

Name is Samuel Belk. I am a "lay" presenter, certainly not an expert in planning or urban development and subdivision. In spite of my North American accent, I arrived in the Lakes District 31 years ago, and we have been residents for 28 years and farm sheep, beef and vines on Stronsay Farm, established in 1866 in Gibbston. I am a member of the Gibbston Community Association and have been its secretary for six years.

AND ACTING CHAIR

28 years ago when we bought our farm, we used Queenstown as for everything we needed: post, machinery, shopping. However with the advent of "Hendo's Hole", traffic, Howard Patterson's development (now Shotover Country) that changed. We now avoid going to Q-town because of the traffic and the depressing expansion around development: tacky housing tracts and strip malls that are endemic to places like California, Texas, and New Jersey; places where I grew up and know well, places that had open space and cornfields and are now housing tracts. Just as with those places, we have been, and continue to surrender our landscape and open space to development and subdivision.

AND SUBDIVISION

I will try not dwell on the hard facts of why we are fouling our own nest, they have been rebutted by experts and Mr. Jeffrey Brown's 260-page 42A document which, for "Lay" residents and ratepayers like me, is opaque and the logic is tortured.

That NZTA has suggested that the Shotover Bridge, roading and infrastructure cannot support the Ladies Mile Housing Tract of over 2,000 houses. The 42A document states

"there will be minimization of generating additional vehicle trips along State Highway 6; the reduction, as far as practicable, of vehicle trips along State Highway 6 generated by the existing Ladies Mile communities (Lake Hayes Estate, Shotover Country Estate and the QCC); the discouragement of private vehicle use and encouragement of active and public transport modes; and the avoidance of development until specific transport infrastructural works have been completed".

And how will that happen? Surge charges? Toll booths? As a "Lay" person I fail to see how traffic along SH 6 won't be exacerbated by the addition of 2,500 house suburbia. This proposal creates a new town.

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2,500 homes addresses nothing: affordable housing, high density housing, or the need for urban multifamily housing as Ngai Tahu has initiated on the old High School site! The developers have awarded 5% of the land to the Housing Trust according to Ms. Scott? 5%?!?!? And the other 95%? These homes will cater not to nurses, firemen, cops, teachers but to second home buyers and overseas buyers. And the nurses, teachers, police, and firemen will commute from more affordable Wanaka and Cromwell with the added inconvenience of more traffic from the Ladies Mile development.

KEYLY

→ WHICH I APPROVE. SIMPLY

I will not address that this is only a sop to well-healed developers who want to build and flip houses. They have the time and resources to hire consultants to convince the Council ... from my perspective, that the Earth is flat and that 2,500 homes on Ladies Mile make perfect environmental, social, infrastructure, traffic, stormwater, and economic sense.

I note that the stormwater is still an issue although the 42A does not really address that, and it has even been identified, I think by Mr. Church, as a problem. Now with regard to Lake Hayes. There will be runoff to Lake Hayes. And the past is prologue. Lake Hayes is Eutrophic. It is dead. It can only support life in the top meter. We killed it with development and runoff that dates from the 60's. And

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I am not quoting some social media site; I am quoting Dr. Marc Schalenburg of U. of Otago, NZ's premier fresh-water limnologist. But I'll leave that to the Friends of Lake Hayes and Mike Hanff.

Nor will I dwell on the fact that the QLDC was against this housing tract it but that this will be -fast-tracked through Central Govt ... is it to show progress on housing by this govt given the abject failure of Kiwi-build, hence the fast-track?

I will not dwell on those hard facts. There are "experts" to address these.

My concerns are soft, qualitative, and global.

Our place in Asia:

I am acutely aware that Queenstown is a global destination. Our comparative destinations are not Taupo and Rotorua, our comparatives are Chamonix, Aspen, Davos and Whistler (which the housing trust was modelled on). I know all of those places very well. My professional career was in finance, most of it spent in Tokyo (11 years, try telling Tokyo residents that apartments are unsellable as one of the presenters stated yesterday), HK, Sydney, Singapore. ^{VAL DISCRE} We know how desirable and unique Queenstown is to all of North Asia. If you go four time zones west, Northern and Southern Hemispheres, there are no comparatives. We are one of the last places with open space ... why do we want to put up a housing tract of 3 br and 2 bath homes? Digress - \$1.7M NZD = 1.4M USD -

Housing

COMMISSIONER MOORE, THAT IS CHEAP.

And yet we believe in an out of date national ideal that we need to provide everyone, including new semi-skilled entrants, with a section, three bedroom two bath home. We will use up our limited land in the Lakes Region clinging to a parochial and provincial housing ideal that is not available anywhere else in Asia. I lived in an apartment for eleven years in Tokyo; new entrants to The Lakes can live in high density multi-family urban housing. ^{REMAINING}

Landscape

We have outstanding landscape full of ONL's and ONF's. We are designated, under the National Policy Statement, as HPL 3, Highly Productive Land class three. Sorry, according to the 42A Ladies Mile includes "vacant rural land with limited productive and rural activities". That describes every farm in NZ ... Landscape is built on views and open space. It is in direct conflict with housing tracts and apartment blocks. There are hundreds of examples globally; the most jarring for me was a recent visit to the Central Valley of California which used to be open pasture and farms. It's now one big housing tract ... for miles and miles. Cookie-cutter identical McMansions separated from each other by no more than a meter. A one-way commute to the jobs in the Bay Area is two hours. Is this what we want for the Lakes Region? We already have a shopping and strip mall at Five Mile, the successor to "Hendo's Hole". Do we really want to extend this tacky development further? ^{EPITOM}

Queenstown's Future

We risk, with this development and those like it, incrementally fouling our nest further. If we truly want to preserve the attractiveness of the region, for both residents and visitors, we need be much more thoughtful about any further development. We can approve the Ladies Mile Development and others like it ... and each one will be a small incremental change ... it's the Boiled Frog Syndrome. But cumulatively we will lose the Lakes Region to development. We are losing it already. It is less attractive, much more crowded, and much much much more developed than when my wife and I crested the Crown range (on a dirt road) in 1991. There is a price to live in the Lakes Region, we are a global destination, we need to preserve what is left of our landscape, and the Ladies Mile

development should be dramatically shrunk or better, not be approved. If you really want transparency and input, run a Lakes-wide referendum on the Ladies Mile development. See how the "Lay" people, the ratepayers, the great unwashed like me vote. I think the outcome of a referendum would be obvious, which is exactly why there would never be a referendum. Because this development appears to be a fait accompli and as a "Lay" person and ratepayer, I might as well be charging windmills.

Thank you for your time.

*My good friend JOHN ALEXANDER WHO SPOKE EARLIER WARNED ME
"DON'T SPEAK TOO FREELY OR YOU'LL GET HAMMERED WITH A
CODE OF CONDUCT VIOLATION" I HOPE I HAVE NOT TRANSCRESSED.*