight stated that “affordable long-term rentals” was the most important concern to focus on. The remaining three selected the “all of the above” response encompassing “public, emergency, and transitional housing”, “affordable short-term rentals”, “affordable home ownership”, as well as the most popular “affordable long-term rentals”.

The questionnaire also contained several qualitative/free text questions. The key concerns and recommendations highlighted in these responses related to the planning and density of housing and people in the district and the impact that this will have on various factors, including, infrastructure provision, transport (including public transport and transport corridors), the environment, and the community culture.

Feedback on the Annual Plan 2023-2024 relating to housing was incorporated into the feedback and consideration of the JHAP, given the close timing of the two consultation processes, and the high level of media attention on the issue. Key themes from this feedback related to:

- Controlling and limiting the rate of growth in the district
- Actions to relieve the cost of housing and the associated rental pressures e.g., rates, cost of building consents
- Disincentives for empty houses and holiday homes e.g., higher rates.

The final JHAP was formally endorsed by Council on 10 August 2023, with a number of minor amendments addressing matters raised through public feedback. It was endorsed by the Grow Well Whaiora Governance group on 11 October 2023.

#### 4.3.7 Plan Change 24

Plan Change 24 to the Queenstown Lakes Operative District Plan was notified in 2007 and sought to require qualifying developments to provide affordable housing that was proportional to the effects or impacts of the proposed development and/or subdivision on affordable housing demands (also called linkage zoning).

However, the plan change was heavily litigated over several years and failed to introduce the final aspects needed to implement the requirement via a specified method, leaving the plan change only partially effective. Instead, the plan change resulted in affordable housing objectives and policies being included in the Operative District Plan.

The plan change established the legal point that housing is an issue that can be addressed under the RMA, and therefore within District Plans.

#### 4.3.8 Other relevant QLDC strategies

##### 4.3.8.1 Proposed District Plan

The Proposed District Plan (PDP) sets out to provide a more accessible and transparent plan that provides more certainty to property owners and a clear strategic direction for the district as well as additional scope for intensification in suitable locations. The 2007 Operative District plan has been reviewed in stages since 2015.

There are six strategic issues set out in the PDP, five of which have relevance for housing:

Strategic Issue 1: Economic prosperity and equity, including strong and robust town centres, and the social and economic wellbeing and resilience of the District's communities may be challenged if the District's economic base lacks diversification.

Strategic Issue 2: Growth pressure impacts on the functioning and sustainability of urban areas, and risks detracting from rural landscapes, particularly its outstanding natural features and outstanding natural landscapes.

Strategic Issue 3: High growth rates can challenge the qualities that people value in their communities.

Strategic Issue 4: Some resources of the District's natural environment, particularly its outstanding natural features and outstanding natural landscapes and their landscape values, require effective

identification and protection in their own right as well as for their significant contribution to the District's economy.

Strategic Issue 5: The design of developments and environments can either promote or weaken safety, health and social, economic and cultural wellbeing

#### National Policy Statement on Urban Intensification – Urban Intensification Plan Variation

QLDC's Urban Intensification Variation was notified 24 August 2023 and implements policy 5 of the NPS-UD, which directs councils to enable more height and density in certain locations. It also aims to implement the wider directive of the NPS-UD, to ensure well-functioning urban environments that meet the changing needs of our diverse communities and future generations..

The notified plan variation gives effect to the central government's NPS requirements, while responding to the local context. The plan variation also marks the implementation of several outcomes and objectives identified across the Queenstown Lakes Spatial Plan 2021, the Joint Housing Action Plan, the Climate and Biodiversity Plan 2022-2025, and the Better Ways to Go Mode Shift Plan 2022.

#### 4.3.8.2 Queenstown Lakes Spatial Plan – Grow Well | Whaiora (2021)

The Queenstown Lakes Spatial Plan sets out a vision and framework for how and where the communities of Whakatipu and Upper Clutha can develop to ensure wellbeing and prosperity. The Spatial Plan provides a long-term framework for managing growth. It recognises that solving some of the district's key challenges, including housing and access to jobs and opportunities, will require Central and Local Government to work together with iwi, the community, and the private sector.

Two of the Spatial Plan's key outcomes are particularly relevant to housing and have been accounted for in the strategic actions for the Queenstown Lakes District Homes Strategy 2021-31. The JHAP aims to develop robust actions that will deliver on these outcomes. Work is currently underway on the Spatial Plan Gen 2.0, building on work completed in 2021, and will become part of QLDC's Future Development Strategy (FDS) which is a requirement of the National Policy Statement on Urban Development.

#### 4.3.8.3 Vision Beyond 2050

In March 2019, QLDC unanimously agreed to commit to the Vision Beyond 2050 as a guiding document to inform future decision making and planning in the district. This was prepared in conjunction with a range of community members, including iwi, those with disabilities, young families, the elderly, and ethnic minorities. Of note for this report is the 'thriving people' vision, where everyone can find a healthy home in a place they choose to be.

### 4.3.9 Community Data

Beyond the public feedback received in relation to the above documents, QLDC also capture other community data of relevance to housing.

#### 4.3.9.1 My Place Pre-Consultation workshops 2019

In February and March 2019, QLDC engaged with the community through the 'My Place' facilitated workshops across the district to hear perspectives on housing, and possible solutions from the participants' perspectives.

In total, 679 feedback points were raised, with 13 overarching themes selected for categorisation. Planning was one of these themes, which included discussions around lot sizes, densities, or district plan rules, as well as policy discussions. The feedback received collectively from all the sessions suggests that there is little to no disagreement that housing is a major problem for Queenstown Lakes communities.

#### 4.3.9.2 QLDC Quality of Life Survey 2022

Since 2018, QLDC has conducted the Quality of Life Survey to gauge residents' overall quality of life. Specifically, these surveys look at various facets which contribute to this, so that QLDC and its partners can help improve the quality of life of residents throughout the district. The information is used to support improvements to community wellbeing through planning and decision-making by Council and other organisations, as well as advocacy to central government on behalf of the community.

The 2022 survey attracted 1,488 completed responses, an increase from 1,250 responses in 2021. Of note for this research, this survey took a special focus on housing. Some key findings include:

- 5% of residents accessed community housing in the past 12 months. 82% of residents have a steady place to live, with 16% having future insecurity and 2% not having a steady place to live.
- 62% of respondents owned the house they live in. This population was more likely to have an income over \$100,000; those that rented a room or a whole dwelling were more likely to have an income between \$40,000-80,000 and be less than 40 years old.
- 20% of residents had to move in the previous 12 months. This group has the same characteristics as the renters. 10% of this group had to move as they were unable to afford rent.

Additional comments of note included:

- There is a shortage of housing in the district which has resulted in increased rental prices and a lack of affordability for first time buyers.
- Costs of renting and purchasing is motivating people to leave the district.
- Renters must regularly move as they are on a fixed-term lease and unable to renew it when it ends.
- In addition to the high cost of rental accommodation in the district, residents also mention the standard of housing available is lower, with many rental homes not meeting the healthy home standard. Residents mention the houses are cold, damp, have mould, rodent issues, and have minimal insulation.
- Lack of rental houses and cost for permanent residents exacerbated by housing being rented out for short term accommodation (e.g., Airbnb).
- Cost of power is high in rental properties with low insulation that require heating.

#### 4.3.9.3 Queenstown Lakes labour market snapshot to December 2022

The quarterly labour market snapshot report (to December 2022), prepared for Queenstown Lakes, includes an overview of rental housing data to see whether evidence supports widespread reports that a shortage of rental housing is holding back recruitment efforts in the district. The report finds the following:

- Lack of workers is an ongoing issue for the district – wages have increased by 9% rather than 6.4% nationally. Can attribute some of the shortages to the rental market shortage.
- 30.5% of businesses (checked by Queenstown Business Chamber of Commerce, January 2023) believe availability of accommodation is the biggest barrier to achieving optimal staffing levels, and 42.7% believed it is important but one of many issues.
- 100 fewer rental properties in November 2022 than a year before.
- Looking at consenting statistics, over the past year approximately 650 new houses were built above and beyond the joint demands of population growth and additional use by short-stay visitor accommodation. Unfortunately, the end use of these additional new homes is unknown. It is likely that many houses are unoccupied and have been constructed as holiday dwellings or future retirement homes, but there is no recent data on unoccupied dwellings. The most recent data on

unoccupied dwellings was the 2018 Census, which at the time showed that 27% of Queenstown Lakes' houses are unoccupied.

#### 4.3.9.4 QLCHT 2020 Renter's Survey

The Queenstown Lakes Community Housing Trust (QLCHT) undertakes a Renters' Survey every three to four years. Its purpose is to understand the Queenstown Lakes District tenant community, in terms of housing satisfaction, intentions of settling in the district, aspirations to buy a home and barriers faced. This iteration of the survey was undertaken during the Covid-19 pandemic and provides some additional context to the responses, particularly in relation to its impact on wellbeing (including health and financial security).

Key findings include:

- There has been a clear shift in demographics since the 2016 Renters Survey. The 2020 Renters Survey indicates the 20's age group has declined, replaced by a greater number of people in their 40's. Given this increased maturity, there is also an increased number of families with children renting in the district.
- In terms of current housing satisfaction, 'location', 'landlord relationship' and 'security of tenancy' rated highest with 94%, 89% and 87% of respondents (respectively) being moderately to very satisfied.
- 'Affordability' and 'warm and dry', continue to be the two lower rated areas of satisfaction with 34% and 25% (respectively) saying they are not satisfied. Almost a quarter of respondents stated they are not able to adequately heat their homes, primarily due to the cost of heating and poor insulation.
- 29% of respondents have lived elsewhere in New Zealand in the past five years. When asked to compare their renting experiences with that in the Queenstown Lakes area, over half of those respondents' rated 'affordability', 'cost of heating your home' and 'choice/variety of rental properties' as being worse in the Queenstown Lakes area.
- There are a vast majority that wish to remain in the area long term and a vast majority that would like to purchase a home in the district. Housing affordability is noted as a barrier; the inability to save for a deposit due to the high cost of living and incommensurate incomes, housing affordability itself and the current financial impact of COVID-19 (reduced income and job instability).
- When asked about QLCHT, 56% have heard of QLCHT but a third of those respondents were not aware of any QLCHT housing programmes (this equates to around 62% who know little or nothing about QLCHT).

## 5 Literature Review

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The scope of this literature review includes the review of grey and academic literature to understand:

- The types of inclusionary zoning (inclusionary housing) policies and how these have influenced the provision of affordable housing.<sup>4</sup>
- Potential social impacts due to the provision of affordable housing; and
- The link between inclusionary zoning policies and social impacts.

### 5.1 Inclusionary zoning policies and affordable housing outcomes

Inclusionary zoning encompasses a diverse range of programmes and policies aimed at addressing issues of unaffordable housing and socio-economic segregation in communities (de Kam et al., 2013). Originating in the 1970s, it gained popularity across the United States of America (USA) as a response to the challenges posed by strict land-use zoning, which limited development supply and contributed to rising housing costs (Calavita & Mallach, 2010). Initially concentrated in suburban areas with significant greenfield development, over time inclusionary zoning programmes began to be adopted in urban areas experiencing redevelopment, unaffordability, infill, densification, and gentrification (Calavita & Mallach, 2010).

Inclusionary zoning programmes can take various forms and involve local-level and regional policy interventions to encourage or mandate new developments to contribute to affordable housing supply. These interventions may include offering density bonuses, development contributions, zoning rules, or private negotiations with developers. One option is requiring developers to allocate a portion of their development for affordable housing. This approach aims to create more integrated and mixed-income communities by providing affordable housing options within a development (Wang & Balachandran, 2021). Another commonly cited option is to require development contributions which are then utilised to provide affordable housing in other areas (Meda, 2009; Schuetz et al., 2010).

#### 5.1.1 Overseas Examples

In England, inclusionary zoning is primarily driven by Section 106 (s106) agreements, which empower councils to mandate a certain proportion of affordable housing in a development based on local housing needs. Section 106 agreements “made the provision of affordable housing a ‘material consideration’ for the granting of planning permission” (Austin et al., 2013). Local planning authorities specify the percentage of affordable housing that developers must provide. On-site provision is preferred, but off-site options may be considered where it can be justified and contributes to mixed and balanced communities. Off-site provision may allow for more homes to be delivered in areas of specific need, but may also lead to issues such as an overconcentration of affordable housing in some locations (Lichfields, 2021). In 2016 UK Government policy changes were made for small sites in England, meaning that affordable housing contributions are not required for residential property development of 10 units or less, (UK Parliament, 2019).

In the Netherlands, the focus is on achieving a social and tenure mix in affordable housing provision. Large-scale developments often incorporate a significant percentage of social housing, alongside various forms of tenure and accommodation. Since 2008, municipalities have had the authority to allocate a percentage of

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<sup>4</sup> Literature and policy use the terms inclusionary housing and inclusionary zoning interchangeably. The difference between policies will depend on the intent and implementation. This is further discussed in section 5.1.



land in new developments for social rental housing or below-market price housing (Buitelaar & De Kam, 2012).

In Germany, the emphasis is in promoting social integration within large-scale developments through a mix of rental and owner-occupied units. An interesting approach known as co-building involves housing associations formed by individuals to cooperatively construct developments, with a portion of units reserved for social housing (Mahzouni, 2017). Local government in this jurisdiction is the promoter of this cost-effective approach to affordable housing.

In Bogota, Colombia, inclusionary zoning provisions have been established through a national reform legislation called Law 388. This law mandates a minimum of 20% of units in developed sectors, and an even higher percentage in peripheral areas, to be designated as social housing. Developers in expensive areas have the option to pay in lieu, that is by providing affordable housing in less expensive areas, striking a balance between social inclusion and housing production (Santoro, 2015).

There are also many other “resort towns” around the world that have implemented or are considering inclusionary housing provisions. Notably, the Whistler Housing Authority has delivered a significant number of affordable homes and rentals since the mid-1990’s, through an array of funding structures. One such structure requires developers of commercial space or tourist accommodation to construct employee housing or make a cash contribution to an affordable housing fund (Curran & Wake, 2008). Section 933(2.1) of British Columbia’s Local Government Act allows a resort region to impose development cost charges for the purpose of providing funds to assist the local government to pay the capital cost of providing or expanding employee housing to service, directly or indirectly, the operation of the resort activities. In the United States, the resort town of Aspen, Colorado, has a long-established affordable housing programme that makes use of inclusionary zoning. Inclusionary zoning under the Aspen Area Community Plan requires at least 60% of the bedrooms in a residential subdivision to be in deed-restricted affordable housing units (Austin, 2007). Similarly, Nevada County requires 10% affordable housing built on- or off-site for all subdivisions or projects with more than twenty parcels or dwelling units (Koldus, 2004).

One of the most significant points of contention with inclusionary housing programmes is their potential impacts on housing supply, housing prices, and housing quality. The literature provides mixed results, with some instances showing drops in housing supply, while others indicate negligible changes (Wang & Fu, 2022). The effectiveness of inclusionary zoning depends on various factors, including policy age, geographic coverage, and local housing market conditions (Hamilton, 2019; Knaap et al., 2008). A recent study in the USA (which has the largest number of inclusionary zoning policies) examined the relationship between inclusionary zoning policy features and average annual affordable rent production for 27 states. It found that jurisdictions where the policy was mandatory, older, and covered the entire jurisdiction, or had complex requirements to reach lower income levels, had higher production of ‘affordable units’ (Wang & Fu, 2022). However, evaluating the effectiveness of inclusionary zoning policies can be difficult because of variation in the design and implementation of each programme that may affect outcomes (Ramakrishnan et al., 2019).

### 5.1.2 Aotearoa New Zealand Context

Although international examples are useful for context and to understand what is happening elsewhere, the legislation and land tenure context is different in New Zealand, and direct comparisons are difficult.

In Aotearoa, inclusionary housing policy has been used infrequently. QLDC began using inclusionary zoning policy to create a stock of retained affordable homes in 2004 through private agreements with developers at the time of private plan changes. These agreements dedicated around 5% of the residential land for affordable housing as part of the plan change approval process of rezoning rural land to residential subdivision. Inclusionary Zoning policy has changed in the District over time, as detailed in section 4.3 of this report.

The Housing Accords and Special Housing Areas Act 2013 (HASHAA) was established to enhance housing affordability by facilitating an increase in land and housing supply in certain regions or districts, identified as having housing supply and affordability issues, including in Queenstown Lakes district. The HASHAA facilitated accords between the central government and these identified councils, which allowed for Special Housing Areas; areas of land suitable for new housing, where development could be fast-tracked. QLDC also adopted a Lead Policy to guide how the Council will implement the HASHAA, including a requirement for developers to incorporate retained affordable housing (to be delivered by QLCHT (or other suitable affordable housing provider) into SHA proposals. The Council would not enter into any agreement until it addressed issues of affordable housing to the satisfaction of the Council (QLDC, 2019a).

As detailed in the Economic Assessment supporting the notified Plan Variation provisions, to date it does not appear that previous inclusionary housing activities have had a discernible negative impact on housing supply. However, while housing stock has increased, this has not been uniform across the housing continuum; housing stock has grown but the supply of rental housing has not.

The Housing & Business Capacity Assessment 2021 concludes that the district has an undersupply of housing in the lower value bands, which is anticipated to worsen over time. The growth in residential rental flats and the diversion of housing stock into the short-term visitor accommodation and rental market has also further exacerbated affordability issues. These issues collectively underscore an undersupply of housing in the lower value bands which necessitates comprehensive strategies to address the pressing need for affordable housing solutions for lower-income households (Housing Development Capacity Assessment, 2021).

## **5.2 Social impacts arising from the provision of affordable housing**

There is strong recognition in literature of the importance of the 'less tangible' aspects of the housing experience and how this contributes to wellbeing of individuals and communities. The concept of 'healthy housing' has gained prominence, and is characterised by affordability, suitability, habitability, lack of overcrowding and discrimination, and secure tenure (Deluca & Rosen, 2022).

### **5.2.1 Individual wellbeing**

The medical literature widely acknowledges that housing significantly influences health (WHO Commission on Social Determinants of Health, World Health Organization [WHO], 2008). The condition of one's home can profoundly impact their overall wellbeing. For example, if a person returns to an environment that caused health issues in the first place, medical treatment may be less effective (Braveman & Gottlieb, 2014). Research shows that subjective experiences of housing and housing services can significantly influence one's sense of home and security (Rolfe et al., 2020). Renters are often identified as a particularly vulnerable group as they may face specific challenges related to tenure security and agency in generating their 'sense of home'. This recognises that landlords and housing organisations play a crucial role in shaping the housing experience for tenants (Rolfe et al., 2020).

Unaffordable housing reduces funds available for essentials like food, energy, and healthcare, negatively affecting health. Conversely, affordable housing creates sufficient financial ability to spend money on nutritious food, medical visits, and utilities, leading to improved overall health. It also curtails overcrowding and the spread of infectious diseases (Jones et al., 2021), contributing to better quality of life, reduced stress levels, and improved educational outcomes, particularly for children (Mehdipanah, 2023). Research spanning 17 years in wealthy countries revealed that the housing cost burden (housing cost to income ratio) significantly correlated with preventable mortality, treatable mortality, and suicide (particularly after the global financial crisis). Effective social spending and housing policy measures, like inclusionary zoning, were identified as potential ways to reduce premature deaths (Park et al., 2022).



Access to housing can be a particular challenge for economies which rely on a temporary/seasonal workforce. This is further examined in section 6 for the Queenstown Lakes context. However, it is also applicable to other areas in Aotearoa such as the Hawkes Bay and Bay of Plenty who rely on seasonal workers for industries such as horticulture and viticulture. A recent report in the Hawkes Bay highlighted a critical shortage of housing for social emergency and temporary accommodation which is impacting the region's ability to maintain a stable labour force (Local Insights Report, 2020, Housing Development Capacity Assessment, 2021). Similarly, during the peak kiwifruit picking season, Bay of Plenty faces a housing shortage, particularly for seasonal workers (Rennie, R. 2019).

Throughout Aotearoa affordable housing also plays a significant role in Māori wellbeing, influencing health, culture, and family connections (Menzies et al., 2019). One critical issue is housing affordability, particularly for Māori renting homes. Prioritising the construction of affordable units tailored to Māori household sizes and engaging Māori communities through marketing and applicant selection can be a mechanism to enhance access to affordable housing (Menzies et al., 2019).

### 5.2.2 Social inclusion

In New Zealand, the term 'social inclusion' refers to the degree to which communities embrace diversity, are free from prejudice and discrimination, and have the resources, skills, and knowledge to meaningfully participate in society. It is an important component of social cohesion (Ministry of Social Development, 2020). There is evidence to suggest that social inclusion promotes health outcomes, particularly from reduced racial discrimination, and improved justice outcomes, with community social support identified as a powerful determinant of crime rates (Ministry of Social Development, 2020).

More broadly, the literature points to the positive contribution of urban diversity (that is inclusion of ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, and culture), to the socio-economic well-being of mixed neighbourhoods (Tasan-Kok et al., 2013). In particular, urban diversity is widely linked to the economic competitiveness of the city, and seen as a vital resource for the prosperity of cities and a potential catalyst for socio-economic development (Bodaar and Rath, 2005; Eraydin et al., 2010; Tasan-Kok and Vranken, 2008). Social cohesion, brought about by this urban diversity, can increase social mobility and economic opportunities (Tasan-Kok et al., 2013).

For housing specifically, the concept of 'healthy housing' also extends to the surrounding environment, including neighbourhoods with social interactions, access to services and green spaces, as well as safe public and active transport options (WHO, 2008). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2023) emphasises the importance of housing for people's wellbeing, asserting that "affordable housing" is crucial for a sustainable and inclusive economy. Moving frequently can disrupt social networks and contribute to financial instability for families (Davey-Rothwell et al., 2008). Employers are also impacted by a transient workforce as more time and resources are required to be spent on advertising for staff, training and upskilling which can be disruptive to trading activities. As aforementioned in relation to Queenstown, a lack of workers is an ongoing issue for the district, some of which can be attributed to shortages in the rental housing market (Queenstown Lakes District Council, 2021a).

Inclusionary housing programmes present potential opportunities for creative interventions to address the various barriers that hinder economic advancement for low-income households and businesses. Examples of this include communities living in houses created through inclusionary zoning may have greater opportunities for advancement, such as income and wealth generation given proximity to resources such as higher-quality schools, employment opportunities, retail services and access to transportation (Khare et al., 2020). By implementing innovative approaches, such as targeted support services, job training programs, or community partnerships, inclusionary housing can play a more active role in fostering economic mobility and empowering residents to achieve financial stability. However, it is acknowledged these outcomes will be

context specific, and require particular emphasis on providing enhanced access to opportunities to be planned in conjunction with inclusionary housing policies.

### 5.3 The link between inclusionary zoning policies and social impacts

Although inclusionary zoning policies are growing in use, research on the social effects is still limited and geographically specific. Most of the research focuses on how the private market housing market will respond to inclusionary zoning policy, rather than the social effects of the implementation. There is some research on the effectiveness of inclusionary housing policy to generate residential integration. However, it is largely based on research from the USA with specific state and local policy parameters, such as whether units are required to be distributed within buildings, proximate blocks, and surrounding neighbourhoods (Mukhija et al., 2010). Some research has found that participants living in units created by inclusionary housing policies tended to be in low-poverty neighbourhoods that had higher-performing schools (Ellen & Horn, 2012). Conversely, Schwartz et al. (2012) found through a case study of 10 inclusionary housing programs that the affordable housing tended to be built in neighbourhoods that were already racially and economically diverse as compared to majority-White, affluent neighbourhoods.

There is minimal research on mixed communities in New Zealand outside of large-scale redevelopment. New Zealand does not currently have targeted policies for mixed housing developments and there are limited mixed-income and tenure developments. Largely funded by the government, these developments are infill housing on existing state housing land with a mix of public, private and affordable housing. Research by Chisholm et al. (2022) found that consistent with international literature, mixed communities are supported for increasing housing supply and creating a more tolerant society, but concerns are raised around gentrification of currently low-income areas, displacement of public housing tenants, and public tenants may be marginalised or stigmatised (Gordon et al., 2017). Conversely, Fergusson et al. (2016) found that all tenancies of the mixed community of Waimahia had intentions to stay within the development long-term, and thus had a commitment to build a community and ties with neighbours. Research by Saville-Smith et al. (2015) argues that there are difficulties in transferring insights from international contexts to New Zealand's urban context.

### 5.4 Media review

The literature review sets out relevant research undertaken on Inclusionary Housing and affordable housing provision, from academic and grey literature. Media coverage of affordable housing has the potential to influence the community's perception of inclusionary zoning. A review of newspaper articles and media releases has also been undertaken to understand community sentiment, with key themes summarised below.

#### 5.4.1 Housing affordability

Queenstown Lake's housing affordability problem has long been recognised in the media. The dominant recent coverage relates to issues of housing unaffordability for local communities and workers in the Queenstown Lakes area relative to the rest of New Zealand. A recent article describes the problem as a function of a 'perfect storm' of factors, including the resurgence of the tourism industry post-Covid; the subsequent need for more workers; policies which have disincentivised landlords to continue with long-term rentals; and the rising popularity of Airbnb's and short-term rentals which together have pushed local residents out of homes (Riddell et al, 2023). News articles also document the stories of local workers and families who live out of tents and caravans (Jamieson, 2023b; Scott, 2023; Hendry-Tenant, 2023; Brunton, 2023), highlighting the urgency and prevalence of Queenstown's housing problem within the community.

It was reported that the median house price in Queenstown Lakes in April 2023 was \$1.12 million, almost 14 times the district's median income (Jamieson, 2023b). It also set out the concerns of a primary school principal who is wary of the future ability to staff schools in the area, as a teacher's salary would not be able

to cover a mortgage payment, thereby limiting people's ability to live and work in Queenstown. Similarly, another article (Jamieson 2023b), outlines that it can take almost 18 years to save for a deposit on a house in Queenstown, and 90% of household income is needed to service the mortgage. In July 2023, it was reported that rates would be increasing by 14.2%, double the increase experienced in Christchurch (1 News, July 2023).

#### 5.4.2 Housing unavailability

Housing unavailability is another serious problem reported by the media. An article in the Guardian (Solomon, 2023) states that although housing construction in Queenstown has kept up with population growth, many of those houses are unaffordable and built for holiday homeowners who leave the house empty for most of the year. It also reported that homeowners are increasingly reluctant to list their properties as long-term rentals due to a series of 'well-intentioned policies' which seek to protect tenants and make it more difficult to end fixed-term rentals. Rental properties for long-term tenants must now meet higher standards, such as for heating and insulation, than for short-term or holiday lets. Another article notes that landlords are disincentivised to enter long-term rentals and more inclined to either advertise their home as an Airbnb or leave it as a ghost home; approximately 4,500 houses are registered with Airbnb in a district with 23,000 houses (Riddell et al., 2023).

The situation is worse for those who cannot secure a rental home and, as above, are forced to live in tents and caravans or unpleasant, overcrowded living environments. Newshub (Hendry-Tenant, 2023) outlined the homeless crisis due to unavailable housing, describing workers who moved to Queenstown Lakes for employment opportunities sleeping in their cars every night, who are then further penalised with fines for freedom camping. Similarly, the NZ Herald (RNZ, 2023) reported that a Queenstown migrant worker is being charged \$250 a week to live with more than 25 others in a poorly kept, overcrowded property, with a further 15 people living outside in illegal cabins or in the garage. The article conveyed that those who have come to Queenstown Lakes to build a better life have been left in 'instability and fear' living in poor conditions during the cold months.

#### 5.4.3 Stress and anxiety

Uncertainty over housing, employment, and financial pressures, exacerbated by events such as the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns can also put relationships and families under stress. The resulting scarcity of rental properties and stiff competition for local workers and families to secure a home has created a sense of anxiety for the rental population. Even individuals who are currently housed in a rental home have expressed that there is a constant feeling of worry at the uncertainty that a tenant will be issued a rent increase they cannot afford, or a vacating notice for a landlord who wishes to utilise the property as an Airbnb instead (Solomon, 2023).

#### 5.4.4 Retention of workers

A further impact of the housing crisis covered by media has been the retention of workers. Businesses in Queenstown, already stretched by the difficulty during Covid, are forced to buy properties to house employees to avoid losing them (Solomon, 2023). Alternatively, businesses in Wānaka have not been able to hire international workers due to a lack of availability of rental accommodation (Caldwell, 2022). This was supported by a 2023 article (Cook, July 2023), which discusses how a local employer - Presbyterian Support Otago - appealed to Wānaka property owners to open up their rental houses to provide homes for aged-care staff who are moving to the area from other parts of the country or overseas. It was noted that rental accommodation is a key component to successfully recruiting staff, and Wānaka and Queenstown have long issues with supplying this.

### 5.4.5 Community housing

In a more positive light, recent articles have shared success stories around the QLCHT. News articles (including Scott, 2023) share that there has been a change in how people perceive community housing in Queenstown; most people know someone who is living in community housing, and the housing shortage problem is apparent. Despite the success of the Housing Trust however, the media review points to the need for further action, as the Trust's waitlists continue to grow exponentially. Articles report public sentiment that the trust is a great vehicle to progress towards housing affordability, but without larger contributions from developers, or a dedicated source of funding from Government, it will not resolve the problem (Riddell et al, 2023).

## 5.5 Conclusion and Relevance to the SIA Report

There is a clear link between the provision of **affordable housing and beneficial social effects for communities**. This includes enhancing individuals' wellbeing by creating a stable and quality living environment as well as increasing funds available for other essentials such as spending on nutritious food, medical visits, and utilities. What is contested is:

- **The influence of inclusionary zoning in increasing housing supply, decreasing the price of housing within the market and improving housing quality.** The effectiveness of inclusionary zoning depends on various factors, including policy age, geographic coverage, and local housing market conditions.
- **The evidence to confirm the scope of social effects from inclusionary zoning.** There is some research on the effectiveness of inclusionary housing policy to generate 'residential integration'. However, it is largely based on research from the USA with specific state and local policy parameters. Therefore, the potential social effects in the Queenstown Lakes District context are further examined based on the existing social condition and engagement with the community and stakeholders, as set out in section 8.

## 6 Community Profiles

### 6.1 Study area

The study area is indicated in Figure 3 below. It is defined by the territorial authority of Queenstown Lakes district, which is situated within the Otago region of New Zealand's South Island, adjacent to the Southland, Central Otago, Westland and Waitaki districts (**Error! Reference source not found.**). The study area includes the population settlements of Queenstown, Wānaka, Arrowtown, Glenorchy, Kingston, Luggate, Cardrona and Lake Hāwea. The proposed zoning would apply to these urban areas contained within the study area.

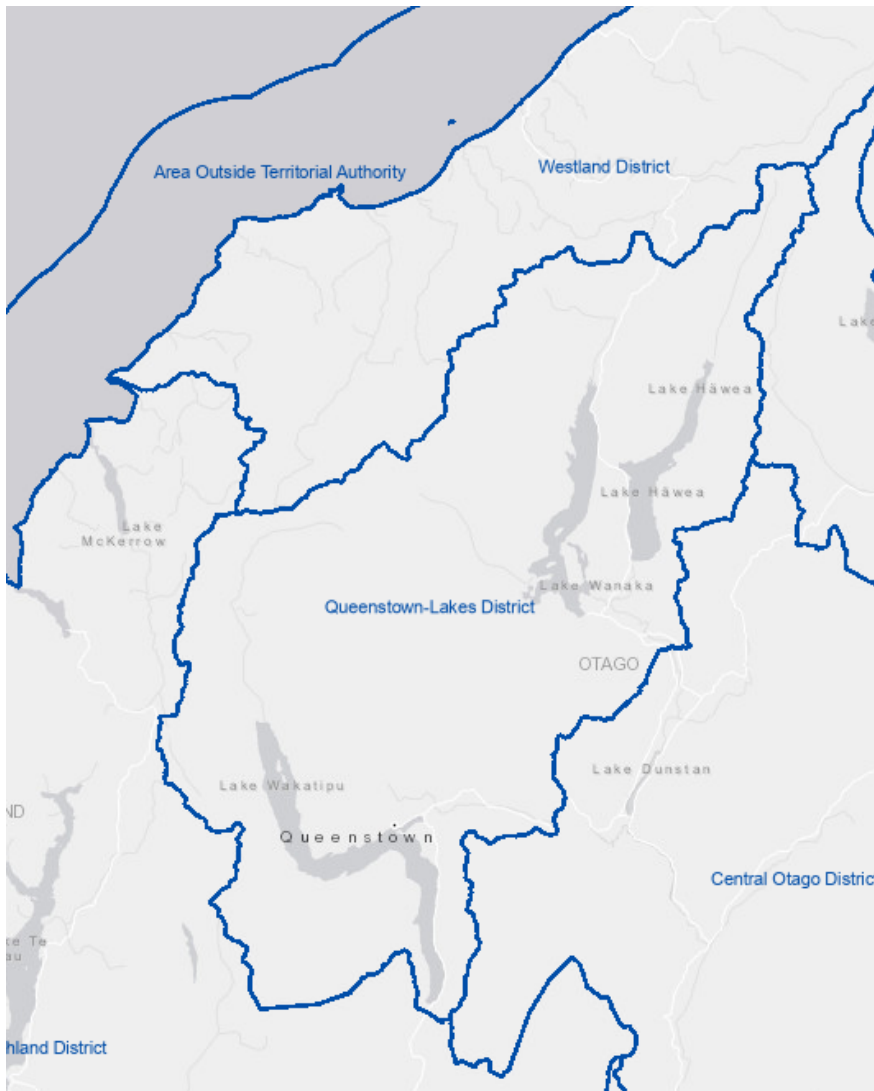


Figure 4: Study area (Stats NZ, 2023a)

### 6.2 Demographic profile

At the time of the 2018 Census, the district had a population of 39,153 people, which increased to approximately 42,000 in 2021 (Stats NZ, 2023b; Grow Well | Whaiora, 2021). International migration has accounted for 81.5% of net migration between 2013 and 2018; there is an increasing migrant population, with overseas-born residents increasing from 5,493 to 15,621 between 2006 and 2018 (Stats NZ, 2023c). This is consistent with 2018 Census data, which shows that 7% of the population lived overseas 1 year ago,

compared to 2.7% of the national population (Stats NZ, 2018b). People with temporary work visas<sup>5</sup> makes up a substantial proportion of the population (Collins, 2021). It is important to note that Queenstown Lakes is also subject to high visitor numbers (further detailed in section 6.7), many of whom who stay for seasonal work, which means that population numbers are only an indicative measure of the number of people in the district at any given time. Interestingly, net internal migration in the Queenstown Lakes district (the difference between internal migration to and from the area) has been net positive every year between 2018-2022. Comparatively, Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington territorial areas have experienced negative internal migration every year between 2018-2022. This indicates that there are more people migrating to Queenstown from other parts of New Zealand, than there are people leaving Queenstown to live in other parts of Aotearoa.

As identified in Table 1 below, the median age in Queenstown Lakes is slightly lower than the national median (34.4 compared to 37.4). The vast majority of the Queenstown Lakes District population is European, with 83.6% of Census respondents identifying as NZ European (Stats NZ, 2023b). This is greater than the national proportion of 70.2%, with a lower proportion of the Queenstown Lakes population identifying as Asian (9.9%) or Māori (5.3%) compared to the national population (Stats NZ, 2023b).

Table 1: Demographic information for the Queenstown Lakes District and New Zealand from the 2018 Census (Stats NZ, 2023b)

	Queenstown Lakes District	New Zealand
2018 Population	39,153	4,699,755
Population change from 2006 to 2018	70.5%	16.7%
Dwellings (number of total private dwellings) *	19,845 <sup>6</sup>	1,871,934 <sup>7</sup>
Median age	34.4	37.4
Largest ethnic group <sup>8</sup>	European (83.6%)	European (70.2%)
Second largest ethnic group	Asian (9.9%)	Māori (16.5%)
Third largest ethnic group	Māori (5.3%)	Asian (15.1%)
<i>Usual residence 1 year ago**</i>		
Same as usual residence	70.3%	79.1%
Elsewhere in New Zealand	21.1%	16.7%
Overseas	7.0%	2.7%
<i>Home ownership*</i>		
Owned or partly owned	39.1%	51.3%
Not owned or held in family trust (e.g. rented)	37.3%	35.5%
Held in a family trust	23.6%	13.3%
Median weekly rent*	\$530	\$340
<i>Income and employment</i>		

<sup>5</sup> New Zealand's Temporary Holiday Visa enables young international visitors, usually aged 18 to 30, or 18-35 from select countries, to travel and work in New Zealand for up to 12 months, or 23 months if they are from the United Kingdom or Canada.

<sup>6</sup> This does not include the 342 occupied non-private dwellings recorded.

<sup>7</sup> This does not include 9,567 occupied non-private dwellings.

<sup>8</sup> Percentages for ethnic groups can add up to over 100 as where a person reports more than one ethnic group they are counted in each applicable group.

Median personal income	\$40,600	\$31,800
Percentage of the population that earn >\$70,000	19.9%	17.2%
Full time employment	66.4%	50.1%
Part time employment	14.2%	14.7%
Unemployed	1.1%	4.0%
Not in the labour force	18.3%	31.3%

### 6.3 Deprivation

The NZDep is an area-based measure, which measures the level of deprivation for people in each Statistical Area 2 (SA2) and is based on nine Census 2018 variables<sup>9</sup> (Environmental Health Intelligence New Zealand, 2023). NZDep2018 is displayed in 10 deciles, with Decile 1 representing areas with the least deprived NZDep2018 scores, and Decile 10 representing areas with the most deprived NZDep2018 scores.

As shown in Table 2 on the page below, the SA2 that make up the Queenstown Lakes district have been assessed as having very low levels of deprivation, with an average score of 2 across the district. There are some small pockets of moderate deprivation in Warren Park, Queenstown Central and Queenstown East.

<sup>9</sup> People aged 18-64 receiving a means tested benefit; people living in households with equivalised income below an income threshold; people with no access to the internet at home; people aged 18-64 without any qualifications; people aged <65 living in a single parent family; people not living in own home; people living in household with equivalised bedroom occupancy threshold; people aged 18-64 unemployed; people living in dwellings that are always damp and/or always have mould greater than A4 size.



Table 2: NZDep scores for SA2 in Queenstown Lakes district (Environmental Health Intelligence New Zealand, 2023).

SA2	NZDep2018 score
Outer Wānaka	2
Glenorchy	3
Inland water Lake Wānaka	n.d.
Outer Wakatipu	1
Inland water Lake Hāwea	n.d.
Cardrona	1
Inland water Lake Wakatipu	n.d.
Wānaka Waterfront	1
Wānaka North	1
Wānaka West	1
Albert Town	1
Wānaka Central	2
Lake Hāwea	2
Upper Clutha Valley	1
Kingston	2
Arthurs Point	1
Wakatipu Basin	1
Queenstown Hill	n.d.
Warren Park	6
Sunshine Bay-Fernhill (Queenstown)	3
Arrowtown	1
Quail Rise	1
Queenstown Central	6
Queenstown East	4
Frankton Arm	3
Frankton	3
Lake Hayes	1
Kelvin Heights	1
Shotover Country	1
Lake Hayes Estate	1
Jacks Point	1



## 6.4 Land use and community facilities

The majority of the Queenstown Lakes district is rurally zoned under both the Operative and Proposed District Plans as seen in **Error! Reference source not found.** below (the light yellow indicates rural zoning). The towns of Queenstown and Wānaka are predominantly residentially zoned, with some commercial, town centre, and industrial zones (refer to Figures 5 and 6). Queenstown and Wānaka are mostly made up of lower density suburban areas, with some medium-high density focused in the town centres of Queenstown and Wānaka. Increased residential densities are anticipated within the Queenstown and Wānaka town centres under the Proposed District Plan. Resorts and some tourism destinations are zoned for recreational purposes

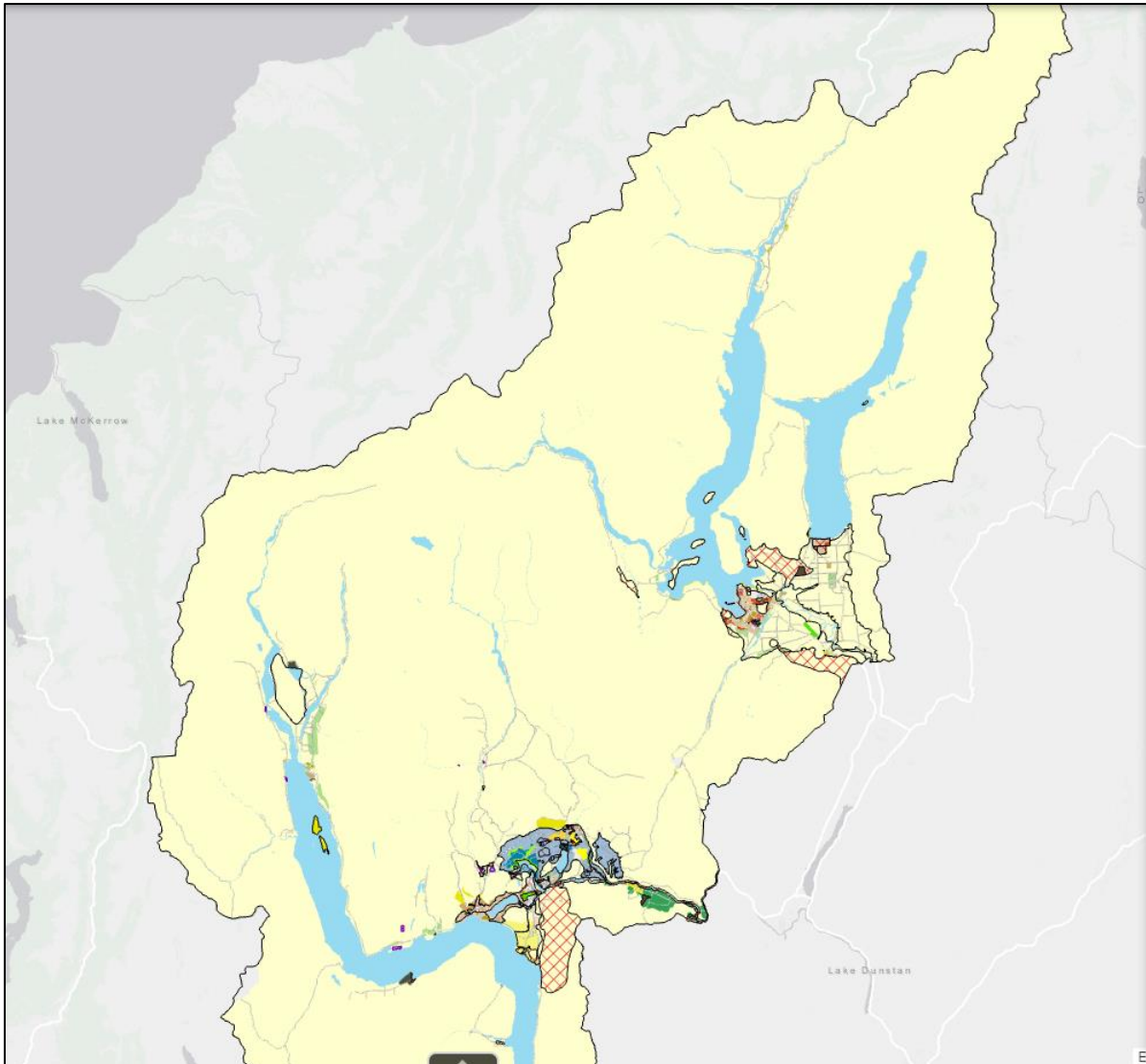


Figure 5: Zoning of the Queenstown Lakes District under the Proposed District Plan. The light yellow indicates rural zoning (Queenstown Lakes District Council, 2023c)

(Queenstown Lakes

District Council, 2023c).

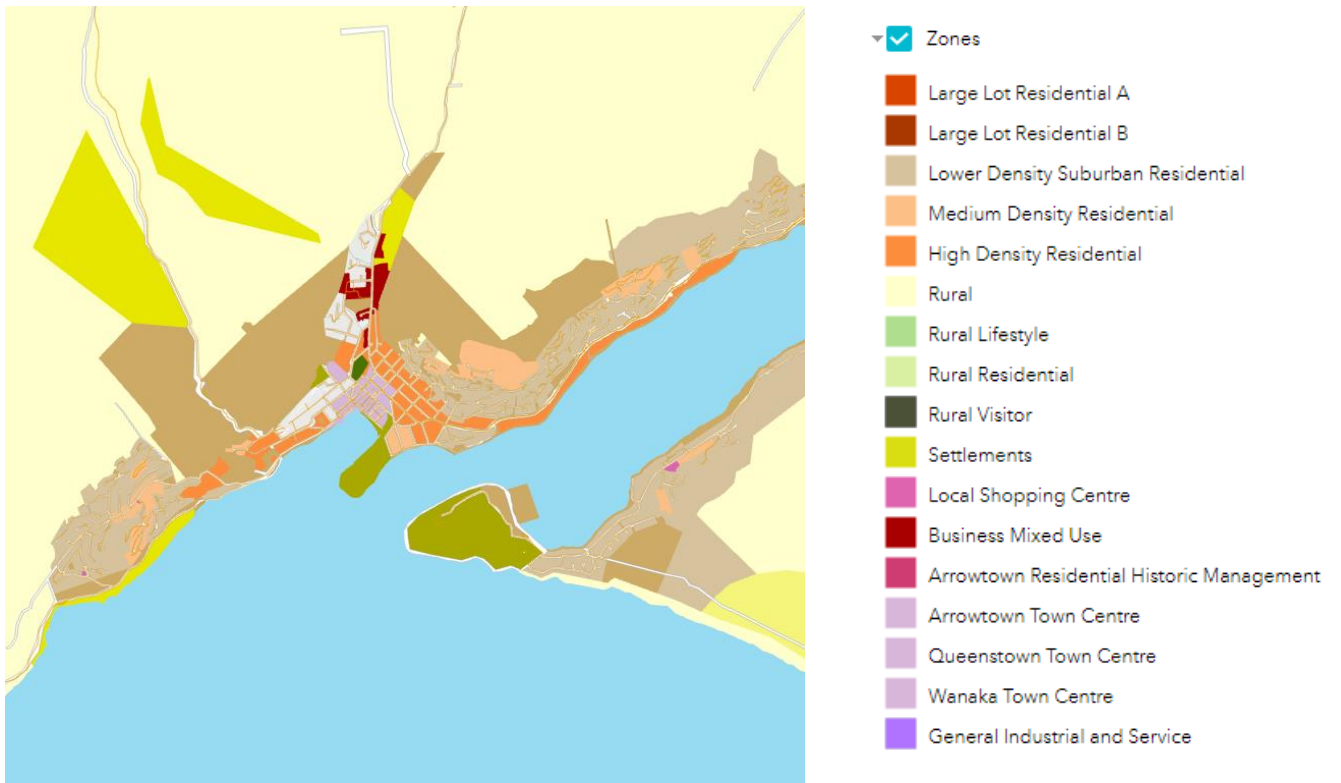


Figure 6: Queenstown zoning under the Proposed District Plan (Queenstown Lakes District Council, 2023c)



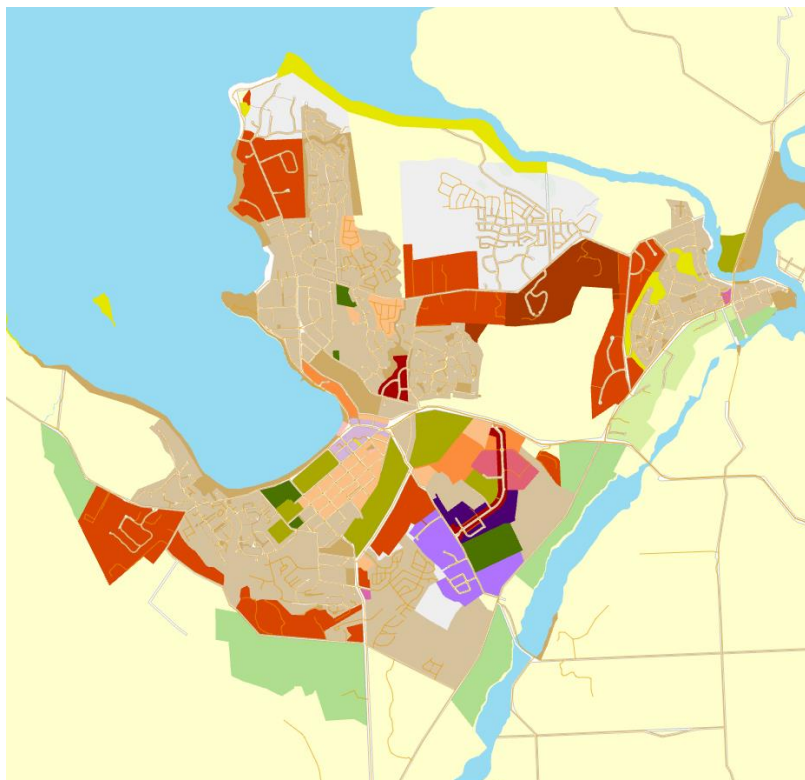


Figure 7: Wānaka zoning under the Proposed District Plan (Queenstown Lakes District Council, 2023c)

The district contains a number of significant community facilities. These include the following:

- **Queenstown Airport:** the district's only domestic and international terminal, with flights from Air New Zealand, Qantas, Jetstar and Virgin Australia (Queenstown Airport, 2023). It is classified as Regionally Significant Infrastructure under the Proposed Queenstown Lakes District Plan.
- **Wānaka Airport:** provides daily flights between Wānaka and Christchurch on Sounds Air, operating 12 return flights per week. It is also a base used by scenic and charter flights around the Queenstown Lakes District and to Milford Sound and Mt Aspiring National Park (Wānaka Airport, 2023).
- **Wakatipu High School:** this public secondary school services a population of 1,336 students (as of June 2023) from the Queenstown and surrounding area (Education Counts, 2023a).
- **Te Kura O Tititea Mount Aspiring College:** this public co-educational intermediate and secondary school has a population of 1,234 (indicative roll as at 1 June 2023), and provides boarding facilities for the Year 13 Hostel Programme (Education Counts, 2023a; Mount Aspiring College, 2023).
- **Liger Leadership Academy:** this is a private co-educational school providing education for years 9-13, with a student population of 43 (as of June 2023) (Education Counts, 2023a).
- **13 primary schools in the district:** these primary schools serve years 1-8 (Education Counts, 2023b).
- **Tertiary institutions:** the University of Otago, Southern Institute of Technology, and Queenstown Resort College have campuses in Queenstown and the surrounding suburbs. These provide both certificate and foundation years – the University of Otago is partnered with the Queenstown Resort College (Study Queenstown, 2023; Southern Institute of Technology, 2023).
- **Lakes District Hospital:** this facility is the only hospital within the district and is located within the Queenstown town centre. It has 21 beds, and provides maternity services, hospital level elderly care,

and acute medical care. It provides outpatient clinics and day surgery, and a Level 2 emergency service (assessment and stabilisation), with links to Southern Hospital and Dunedin Hospital (Southern Health, 2023).

- **Southern Cross Central Lakes Hospital:** this private hospital has three operating theatres and 13 inpatient beds which provide elective surgery, and is a joint venture between Southern Cross Healthcare and the Central Lakes Trust. It is also contracted by Te Whatu Ora (and formerly by Southern District Health Board) for elective surgical procedures, reducing the requirement for patients to travel to Invercargill (Southern Cross, 2021; Pattemore, 2023).
- **Heartland Services:** this is a service funded and delivered by the Ministry of Social Development that provides information, advice, referral, and advocacy services to rural and isolated communities (Heartland Services, 2023). This office is in Wānaka.
- **Work and Income:** a component of the Ministry of Social Development, a Work and Income office is in Frankton, Queenstown. This service provides financial support for low incomes, unemployed people, and assistance to find housing (Work and Income, 2023).
- **Queenstown Tāhuna District Court:** this court is in the Queenstown town centre and provides judicial services to the district (Ministry of Justice, 2023).
- **Happiness House – Queenstown Community Support Centre:** a support and resource drop-in centre providing crisis intervention, resolution and general social support for families and individuals including client support and advocacy, as well as access to computers, activity groups and play areas, affordable pre-loved clothing, and homewares (Happiness House, 2023).
- **Wanaka Community Hub:** operated by the Wanaka Community House Charitable Trust, it provides space for social services in the region. It also contains meeting rooms, an auditorium, and a commercial kitchen for hire by the community (Wanaka Community Hub, 2023).

## 6.5 Housing availability and affordability

### 6.5.1 Housing availability

The Queenstown Lakes district population has more than doubled between 1996 and 2018, which has significantly increased demand for housing (Market Economics consulting, 2019). The district's housing market also has several unique features which contribute to housing availability and affordability, including a high number of absentee owners, unoccupied houses, and high house prices continuing while other markets around the country have slowed. Additionally, there is a transient and seasonal workforce, which due to the profitability of short-term rentals, places pressure on housing availability and affordability (Mead, 2021; Collins, 2021).

A much higher proportion of the housing stock in the Queenstown Lakes district is unoccupied (27.6%), compared to the national housing equivalent and other major cities around New Zealand (10.4%) (refer to Table 3) (Stats NZ, 2023b). In addition, 16.1% of the housing stock is empty<sup>10</sup> compared to 5.2% of the national housing stock, and less than 5% of the housing stock in other major cities in New Zealand (Stats NZ, 2023c; Market Economics consulting, 2021). This is indicative of Queenstown's high rates of absentee owners and unoccupied houses.

<sup>10</sup> Stats NZ defines that unoccupied dwellings may be classified as 'empty' or 'residents away'. Unoccupied dwellings including private and non-private dwellings, baches, and holiday homes are defined as empty dwellings. A dwelling is classified as having 'residents away' where occupants of a dwelling are known to be temporarily away and are not expected to return on, or before, census night.

Table 3 below provides a breakdown of the housing stock in relation to other cities around New Zealand, and the national housing stock. The figures in red text indicate those that are lower than the national equivalent, while the figures in green text indicate those that are higher than the national equivalent.

Table 3: Housing occupancy in the Queenstown Lakes district (Stats NZ, 2023b)

	Total dwellings	Total occupied and unoccupied dwellings	Occupied dwellings	Unoccupied dwellings	Residents away	Empty dwelling	Dwellings under construction
Total - New Zealand by Territorial Authority/SA 2	1886517	1870386	88.73%	10.42%	5.23%	5.19%	0.85%
Queenstown Lakes District	20403	19692	▼68.92%	▲27.60%	▲11.47%	▲16.13%	▲3.48%
Auckland City	547059	540030	▲91.45%	▼7.27%	▼4.10%	▼3.17%	▲1.28%
Wellington City	81003	80418	▲93.18%	▼6.10%	▼3.34%	▼2.76%	▼0.72%
Christchurch City	154293	152715	▲90.56%	▼8.42%	▼4.00%	▼4.42%	▲1.02%

In the year ended March 2023, 1,230 residential building consents were granted in the Queenstown Lakes district. This was the fifth highest number in New Zealand after Hamilton, Selwyn, Christchurch, and Auckland territorial authorities. However, Queenstown Lakes had the highest number (248) of residential building consents per 10,000 people in the same year (refer Figure 7) (Ministry for Housing & Urban Development, 2023). As discussed in section 4.3.7.2, the end use of these consented homes is unknown. However, based on the housing occupancy statistics in Table 3, it is likely that a large proportion of them will be unoccupied dwellings if the current trend is to continue.



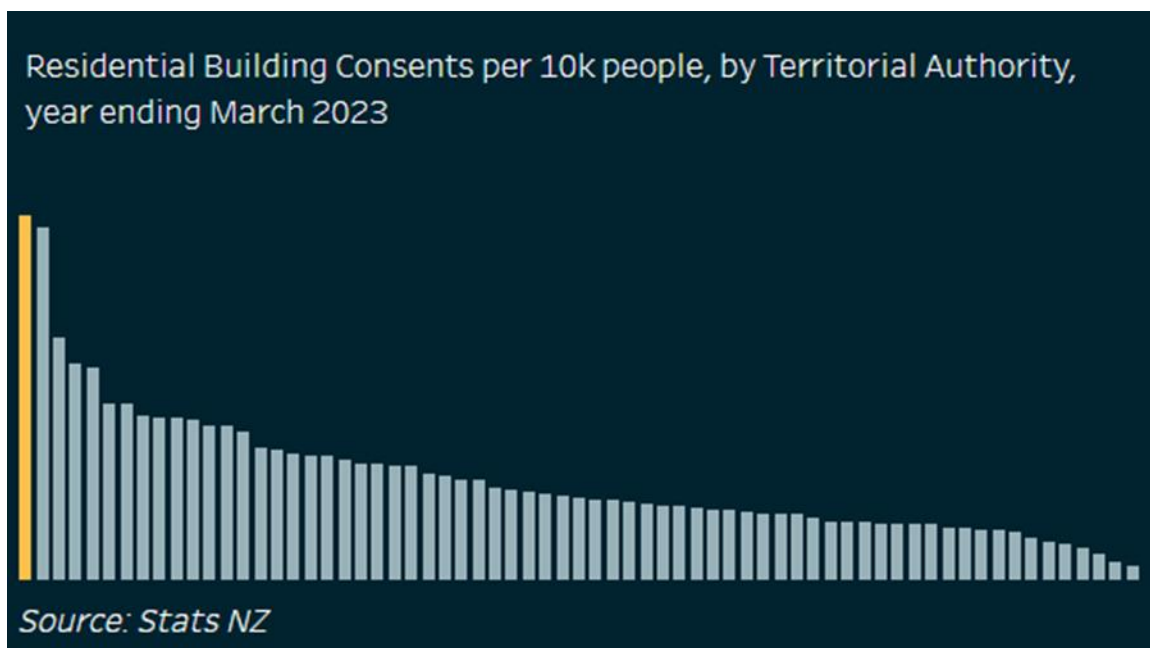


Figure 8: Residential Building Consents in Queenstown Lakes per 10k people, by Territorial Authority, year ending March 2023 (Ministry for Housing & Urban Development, 2023)

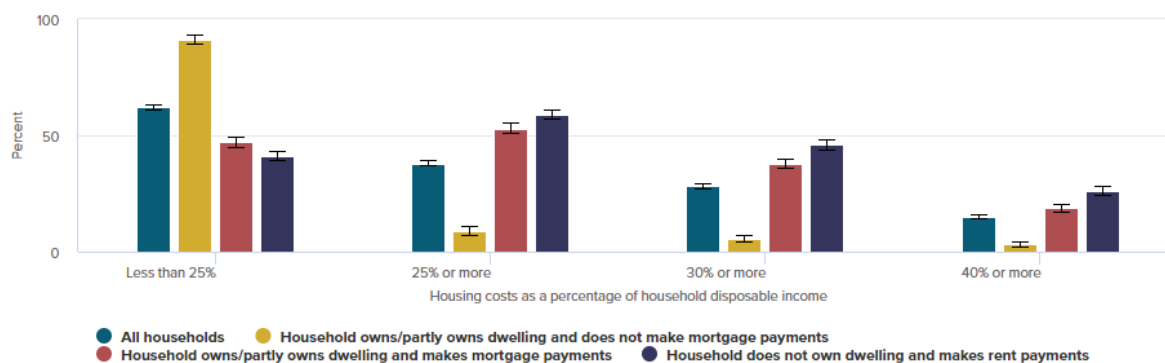
The proportion of the population that own, or partly own their own house is 12.2% lower than the national average (39.1% compared to 51.3% nationally) (Stats NZ, 2023b). However, the proportion of houses in the Queenstown Lakes district owned by family trusts is 10.3% greater than the national average (Stats NZ, 2023b). The proportion of the population that rent is also slightly higher than the national average (37.3% compared to 35.5% nationally) (Stats NZ, 2023b). This is consistent with the Queenstown Lakes District Council's 2022 Quality of Life Survey, which indicated that 38% of the population rent (Queenstown Lakes District Council, 2022a).

Demand for public housing in New Zealand has also increased, with 24,081 applicants on the Housing Register in March 2023, compared to 7,890 in March 2018 (Ministry of Social Development, 2023). From the time of the Census in March 2018 to June 2022, the number of households on the Housing Register for the Queenstown Lakes district increased from less than 10 to 20 (Ministry of Social Development, 2023; Stats NZ, 2022), with 54 public houses occupied (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2023). There were also 8 Emergency Housing Special Needs Grants provided in the quarter up to June 2022 (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2022). However, this is not reflective of the housing need in the district. As there are only 13 Kāinga Ora homes in the district, most of the subsidised and affordable housing is provided by the QLCHT, who have 138 households in homes (Queenstown Lakes Community Housing Trust, 2023). Of the houses provided by QLCHT, 41 are Income Related Rent Subsidy housing subsidised by the Ministry of Social Development as of March 2023 (Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 2023). As of September 2023, there were 1093 households on the QLCHT waitlist (QLCHT, 2023). The focus for provision of more public housing by Kāinga Ora is concentrated in Dunedin and Invercargill, where the Ministry of Social Development reports higher housing deprivation (Patterson, 2023; Ministry of Social Development, 2023). It is noted that migrants are not eligible for public housing; therefore, their housing need is also not captured by this data.

### 6.5.2 Housing affordability

Lack of affordable housing has become an increasingly common issue in New Zealand and in the Queenstown Lakes area. In the year ended June 2022, 25% of New Zealand households that were renting were spending more than 40% of their disposable income on housing costs, and 20% of property owners were spending more than 40% on their mortgage (Figure 8; Stats NZ, 2023b).

Proportion of households, by housing cost as a percentage of household disposable income and by tenure, year ended June 2022



Error bars show 95 percent confidence intervals, between which we are confident that the true value lies.

Stats NZ

Figure 9: Proportion of income spent on housing costs by tenure from June 2022 (Stats NZ, 2023b).

In the Queenstown context, as highlighted in section 4.3.5, analysis undertaken as part of the QLDC's Housing Development Capacity Assessment 2021 (HCDA) shows that the District as a whole has sufficient housing development capacity within the short (3 years), medium (10 years) and long-term (30 years), based on planning rules and infrastructure programmes. However, the market is not delivering, and is unlikely to deliver affordable housing for low-medium income households. Notably, the HCDA identified a shortfall of housing in price bands below \$500,000 in 2020 (-2,350 affordable dwellings for first home buyers, with the majority of these households in rental accommodation). This shortfall is projected to worsen in the absence of any interventions.

QLDC have reported that rents have increased by 54% between 2015 and 2020 and increases in household income have not kept up with the cost of living despite low unemployment rates (Grow Well | Whaiora, 2021). Furthermore, the HCDA found that over 83% of first-home buyer households and 37% of renters were spending more than 30% of their income on housing costs. These were found to be much higher levels than other parts of the country.

In the year ending March 2023, rent affordability in the Queenstown Lakes district decreased 11% - this was the second highest reduction in rental affordability in New Zealand after the Waimate district (Ministry for Housing & Urban Development, 2023). The median rent for Queenstown between December 2022 and May 2023 was \$750, and \$705 in Wānaka, compared to \$565 nationally in March 2023 (Tenancy Services, 2023; Ninness, 2023). The Queenstown Business Chamber of Commerce survey indicated 30.5% of businesses felt that a lack of accommodation was the biggest barrier to achieving optimal staffing levels (Patterson, 2022). This lack of affordability has placed significant pressure on QLDC and housing providers to ensure households have access to affordable housing.

House prices in the Queenstown Lakes district are significantly higher relative to the rest of the country. In the June 2023 Quarter, the average house value was \$1,672,233 compared to \$907,579 nationally (Infometrics, 2023). Unlike other cities in New Zealand, house prices have continued to rise amid a downturn in the housing market, with the average house value in the Queenstown Lakes district increasing 1.9% in the year ended June 2023, compared to median house values decreasing 7.1% in the Selwyn District, 12.7% in Wellington, and 14.6% in Auckland (Infometrics, 2023). This is a significant issue for the District, as housing remains unaffordable to a significant proportion of the District's population.

Some recent research by CoreLogic, suggests the residential housing development costs are increasing, with the latest Cordell Construction Cost Index (CCCI) showed that the cost to build a 'standard', single storey, three bedroom, two bathroom, brick and tile house (over a standard build-time duration) rose 0.6% in Q2 2023 – the same rate of increase as was seen in Q1 of 2023 (CoreLogic, 2023).

However, this rate of cost growth has slowed in the last year, with CoreLogic reporting an easing of the construction materials supply chain pressures in recent months and slightly reduced workloads for builders (CoreLogic, 2023). The quarterly rate of increase averaged 2.5% in 2022, compared to 0.6% in first two quarters of 2023. Accordingly, the annual rate of change in the CCCI has also slowed, and now sits at 6.4%. This is above the decade average of around 4.5%, but down significantly from the peak of 10.4% in late 2022 (CoreLogic, 2023).

## 6.6 Income and employment

The median personal income in Queenstown Lakes is higher than the national equivalent (\$40,600 compared to \$31,800). The percentage of the population that earn more than \$70,000 is also higher than the national percentage (19.9% compared to 17.2%) (Stats NZ, 2023b). However, it is important to point out that the figures cited in this section and the table below reflect income only and does not take into consideration the cost of living.

Table 4 below shows the proportion of the population within each income bracket, relative to the national population. The cells shaded in red indicate the proportions of the Queenstown Lakes district population that are lower than the national equivalent, and the cells shaded in green indicate the proportions that are higher than the national equivalent. The largest proportion of the population earn between \$40,000 and \$50,000 (13.2%) (Stats NZ, 2023b).

Table 4: Annual income of the Queenstown Lakes District population in comparison with New Zealand (Stats NZ, 2023b).

Category	Queenstown Lakes District (%)	New Zealand (%)
Loss	0.3	0.5
Zero income	2.7	6.8
\$1-\$5,000	4.4	5.6
\$5,001-\$10,000	3.7	4.7
\$10,001-\$15,000	4.4	6.9
\$15,001-\$20,000	6	9.9
\$20,001-\$25,000	6	8.1
\$25,001-\$30,000	6.3	5.6
\$30,001-\$35,000	7	4.9
\$35,001-\$40,000	8.4	5.6
\$40,001-\$50,000	13.2	9.7
\$50,001-\$60,000	10.3	8.2
\$60,001-\$70,000	7.4	6.2
\$70,001-\$100,000	10.7	9.6
\$100,001-\$150,000	5.1	4.7
\$150,001 or more	4.1	2.9

At the time of the 2018 Census, 80.6% of the Queenstown Lakes district population were employed full-time or part-time, compared to 64.8% of the national population (Stats NZ, 2023b). Unemployment was also below the national average (1.1% compared to 4% nationally) (Stats NZ, 2023b). This is indicative of Queenstown's large working population.

Of the employed population over 15 years of age, the largest proportion of the population work as managers (21.5%) (Stats NZ, 2023b). There is a lower proportion in the district of people who work as 'professionals', 'labourers', and 'clerical and administrative workers' than the overall New Zealand population. However, there are 4.3% more people working as 'technicians and trade workers' in the district (Stats NZ, 2023b). 11.8% of the employed population work as 'community and personal service workers', which includes hospitality, roles in tourism and adventure guides (Stats NZ, 2023b). In 2022, 9,712 people were directly employed by the tourism industry (Infometrics, 2022). This accounted for 32.7% of employment in the Queenstown Lakes district in 2022. Comparatively, tourism employment accounted for 5.4% of employment in New Zealand in 2022 (Infometrics, 2022).



Tourism employment peaked in the Queenstown Lakes district in 2016, when it accounted for 55.3% of employment (Infometrics, 2022). Tourism employment rose 18.6% in the year ended 2016, representing the largest increase in tourism employment growth between 2000 and 2022 (Infometrics, 2022).

## 6.7 Tourism

Since the gold rush in the Queenstown Lakes district in the 1860s to the early 1980s, Queenstown has been through boom cycles (Martin Jenkins, 2018). Queenstown was primarily a summer destination until the development of commercial skiing at Coronet Peak in 1947, followed by the introduction of jetboating in the 1950s and the first commercial bungy jump in 1988 (Queenstown NZ, 2023). Once firmly entrenched as a tourism destination, Queenstown Airport began operating flights from Christchurch in 1961, with the first trans-Tasman flight in 1995 (Beech, 2010). Similarly, for many years Wānaka was a quiet summer holiday place, but it became an all-season tourist resort when the ski fields opened from the late 1970s (McKinnon, 2023).

Since the early 1980s, the population of Queenstown has tripled. However, this population is dwarfed by tourism; in 2018 there was one local resident per 34 international visitors (Martin Jenkins, 2018). Data from 2018 indicated that approximately \$988 million - \$1.1 billion of international credit card spending occurred in Queenstown, which was 63-69% of the total international credit card spend in New Zealand (Martin Jenkins, 2018). In 2018, domestic tourism spending in Queenstown was estimated to be \$846.4 million, while international tourism spending was estimated to be \$1.53 billion in the same year. Spending data equated to 3.67 million guest nights. In Wānaka, domestic tourism spending in 2018 was estimated to be \$236.7 million, with international tourism spending estimated at \$337.6 million (Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment, 2019).

In 2022, QLDC projected that there is an average of 16,370 visitors to the district each day, with a peak around the New Year period of up to 52,490 (Queenstown Lakes District Council, 2022c). Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the tourism industry dominated commercial ventures in the district, accounting for 63% of jobs and 55% of Queenstown Lakes GDP. Queenstown Lakes is the second largest tourist destination in New Zealand (Martin Jenkins, 2018).

The domination of tourism in the Queenstown Lakes economy had a significant negative economic impact during the Covid-19 pandemic, which resulted in the closure of the New Zealand borders to international tourism. QLDC modelled impacts on the economy which estimated a 91% reduction in international tourism spending and a 21% drop in domestic tourism spending, which contributed to an overall contraction of GDP by 2% (Infometrics, 2020; Queenstown Lakes District Council, 2022b). Covid-19 resulted in the unemployment rate increasing from 1.1% in 2019 to 18.5% in March 2021, and a loss of over \$270 million in earnings for the 2020/21 financial year (Infometrics, 2020).

Tourism is recovering in the Queenstown Lakes district following the reopening of borders to international visitors in August 2022 (Unite against COVID-19, 2022; Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment, 2023). Tourism contributed \$889 million to the district GDP in 2022, which equated to 24.7% of the district's total GDP (9; Infometrics, 2022). While this is below the peak of 39.2% of GDP in 2019, international visitors in July 2022 represented 90% of the pre-pandemic ski season (Inside Government NZ, 2022). QLDC projects that there will be between 42,000 and 126,000 daily visitors by 2051 (Grow Well | Whaiora, 2021).

## Tourism share of total GDP, 2000-2022

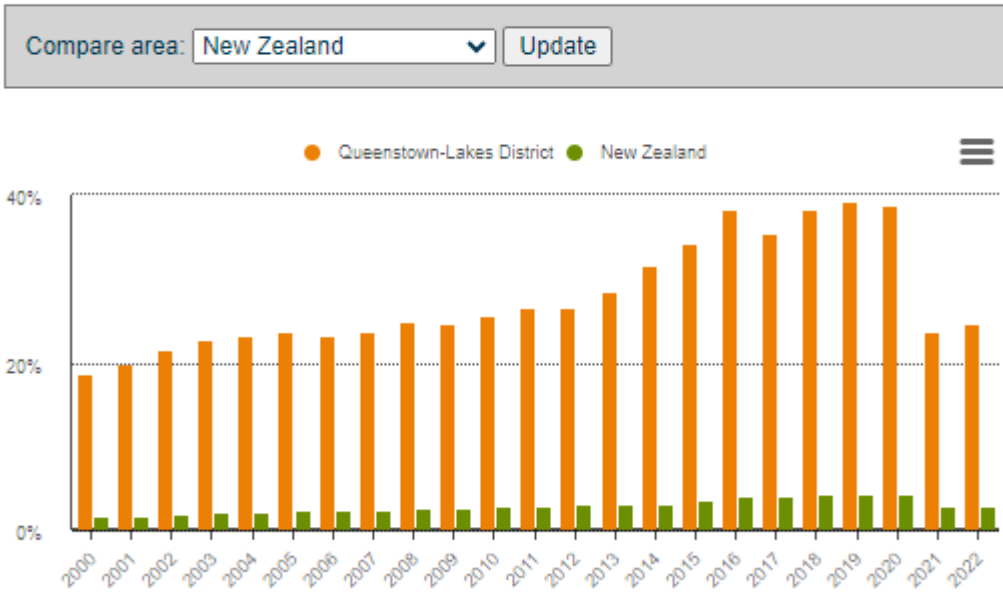
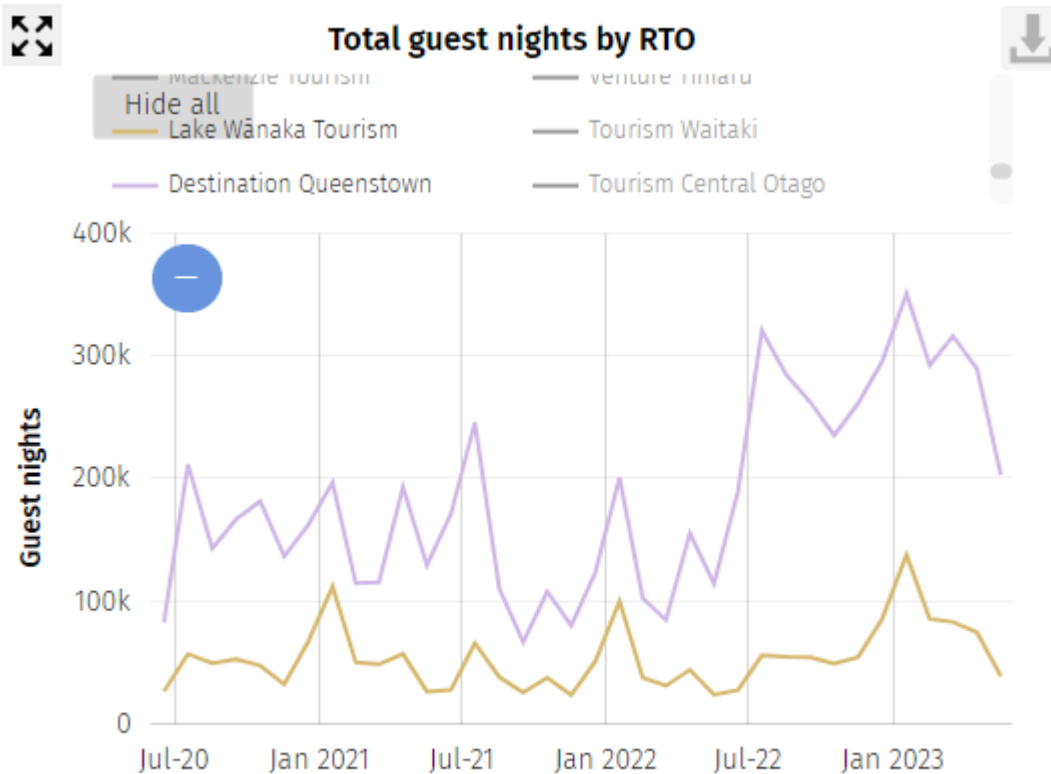


Figure 10: Proportion of GDP for the Queenstown Lakes district and New Zealand comprising of tourism revenue (Infometrics, 2022).



Source: MBIE - Accommodation Data Programme. Last updated on 2023-07-06 11:00:00.

Figure 11: Guest nights in Queenstown and Wānaka from 2020 to 2023 (Ministry of Business, Industry & Employment, 2023).

## Tourism GDP growth, 2001-2022

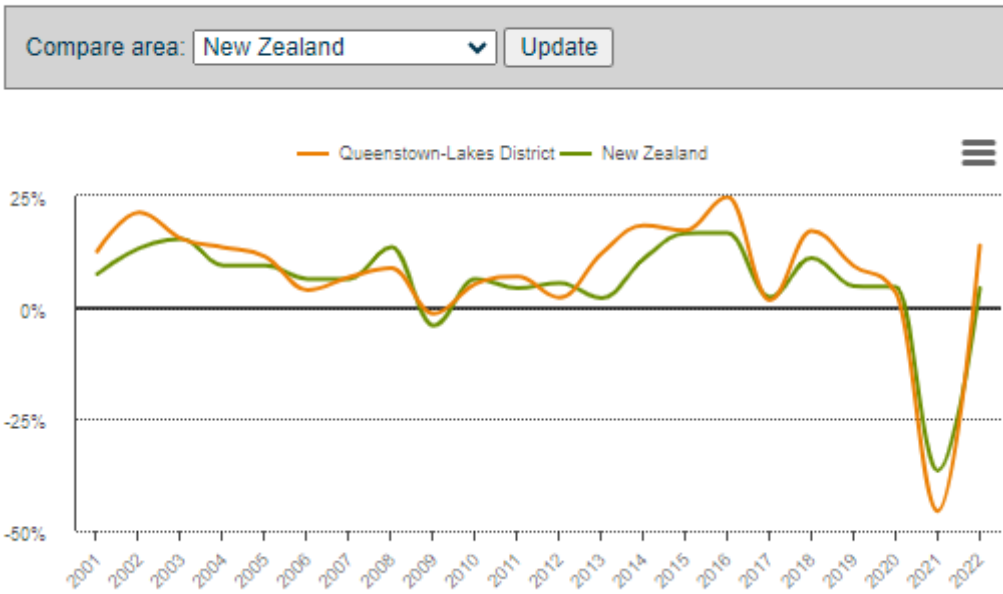


Figure 12: Tourism GDP growth for New Zealand and the Queenstown Lakes District from 2001 to 2022 (Infometrics, 2022).

## 7 Assessment Assumptions

This Social Impact Assessment is based on the notified provisions and evidence used to support the proposed Inclusionary Housing Plan Variation. There are several key assumptions from the evidence used to support the notified provisions that are relied upon for this assessment. These assumptions are detailed below.

- All 'key documents' reviewed have been provided by QLDC and/or are in the public domain to support housing strategic work programmes or the proposed changes to the District Plan.
- The statistical information used to create the community profiles is based on the most up-to-date publicly available data sources. The limitations of these data sources also apply to this report.
- As outlined in the 'Working Paper: Developing an Affordable Housing Provision' District Plan-based methods will sit alongside a range of measures that QLDC can use to support the provision of affordable housing (Mead, 2021). The scope of this SIA Report only includes the potential changes to social conditions resulting from the implementation of the Inclusionary Housing Plan Variation provisions as notified.
- The main non-regulatory tool that QLDC has used to date is the establishment of the QLCHT. This SIA assumes:
  - That QLCHT are committed to working in the area, with its forward focus on assisting 1000 households into affordable and secure housing by 2038 (Annual Plan 2023). Its largest development to date, 68 homes at Tewa Banks, is underway, alongside a number of other housing projects throughout Whakatipu and the Upper Clutha.
  - That QLCHT will continue to develop affordable housing in locations which are in close proximity to amenities, are well-designed and of a good quality.
  - That the eligibility criteria for housing assistance from QLCHT will not change as a result of the Inclusionary Housing Plan Variation.
- As outlined in the Section 32 Report, important factors contributing to local (Queenstown Lakes District Council area) demand and supply relationships for housing are:
  - Population growth is driven by people moving into the district (rather than through natural increase)
  - Housing supply is relatively slow to respond to short term changes in demand due to local geographic constraints
  - While existing older homes provide the bulk of the affordable product in most cities, in the case of the Queenstown Lakes District area, the youthful age of the housing stock and rapid growth in population mean that the 'second hand market' remains relatively unaffordable.
  - Unless measures are in place to support the delivery of a range of housing price points, an increase in housing stock will not necessarily flow into more affordable housing products
- As outlined in the Section 32 Report, negotiated, district-plan based affordable housing methods have increased the stock of retained affordable housing with no perceptible negative impact on housing supply, housing prices, house size or quality. While this may be because only those developments that can afford a transfer of land or money have offered a contribution, it also demonstrates that there is scope within the current development settings for affordable housing contributions to be viable.

- The two most cited risks/unintended adverse consequences resulting from inclusionary zoning policy are that the price of other housing in the residential development market will be raised to cover the costs of the affordable housing requirements, which could then slow the rate of housing development. The Economic Report by Sense Partners discusses both points and concludes the following:
  - Best case scenario – there is no discernible impact on house prices (see rationale of this in section 6.1 of the Economic Report)
  - Worst case scenario – a 1% increase in all house prices
- The Economics Report concludes that as existing inclusionary policy requirements have not had negative impacts on house prices and supply, there is unlikely to be discernible impact on house prices and housing supply as a result of the proposed Plan Variation. The SIA has been prepared on this basis.

## 8 Assessment of Social Impacts

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This section considers the actual and potential social impacts associated with the proposed Plan Variation.

To evaluate the potential social impacts our assessment takes the following approach. For each potential social impact domain (as set out in section 2) we:

- Provide the community's experiences and reported impacts of the current situation (a lack of affordable housing provision)
- Assess the potential change to the current situation as a result proposed Plan Variation.

The potential social impacts identified have been evaluated as either **positive**, **negligible**, or **negative**.

Potential changes to the current situation may be experienced differently by different groups in the Queenstown Lakes area; for example, those who are able to access affordable housing are likely to experience different impacts than those living in the wider community more generally. As such, this section assesses impacts experienced at the **District community level**, and at the **individual/ family level**, and an **overall** impact rating is then given.

### 8.1 Impacts on people's way of life

#### 8.1.1 Reported impact on people's way of life from a lack of affordable housing provision

This type of impact refers to how people 'live, work, play' and interact with one another on a day-to-day basis. It was reported in the interviews that there are parts of the community that are having to move between places providing temporary accommodation, due to changes to rental accommodation provision and/or a lack of short-term affordable housing. It was also reported that there are also people who are 'rough sleeping' in parts of the district. Those interviewed commented that not having a stable living environment 'spills over into other parts of life', such as performing at work, impacting the ability for people to retain employment.

As identified in the Community Profile, the Queenstown Lake area has an increasing population, including a migrant population, and high visitor numbers. As this resident and visitor population increases, the demand for services grows, including schools and health care centres, which in turn increases demand for service and key workers. Several people interviewed commented that employers were finding it difficult to attract and retain employees in the area due to the high cost of living and a lack of affordable housing. This was reported by businesses paying a range of incomes, from professional service consultancies to tourism operators. It was noted that if the market is left as it is, the shortage of workers is likely to impact the ability for businesses to be able to operate in the District, and for the community to access the goods and services these businesses provide. In particular, several interviewees stated that the lack of short-term rental accommodation, due to changes in tenancy law disincentivising landlords to rent their properties longer-term, has worsened in recent times (approximately between 2021 and 2023). The potential impact of this on the tourism industry is reported below in section 8.2 given how much this forms part of the character of the District.

Several interview participants noted the increase in traffic in Wānaka and Queenstown over the last 2-3 years. Reasons for this included population growth, limited public transport options and people relying on private vehicles to travel from their homes to access work, community facilities and educational opportunities. Similarly, people noted that housing is not always easily accessed by public transport, which means people have to travel by car. One interviewee stated that a number of potential recruits for their organisation are from overseas and some do not drive, so would find it difficult or not be able to live in developments with no public transport provision.

### 8.1.2 Assessment of potential impacts on way of life – proposed Plan Variation

In terms of potential changes and impacts to the way of life of residents as a result of the proposed Plan Variation, this will be dependent on the location of the new affordable houses, and the proximity of these to goods, services, employment, community facilities and other opportunities. This is because the proximity of these destinations influences how people carry out their day-to-day activities. To date, the majority of the affordable developments that QLCHT have created are in locations which are in close proximity to amenities. It is assumed that this will continue, given the positive feedback the Trust has received on the housing it provides.

As discussed above, there are a number of businesses that provide accommodation for workers.. The potential risks of this are discussed below in section 8.5. It is anticipated that this trend is likely to continue and is unlikely to be significantly impacted by the proposed Plan Variation. This is because QLCHT already has a long waiting list, so employers are unlikely to use this as the primary mechanism to retain or attract employees to the area given the delay between someone being put on the list and affordable accommodation becoming available. However, this may change over time, depending on the extent of affordable houses which can be built, as a result of the increased financial contributions and/or land provided through the requirements of the proposed Plan Variation.

Several developers commented in the interviews about the importance of providing supporting public transport infrastructure to new residential developments, including those providing affordable housing, so that the number of private vehicles on the roading network in the District does not increase significantly. Although the transport requirements are outside the scope of the proposed Plan Variation, there are existing policies and planning rules in the District Plan which are likely to manage these impacts. These impacts will need to be assessed in accordance with the scale and location of the proposed housing.

At the District community level, there is likely to be a low positive impact. It is unlikely to be a substantial impact on business operations in the short-term, but this may change over time depending on the extent of affordable housing which are provided through the scheme and/or the availability of more affordable housing generally within the District. At the individual / family level, a low-moderate positive impact is likely for those residents that are able to access affordable housing , particularly where it is located in areas favourable for accessing other goods, services, community facilities and other destinations that positively contribute to 'way of life'. Overall, there is likely to be a **low positive impact on people's way of life** in the District.

## 8.2 Impacts on community cohesion and character

### 8.2.1 Reported impact on community cohesion and character and the relationship with housing affordability

This refers to the distinct identity of a place, the contribution of this to people's sense of place and the cohesion of the community. The District is a popular tourism destination known as the 'adventure capital of the world'. There numerous adventure activities including bungee jumping, jet boating, white water rafting and skydiving. It also has four ski fields, mountain biking and several wineries. The area is renowned for its outstanding natural beauty, diverse landscapes and access to the environment which means that people visit year round. Wānaka and Queenstown are the largest population centres and as a result have the most tourist accommodation and employment opportunities. The smaller townships include Makarora, Hāwea, Luggate, Albert Town, Glenorchy, Kinloch, Cardrona, Kingston, and Arrowtown.

Interviewees noted that a key reason for living in the District was the lifestyle and access to the environment. Several respondents noted that a key benefit of living in the area was "being able to work and then in 20 minutes be able to hike, kayak or on the way to the ski field". People also commented on the "beautiful setting" and "vibrancy" of the area.



The majority of those interviewed reported that the lack of affordable housing is having an impact on the existing social cohesion and character, with several commenting that only those who can afford to live in the district are able to stay/settle permanently. People commented on friends constantly leaving, and the difficulty of maintaining strong connections in a more transient community. This particularly impacted younger populations who highlighted that when people want to “settle down, buy a house and have kids” there are limited affordable housing options and people leave the area. 92% of survey respondents agreed that housing affordability is impacting the community, with comments noting that residents are being priced out of the market causing people to leave the area and resulting in a “very transient vibe” and “people can’t develop a real sense of community when they don’t feel settled in the district”. The value of a community including people from different income brackets was a strong theme commented on by most interviewees. This included the importance of ‘community vibrancy’ and how this is created by having diverse communities, where there are interactions and connections between people from different backgrounds. One survey respondent commented that “good communities have a balance of young and old, wealthy, and not so wealthy, however this is lacking in Queenstown”. Another noted that “in order to have a diverse community, there must be opportunities for everyone to be able to afford a home”,

A lack of housing affordability is also impacting the operation of integral services and facilities. Key workers (nurses, teachers, healthcare professionals) are finding it difficult to find and retain accommodation, particularly those who are renting. For example, the Ministry of Education provides housing for some teachers and there is always a waitlist. One interviewee noted that “everyone wants and needs service workers, but they are being priced out of the market”. Due to this issue, the QLCHT now has a specific waiting list for key workers.

The lack of affordable rental accommodation also appears to be impacting more transient parts of the community and workers within the tourism industry and supporting sectors such as hospitality. People identified this as being linked to property owners preferring to rent properties for shorter periods on Airbnb rather than provide longer term rental accommodation. This appears to be disproportionately impacting the those who rent (38% of the population in the District) and particularly those who have lower incomes and therefore budgets for rental accommodation. It was noted by interview participants the importance of the seasonal, service, healthcare and educational workforce to the local economy and community. These types of workers appear to be disproportionately impacted because of a lack of affordable housing provision, making their living situation less certain which impacts their ability to remain and continue contributing to the community.

### **8.2.2 Assessment on community cohesion and character – Proposed Plan Variation**

As a result of the proposed Plan Variation, it is likely that more people will be able to access affordable housing via the QLCHT. As QLCHT provides a range of housing across a continuum, when accessing these services people will have increased choice about the type of affordable housing that may be best for them and their family. It is also understood that the future housing portfolio is likely to include housing for people to live alone and from a range of different incomes, ages, and backgrounds.

The proposed Plan Variation provides greater certainty over the future development plans of the QLCHT and potentially other new community housing providers (should they wish to enter the market). This certainty is likely to positively influence the willingness of people to stay in the area, leading to a less transient community, particularly for key workers who are understood to be prioritised on the waitlist. However, it is noted that given the scale of the lack of affordable housing and rental accommodation in the district, there is still likely to become transiency in the district, impacting community cohesion.

The developments completed to date by the QLCHT have been integrated into existing communities and developments, and will be retained as a community asset. Given this track-record, it is likely that the residents of future developments will have an increased sense of place and belonging because of the



financial contribution/land obtained through the proposed change to the planning process which will enable QLCHT to create more developments.

At the District community level, there is likely to be a moderate positive impact, as the willingness of people of all backgrounds to stay in the Queenstown Lakes area may increase, in the longer term reducing some of the transiency of the community, particularly for key workers. As discussed, this adds to the vibrancy of the area, and people's socioeconomic wellbeing. At the individual / family level, a high positive impact is likely for those residents that are able to access affordable housing, particularly for key workers prioritised on waiting lists. Overall, there is likely to be a **moderate positive impact** on community cohesion and character as there will be greater access to affordable housing, providing opportunities for residents of all ages and backgrounds to remain, contribute to and feel a sense of belonging to the district.

### 8.3 Impacts on political systems

#### 8.3.1 Reported impact on political systems from a lack of affordable housing

This domain explores the extent to which people are able to participate in decisions that affect their lives. Those interviewed, particularly those representing organisations that undertake community outreach such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, Happiness House and the Salvation Army, commented that only some people in the community (who own their own home) have choice, certainty and control over their living situation. Interview participants commented on feeling "powerless" and having a comparative "lack of choice" about their future opportunities, as a lot of them were linked to having an affordable and stable living environment.

As discussed in section 4.2.4, Kāinga Ora does not have an extensive presence in the district, managing 13 rental properties in the Queenstown Lakes Territorial Local Authority area (Kainga Ora, 2023). It was also noted in an interview that Kāinga Ora does not have plans to build more properties in Queenstown Lakes. This was confirmed by numerous interview participants who noted that people do not put themselves on the central government (Ministry of Social Development) housing waiting lists as they know there are limited housing options available in the district. Instead, people use the QLCHT list, as indicated by there currently being over 1,093 people currently on this waitlist (QLCHT, 2023). It was also noted by several interviewees that the QLCHT eligibility criteria is quite strict, with one commenting "it only helps a small number of people... there needs to be something for non-residents too". Therefore, there is likely to be a lack of affordable housing assistance for people to access the support they need.

Survey respondents were asked 'if you need assistance to access housing, are you signing up with any organisations for support? If so, which ones?'. 19% of respondents answered yes, and provided a variety of responses for which organisations they have signed up with; the majority (62% of those that answered yes) stating they had signed up to the QLCHT. Other answers included Facebook, the Queenstown Housing Initiative, and Happiness House. 37% of those that answered that they do need assistance, noted that they do not know which organisations offer support and/or how to access it.

#### 8.3.2 Assessment on political systems – Proposed Plan Variation

As a result of the proposed Plan Variation, it is likely that more people will be able to access affordable housing via the QLCHT. As QLCHT provides a range of housing across a continuum, when accessing these services people will get a choice about the type of affordable housing that may be best for them and their family. In addition to this, QLCHT provides some wrap around support services, connecting tenants with other support agencies such as health care for those in the Senior Housing rental programme.

Despite this policy intervention, decision-making about housing provision in the District remains primarily with existing organisations and people who already own and develop property and/or who are responsible for creating and implementing policy in relation to housing affordability. Several interviewees commented on the disconnect between local and central government in terms of housing affordability and potential opportunities

for interventions to provide more affordable housing. One central government interviewee outlined that there does not appear to be a need for public housing because there is a lack of data to support it. The waiting lists are small and although the demand does appear to be significant, a lot of that is for seasonal workers and non-residents, so these people are not captured in the data and therefore not catered for by government.

Therefore, although there is likely to be a change for people accessing housing through QLCHT (or another community housing provider), the decision-makers and key influencers in the housing and rental market are most likely to remain similar to the status quo. As such, at the District community level, there is a very low (negligible) impact. For the individual/ family level, this exposure and support is likely to have a low positive impact on people's ability to understand and participate in other decisions about their lives, equipping them with an enhanced understanding of additional services they could potentially access. It is acknowledged that the impacts for those who are able to access this housing have the potential to be significant; however, the high demand for this housing and the QLCHT eligibility criteria as it stands means that the extent of the impact (i.e., the number of people impacted) will be relatively small, compared to the District community as a whole. Overall, there is likely to be a **low positive impact** on political systems.

## 8.4 Impacts on the quality of the environment

### 8.4.1 Reported impact on the quality of the environment from a lack of affordable housing provision

This refers to the quality of people's living environment, including sense of place and amenity values. As discussed in section 9.2, the natural beauty of the Queenstown Lakes area contributes to its sense of place and identity.

Comments were made in the interviews that an impact of a lack of affordable housing options has resulted in people living in cars, vans, and tents, in areas that are not designed for this in the long term, and that this does have an effect on the quality of the environment. One comment noted that although the housing stock is expensive, it does not necessarily translate to a higher quality of housing; the demand is high so people will live in whatever accommodation they can find, including vehicles or tents, or in cold or overcrowded housing.

### 8.4.2 Assessment of potential impacts on the quality of the environment – Proposed Plan Variation

In terms of potential changes and impacts to the quality of the environment as a result of the proposed Plan Variation, it is noted that most housing will still be in private ownership. This housing is governed by building standards, including healthy homes standards, but the quality of the home and its environment is dictated by the owner/landlord. For people living in privately owned homes, the quality of these homes is unlikely to change.

However, those who are able to access the affordable housing facilitated by the proposed Plan Variation are likely to have improvements to the quality of their living environment, which can contribute to an increased sense of place. Although it is not clear where any new affordable housing provision will be located, based on the QLCHT developments to date, and those in the pipeline, it is noted that these are on attractive sites in desirable locations (Queenstown, Arrowtown, Wānaka, Lake Hāwea), and are increasingly included as part of mixed tenure developments. The houses are well-designed and of a good quality. More people will be able to access this housing than do currently, and this could contribute to a higher quality housing environment, including by helping to reduce the number of people living in cars, vans and tents in areas that are not designed to support this.

At the District community level, there is likely to be a low positive impact. In the short term, there is unlikely to be a substantial impact for those living in privately owned housing but depending on the extent of affordable housing provided through the scheme, this may help to contribute to the overall quality of the housing stock

and built environment. At the individual / family level, a high positive impact is most likely for those residents accessing affordable housing who will live in well-designed, good quality homes. Overall, there is likely to be a **low positive impact** on the quality of the environment in the District.

## 8.5 Impacts on health and wellbeing

### 8.5.1 Reported impacts on health and wellbeing from a lack of affordable housing provision

Reported impacts on health and wellbeing from the community survey and stakeholder and community interviews include mental wellbeing, particularly stress and anxiety, and potential health impacts associated with un-fit for purpose accommodation.

Community survey respondents were asked to comment on how they felt about their housing situation. Sentiment analysis of these responses found that 75% of respondents felt negatively about their housing situation and/or the district's housing situation more generally. Many respondents described their and/or the district's housing situation as "terrible" or "dire". Approximately 12% of respondents commented on the negative impact that their housing situation has on their mental health and wellbeing, with many people commenting that they are "anxious", "worried" and/or "stressed". One respondent described this, noting "the stress of working a job that was extremely demanding and financially unviable, combined with the fact that I could not leave that job without making myself homeless put a great deal of stress on myself, my mental health and my relationship". The interview participants all reported stress as an impact of limited affordable housing provision. It was reported that this seems to be most prevalent for those who are unable to find or retain affordable housing in the area. Comments were given that it is very stressful to constantly be searching for housing, especially when this is compounded by the stress of living in unstable accommodation, while they search. For example, interviewees noted that this could include living in cars, vans, or tents, of which there are an increasing number, but also other difficult living situations, such as remaining in a home after a relationship has broken down because there are insufficient alternative options. These examples are likely to be very stressful, especially as there is no defined end-period for the living situation, given the lack of affordable housing on offer.

Even when affordable housing is secured, it was noted that stress can be experienced when retention of that home is not certain. One example given was of a family renting a property owned by someone overseas, who was known to travel to the area for the ski season. This left a lot of stress and uncertainty around whether the property owner would reclaim their home on their return. Stress from financial hardship as a result of high rents was also noted for those in rental housing. One social service provider commented that they are now seeing some of their own staff accessing their services, particularly the foodbank.

Several interview participants reported that stress and anxiety can come when a family sized home cannot be found, meaning that families are separated for uncertain lengths of time, leading to stress on family relationships. This lack of family homes was discussed by one social service provider who employs a number of international workers as a key problem for their organisation; it causes stress and anxiety for the worker, their family, and can also have an impact on the retention of staff (as discussed in section 9.1). They noted that they lose a lot of staff to other parts of New Zealand, where accommodation is cheaper and more plentiful. One comment made was that this is not a housing market, but a "room market", whereby it is very difficult to find whole houses to rent.

Potential health impacts were also identified. This was particularly discussed in interviews and the community survey in relation to those people living in un-fit for purpose or unstable accommodation, including in cars, vans, tents and in cold and/or overcrowded housing. Similarly, the QLCHT Renter's Survey 2020 found that 'affordability' and 'warm and dry', continue to be the two lower rated areas of satisfaction with 34% and 25% (respectively) saying they are not satisfied. Almost a quarter of respondents stated they are not able to adequately heat their homes, primarily due to the cost of heating and poor insulation. Residents also

mentioned in the QLDC Quality of Life Survey 2022 that many rental homes do not meet the healthy home standard. Residents mention the houses are cold, damp, have mould, and rodent issues. One community survey respondent identified that their local friend is employed, but has been living in the woods for 18 months as he has not been able to secure accommodation, noting that this has “really impacted his health”. Living in these conditions can result in physical health impacts, including respiratory conditions or injury, as well as mental health impacts, including anxiety.

### 8.5.2 Assessment of potential impacts on health and wellbeing – proposed Plan Variation

It is noted that most housing will still be in private ownership and health and wellbeing circumstances are unlikely to change, as set out above. However, there will be an increased provision of QLHCT housing and, therefore, more people who are able to access this housing.

Those who are able to access affordable housing are likely to see a reduction in the stress and anxiety associated with constantly seeking or retaining a home. While there are likely to still be wait lists for affordable housing, an increase in affordable housing supply means that wait times are likely to be shorter. This may result in more feelings of hope that a place in a QLHCT house is a possibility.

From a health perspective, the affordable QLHCT housing stock is likely to be of a higher quality (as detailed above) and, therefore, less likely to cause physical health impacts. QLHCT policies (including regular inspections) prevent overcrowding or illegal housing practices. QLHCT housing stock is compact, to help maintain affordability, but is available in a variety of sizes and can accommodate families.

At the District community level, there is likely to be a low positive impact. In the short-term, there is unlikely to be a substantial change for those living in privately owned housing but depending on the extent of affordable housing provided through the scheme, this may increase feelings of hope that a place in a QLHCT house is a possibility. At the individual / family level, for those residents accessing affordable housing, there is likely to be a low positive impact on health and wellbeing, as the housing stock is of a good quality and subject to quality regulations and policy. Overall, there is likely to be a **low positive impact** on health and wellbeing in the Queenstown Lakes area.

This is most likely for those residents accessing affordable housing.

## 8.6 Impacts on personal and property rights

### 8.6.1 Reported impacts on personal and property rights from a lack of affordable housing provision

This relates to whether people are economically affected or experience personal disadvantage which may include a violation, or a *perceived* violation, of their personal and property rights. In New Zealand, It is noted that the RMA provides the scope for both central government and local authorities to impose planning controls on private property, primarily via regional and district plans; the focus of which is on the public interest (i.e., the management of potential effects, including social, cultural, and physical environmental effects).

As discussed in previous sections, the majority of interviewees noted recent changes in tenancy law<sup>11</sup> that are disincentivising landlords to rent their properties longer-term, and instead encouraging them to list properties

<sup>11</sup> These are changes to the Residential Tenancies Act 1986 (between 2020-2022). These changes include:

a. Fixed-term tenancy agreements entered into from the 11 February automatically converting to periodic tenancies unless specific requirements are met.

as Airbnb / short term rentals, which provide comparable levels of income over a shorter duration of tenancy. Approximately 37% of community survey respondents commented on the negative impact of Airbnb on housing in the district. One respondent commented “I have lived in three separate houses in Queenstown, and all of which I have had to move out of because they have been turned into an Airbnb/sold/owner moved back into them”. This is supported by a 49% reduction in rental listing in the district from December 2021 - December 2022 (Patterson, 2022). Interview participants also noted the large number of vacant properties in the district. It was agreed that both of these factors are contributing to an increased demand for housing and driving up property prices. Queenstown is an expensive place to live, with rents and house prices both higher than the national average; the HCDA 2021 identified that over 83% of first-home buyer households and 37% of renters spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs. Media reports suggest that it can take almost 18 years to save for a deposit on a house in Queenstown, and 90% of household income is needed to service the mortgage (Jamieson 2023b).

In relation to vacant properties, some interview participants noted that this was a personal right, and there is not much you could do to change this behaviour. Conversely, one interviewee suggested that owning property in an area comes with a social contract; whereby you have a responsibility to contribute to the fabric of the community, for example, by making your home available to the people who live and work in the area. Although this is disadvantaging people, it was recognised that there is no current mechanism to require this.

As mentioned in section 9.1.2, there are some employers in the area who have bought property for their employees. Several interview participants discussed this, noting both the positive and negative potential impacts. It does help to house workers, particularly those from service industries or who come for seasonal work, who are currently highly impacted by the lack of affordable housing provision. However, there are potential risks of having accommodation tied to employment contracts, and the social impacts of “living with who you work with”, which can be problematic for all parties if relationships break down. Similarly, an interviewee noted an example of someone living in employee-provided accommodation who turned down a higher-paid employment opportunity because they would lose their current home and knew the difficulties of finding another. One interviewee outlined that these negative effects used to be more prevalent, as there is now increased knowledge of service agreements, instead of traditional residential tenancy agreements, which provide accommodation for the duration of employment. This helps provide more security for both parties.

Although increased property prices are, on paper, positive for the property owner, an interview participant noted that increased prices may make it difficult for some existing homeowners to afford rising rate prices. Queenstown Lakes experienced a 14.2% rates increase in 2023, double the rates increase experienced in Christchurch. This impact may be particularly felt by older people who are no longer working. This is compounded by a lack of smaller, affordable options they could move to.

### **8.6.2 Assessment of potential impacts on personal and property rights – Proposed Plan Variation**

All of the developers interviewed (5) reported that the anticipated high costs associated with the proposed Plan Variation (the financial contribution required) would make many projects unviable, and they would consider stopping development in the area, including ceasing to continue building out their proposed pipeline. They note the impact of this would be a reduction in supply of affordable housing in the area, exacerbating homelessness and the issues employers have with attracting and retaining staff. They also

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b. Landlords are not able to end periodic tenancies without cause by providing 90 days’ notice.

<https://www.tenancy.govt.nz/law-changes/phase-2/security-of-rental-tenure-law-changes/>

<https://wiseup.nz/investing-property/landlord-selling-house/new-tenancy-laws>



consider this would stop other developers entering the market. It is noted that this is reported as an anticipatory effect, and this potential change in behaviour was not confirmed by any actions these developers had taken to date. This includes any decisions or actions made by developers after Plan Change 24 was introduced, the first formal provisions to enable affordable housing in the district. That is, development has continued to occur in the district since the introduction of Plan Change 24, despite objections from developers.

Similarly, this impact was noted by an interview participant, planning to build their first home. They stated that the proposed Plan Variation would compromise their ability to build, and the timeframes in which it could be built, as the financial contribution required would make the project unaffordable in the shorter term. The affordable housing contribution would also be required in instances where new houses are to be built on lots that have not already been subject to the contribution; for example, building on a vacant lot that was created before the proposed rules came into effect. This has the potential to 'catch people out', increasing costs for developers, or extending timeframes for development. One interview participant noted that buying a house is not a human right, but that access to warm, dry, affordable accommodation is. They also stated that this means the Queenstown Lakes housing crisis is mostly around rental provision. Those who are able to access affordable housing, including those that are provided housing as a result of increased provision provided by the proposed Plan Variation, will have this basic human right met.

Overall, there is likely to be a **moderate positive impact** on people's personal and property rights. At the District community level, there is expected to be a very low (negligible) impact, as it is unlikely to have a discernible impact for those living in privately owned housing. Anticipatory effects of the Proposed Plan Variation, including a cessation of development, are noted by developers and individuals looking to subdivide and/or build in the area, including first home builders. Although we note the potential impacts of a slowing or cessation of development for the purposes of this assessment, an analysis on the likelihood of this occurring is outside the scope of this report has been explored further in the economic assessment.

At the individual / family level, it is noted that there are likely to be high moderate positive impacts on personal and property rights for those residents that are able to access (rent or own) warm, dry, and affordable housing as a result of the proposed Plan Variation. It is acknowledged that the impacts for those who are able to access this housing are likely to be significant; however as discussed above, the high demand for this housing and the QLCHT eligibility criteria as it stands means that the extent of the impact (i.e., the number of people impacted) will be relatively small, compared to the District community as a whole.

## 8.7 Impacts on people's fears and aspirations

### 8.7.1 Reported impacts on people's fears and aspirations from a lack of affordable housing provision

Reported impacts relating to the lack of affordable housing provision are in relation to safety issues and fears (perceived and realised), as well as individual and community aspirations.

A number of people interviewed (community and stakeholders) and many surveyed expressed concern for the future community. As identified in section 9.2, the lack of housing affordability is having an impact on social cohesion. A younger key worker noted that they feel unable to settle in the area and, similarly, an older resident reported concerns that although they want to stay in the area for family and lifestyle reasons, they might not be able to do so as there are insufficient affordable housing options to downsize into. Comments were made that it is important for a community to include people from different income brackets and backgrounds, and concern was expressed that the lack of affordable housing provision is altering the area's community fabric. Community survey respondents also noted concerns over the future of the community in Queenstown. One respondent commented that "after 7 years, I'm making plans to leave. There is not future in Queenstown", and another noted that "people don't stay as (they) can't see a long term future in the

region”. Similarly, the QLCHT Renters Survey 2020, which found that the vast majority of respondents’ wish to remain in the area long term and a vast majority would like to purchase a home in the district. Housing affordability is noted as a barrier; the inability to save for a deposit due to the high cost of living and incommensurate incomes, housing affordability itself and the current financial impact of COVID-19 (reduced income and job instability).

The interviews also identified a number of safety issues associated with a lack of affordable housing provision. A social services provider discussed the potential for safety issues to arise as a result of people having to live in difficult circumstances because there was a lack of affordable housing alternatives; for example, people continuing to live in homes where a relationship had broken down, or there had been violence. It was reported in the media in 2022 that the number of convictions for domestic violence offences in the Queenstown Lakes area increased by more than 80% between 2018 and 2021 (Williams, 2022), identifying that violence in the home can be an issue. Several interviewees also discussed the safety issues associated with living in unhealthy / un-fit for purpose accommodation, such as overcrowded homes. It was noted by several interviewees that there has been some prejudice towards international renters. This may bring safety concerns, or feelings of intimidation for individuals and for the wider migrant community. Comments from the community survey include that “migrant workers work hard and live in below average conditions”, and “people, especially migrants, are too scared to voice landlord concerns”. Similarly, two interviewees noted that there are dubious practices going on that are ‘swept under the rug’; people are often too scared to come forward with housing issues, in fear that they will lose this housing and be able to find alternative accommodation.

### 8.7.2 Assessment of potential impacts on people’s fears and aspirations – Proposed Plan Variation

As set out in previous sections, it is noted that most housing will still be in private ownership, but that there will be an increased provision of QLHCT housing and, therefore, more people who are able to access this housing. In terms of concerns for the future of the community, an increased supply of this affordable housing is likely to have improved impacts on social cohesion (discussed in section 9.2), providing opportunities for residents of all ages and backgrounds to remain in and contribute to the area.

From a safety perspective, an increased supply of good quality, affordable housing options, would help to reduce the number of people living in difficult or unsafe environments, or increase hope for people that there is a viable opportunity for a new home in the future.

At the District community level, there is likely to be a low positive impact. In the short-term, there is unlikely to be a substantial change for those living in privately owned housing, but depending on the extent of housing provided through the scheme, this may increase feelings of hope that a place in an affordable house is a possibility. At the individual/ family level, a high positive impact is likely for those residents accessing good quality, safe, affordable housing. Overall, there is likely to be a **moderate positive impact** on fears and aspirations in the District.

## 9 Conclusion and Recommendations

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The purpose of this SIA is to analyse the potential impacts of the of QLDC's proposed Inclusionary Housing Plan Change. The proposal would require most new residential subdivisions, developments, and redevelopments to pay an 'affordable housing financial contribution'. The contributions would be collected by QLDC and provided to the QLCHT or another registered Community Housing Provider.

The SIA involved desk-top research to analyse existing information about housing affordability and the proposed plan change, including a literature review. To gain an understanding of the communities likely to be affected a community profile was created. In September and October 2023 stakeholder interviews were undertaken with individuals and organisations in-person in Queenstown and Wānaka as well as online. An online community survey was undertaken from the 4<sup>th</sup> September – 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023. The collected information (including community and stakeholder engagement) was reviewed and the social domains of concern for assessment confirmed. Through analysis the social changes and impacts that will likely result from the proposed changes were determined. The potential magnitude of impacts was determined using the methodology outlined in section 2 of this report.

This SIA concludes that there is likely to be **low positive** impacts on people's way of life, political systems, the quality of the environment, and health and wellbeing, A **moderate positive** impact is likely for people's personal and property rights, community cohesion and character, and people's fears and aspirations due to the likely increase in affordable housing, providing opportunities for residents of all ages, backgrounds, and income levels to remain, contribute to and feel a sense of belonging to the district. This can contribute to the vibrancy and wellbeing of the community.

From analysing the potential social changes and impacts, the following observations are made which could be explored further by QLDC:

- There are some additional forms of housing that could be expressly added to the list of exemptions in section 3 of the proposed provisions. These are accessible housing and Papakāinga as they fulfil particular needs in the community. Housing developed by iwi in partnership with the Crown may also be eligible for exemption, if affordable housing provision is already incorporated within the development plans.
- For the purposes of this assessment, it has been assumed that the eligibility criteria for housing assistance from QLCHT will not change as a result of the Inclusionary Housing Plan Change. We also note the existing high waiting list for affordable homes (1,093). It is observed, therefore, that the positive impacts for those who are able to access this housing are likely to be significant; however as discussed, the high demand for this housing and the QLCHT eligibility criteria as it stands means that the extent of the impact (i.e., the number of people impacted) will be relatively small, compared to the QLDC community as a whole. This has been considered in describing the scale of the impact. Revisions to the eligibility criteria may alter the extent of impacts.
- Developers and individuals looking to subdivide and/or build in the area, including first home builders, have identified potential risks and impacts of the proposed Plan Change, including a cessation of development, which could lead to a reduction in the supply of housing in the area, exacerbating homelessness and the issues employers have with attracting and retaining staff. For the purposes of this report, this is noted an anticipated impact, but an analysis on the likelihood of this occurring is outside the scope of this report and has been explored further in the economic assessment.



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# A

## Appendix A – Community Survey

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## 11 Appendix: QLDC Proposed Plan Variation Social Impact Assessment Survey

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Queenstown Lakes District Council have commissioned Beca to undertake a Social Impact Assessment of the Proposed Inclusionary Housing Plan Change. The proposal would require most new residential subdivisions, developments and redevelopments to pay an 'affordable housing financial contribution'. The contributions would be collected by QLDC and provided to the Queenstown Lakes Community Housing Trust or another registered Community Housing Provider to provide affordable housing which is retained as a community asset.

Social Impact Assessment is the common framework used in New Zealand and internationally to analyse, monitor and manage the potential social consequences of changes to policy and/or developments. We want to hear from you about existing housing conditions, affordability and the potential social changes that may result from the Proposed Inclusionary Housing Plan Change. This survey will take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete.

Please return the form by **2 October 2023**. The form can be completed online or in hard copy.

### **Hard copy:**

Hard copies are available at Council offices and libraries in the Queenstown Lakes District.

These can be submitted to Services staff on the front desk, or taken home and then posted to:

Queenstown Lakes District Council

Private Bag 50072

Queenstown 9348

Attention: Social Impacts Survey

If you have any questions please contact Corinne Marti – [corinne.marti@beca.com](mailto:corinne.marti@beca.com)

**Name:**

**Email address:**

**Phone number (optional):**

**Age:**

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-39
- 40-54
- 55-64
- 65+

**Where do you live:**

- Arrowtown
- Albert Town
- Frankton
- Glenorchy
- Hāwea
- Kingston
- Luggate
- Makarora
- Queenstown/Whakatipu
- Wānaka/Upper Clutha
- Elsewhere in Aotearoa New Zealand
- Overseas

**What is your current living situation?**

- I am renting
- I own my own home
- Other (please specify)

**Ethnicity (please tick all that apply)**

- European/Pākehā
- Māori
- Pasifika
- Asian
- Middle Eastern
- Latin American
- Other ethnicity (please specify)

**How do you feel about your housing situation in the Queenstown Lakes District?**

**What are the barriers to rent or own a home in the Queenstown Lakes District?**

**What are the opportunities to rent or own a home in the Queenstown Lakes District?**

**Do you think housing affordability is impacting your community? If so, please provide examples.**

**How do you feel about permanent affordable housing being introduced to your community?**

**If you need assistance to access housing are you signing up with any organisations for help? If so, which ones?**

**For more information about the Proposed Inclusionary Housing Plan Change please see the links below:**

Inclusionary Housing FAQ Page: [https://www.qldc.govt.nz/media/fw0grpu1/inclusionary-housing-faqs\\_-\\_final.pdf](https://www.qldc.govt.nz/media/fw0grpu1/inclusionary-housing-faqs_-_final.pdf)

Inclusionary Zoning Website: <https://www.qldc.govt.nz/your-council/district-plan/inclusionary-housing-plan-change>

Improving housing outcomes in Queenstown Lakes web page: <https://www.qldc.govt.nz/your-council/major-projects/improving-housing-outcomes>

**Data/privacy:**

Feedback will be treated as public information and your comments may be publicly available, however, we will never disclose your name or contact details.