

S35 Monitoring Report Northlake Special Zone

2025

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Executive Summary

This report assesses the efficiency and effectiveness of the objectives, policies and rules of the Northlake Special Zone in the Queenstown Lakes Operative District Plan (ODP) in accordance with s35(b) of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA). The findings of this report will inform amendments to the Northlake Special Zone as part of the review of the special zones of the ODP. The findings are based on available building consent and resource consents that have been lodged within the Zone as well as officer research.

The analysis shows most provisions are effective in delivering the desired outcomes. Use of the Structure Plan to guide development alongside the underlying Outline Development Plans have by and large effectively provided for Northlake to develop as anticipated. Provisions related to landscape, amenity, ecology, open space and recreation, infrastructure and efficient land use have broadly been adhered to. A few key issues were identified:

- The sequencing of community facilities alongside the stages of development.
- The stormwater challenges in the zone

For residential-scale development (i.e. resource consents for individual houses), breaches noted relate to site density, maximum heights, minimum lot sizes, and maximum building site coverage.

Over the last few years, planning changes sought outside the zone framework through fast track consenting and a private plan change signal the zone may not always be working over time.

Despite these breaches, overall it is found that the objectives and policies for the Zone have been mostly effective and generally resulted in the outcomes anticipated by the district plan.



Figure 1 Northlake Zone, Wānaka

Introduction

This report monitors the effectiveness and efficiency of the Northlake Special Zone (the Zone) in the Operative District Plan (ODP). The focus of this report is to determine whether the ODP provisions for the Zone are efficient and effective, whether the objectives and policies are being achieved, and to help identify any emerging resource management issues. The findings of this report will help to inform the review of the Northlake Special Zone, and the wider review of the special zones of the ODP. This report fulfils the requirements of section 35(b) in relation to the Northlake Special Zone

The RMA requires the effectiveness and efficiency of a plan are assessed, with the findings then used to inform the review of a plan. This is focused on the efficiency and effectiveness of the plans objectives, policies or methods (i.e., rules).

District plan effectiveness monitoring requires the Council to compare what is actually occurring under the district plan provisions with the intentions of the plan (as expressed through its objectives). This involves first identifying what the plan is trying to achieve for the zone, and to then track how well it is achieving these objectives. Once an understanding of how well the objectives are being met, the next consideration is identify to what extent this can be attributed to the District Plan policies and rules and to what extent 'outside' influences may be affecting the ability of the Plan to achieve its objectives.

Plan efficiency monitoring refers to comparing the costs of administering the plans provisions incurred by applicants, the Council and other parties compared to the outcomes or benefits achieved. It is noted here that determining what level of costs are acceptable is generally a subjective judgement and, as such, it is difficult to reach definitive conclusions. It is also considered that if development can be undertaken with no resource consent fees then that improves the efficiency of the Plan.

Requirements of the Resource Management Act (1991)

Section 35 of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) states that:

(2) Every local authority shall monitor –

...

(b) the efficiency and effectiveness of policies, rules or other methods in its policy statement or plan;

...

and take appropriate action (having regard to the methods available to it under this Act) where this is shown to be necessary.

What is the Northlake Special Zone?

Site description and context

Northlake is a rapidly developing urban area near the northern edge of Wānaka. It is becoming an integral part of Wānaka's urban fabric, providing a range of living choices and acting as a northern urban hub between the areas of Albert Town and Wānaka. Aubrey Road provides the main connection to Northlake while a series of pedestrian and cycle trails provide active travel connections to wider Wānaka.

Northlake exists atop a landform of alluvial terraces and hummocky hills. The land to the north of Northlake descends across a series of vegetated terraces to meet the Clutha River/Mata-au Outlet. The northern edge of the zone sits within an Outstanding Natural Landscape / Feature and is immediately adjacent to the Dublin Bay Priority Area Landscape Schedule (21.22.22)¹.

The land to the east is occupied by the Hikuwai Reserve, which is a flat landform clad in mature kanuka shrubland and managed by the Department of Conservation.

The land to the south is zoned Large Lot Residential and is part of an urban character area abutting the foot of Mount Iron and Little Mount Iron.

The land to the west is Hāwea/Wānaka-Sticky Forest is land being held by the Crown under the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998 for beneficiaries of the South Island Landless Natives Act (SILNA) to be identified by the Māori Land Court. It is anticipated the land will be a residential development in the future, currently it is clad in mature conifers and used for informal mountain biking and walking.



¹ The general description is: *The Dublin Bay PA encompasses the ONL of the Dublin Bay foreshore and flats on Lake Wānaka and extends to the crests of the landforms enclosing the bay and the Clutha Mata-au outlet – Mount Brown, the glacial moraine behind the bay, the headland on the northern side of the outlet, and the landforms enclosing the southern side of the outlet. The PA is a landscape unit within the wider Lake Wānaka ONL and its boundaries form the visual catchment of the lake when viewed from the lake surface.*

A Residential Focused Mixed-Use Zone

The Northlake Special Zone (the Zone) provides for a predominantly residential neighbourhood, with pockets of zoning which allow for commercial / mixed-use. The 2023 census has 1,810 people resident in the census unit which encompasses much of the zone. The area offers a range of housing choices and lot sizes ranging from low to medium density sections, with larger residential sections on the southern and northern edges. The zone enables development of the land resource in a manner which reflects the zone’s landscape and amenity values.

The Zone includes a Structure Plan showing the general layout of the zone as well as:

- the primary internal road network,
- external road intersections,
- pedestrian linkages and routes through the zone,
- areas to be protected from any development
- tree protection and building restriction areas and
- the developable areas.

An important component of the Zone is the need to submit an Outline Development Plan as part of an application for consent. They are a high-level master plan template providing a link between the Structure Plan, and the subsequent detailed subdivision and building plans. An Outline Development Plan is described in one resource consent document as an “integral link ensuring an iterative design process, filling the gap between the high level structure plan and subdivision of the zone, in anticipation of multiple landowners/developers over time².

Since its inception the zone has largely been developed in accordance with the Structure Plan and to the densities anticipated and set out in the rules. The densities expected versus realised will be further examined through the zone review. For the present, according to rating data (property descriptions) the following characteristics are present in the zone:

Rating Property Description	Count in the Zone
Commercial Offices	4
Educational	1
Lifestyle-Single unit	1
Multi use within Commercial	2
Residential - Multi Unit	7
Residential -Single Unit	742
Retail - Commercial	20
Vacant Residential	270
Total	1047

Table 1 Rating Data - property description (as at Feb 2025)

² See the AEE for RM160152, page 29

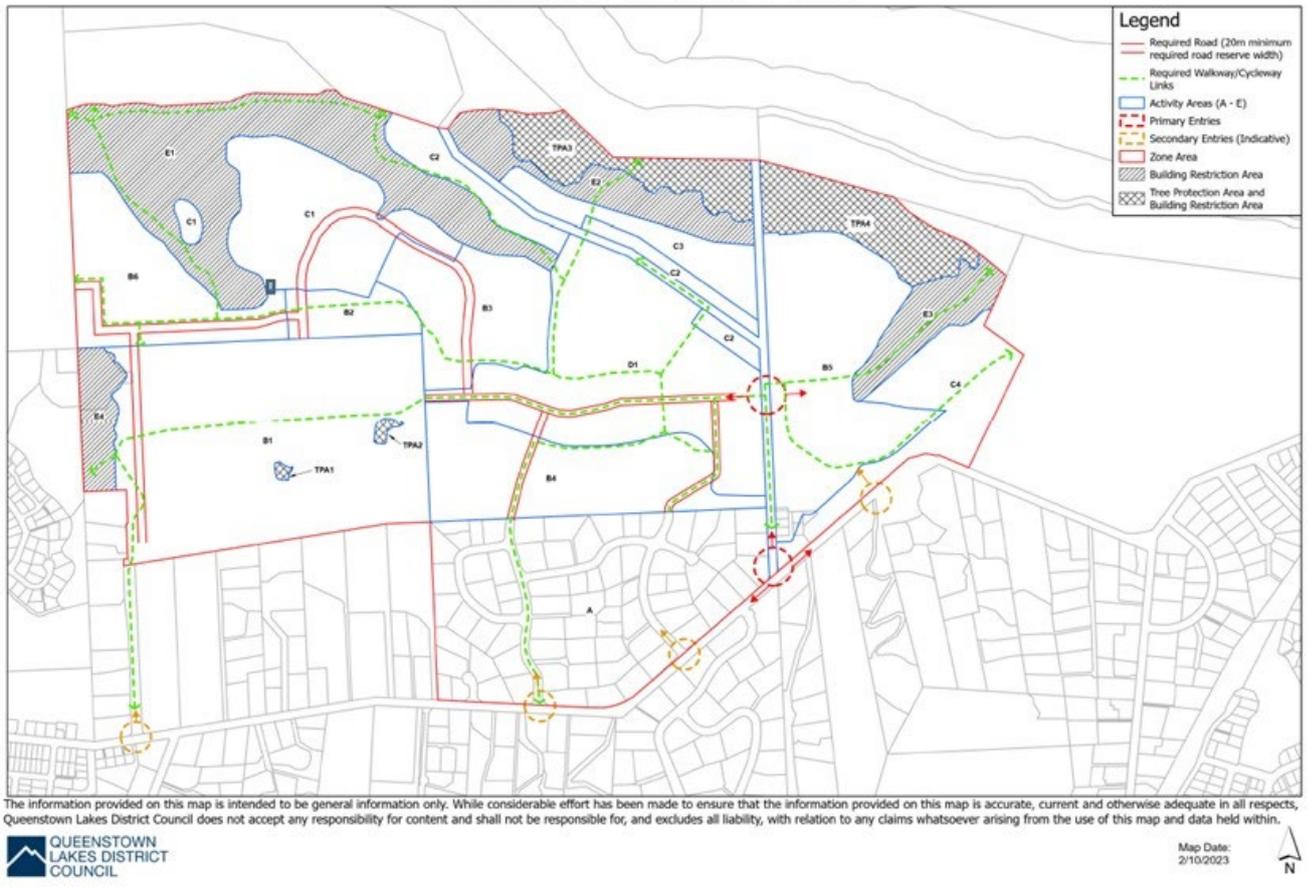


Figure 2 Northlake Structure Plan



Figure 3 Northlake landscape – 2021. Source; Northlake Plan Change Request Northlake Investments Limited Visual Assessment Images 19 January 2022 Reference : PA21628 IS04

How was the Northlake Special Zone Created?

The land was identified in the Wānaka Structure Plan 2007 as being suitable for development due to its proximity to community and education facilities and to future public transport linkages. Following that process (the strategic document was intended to be a guide to future planning across Wānaka), a series of resource consents were issued but never realised in the area for boundary adjustments, amalgamations and smaller subdivisions at densities more similar to lifestyle blocks.

The Zone as known today was processed as a private Plan Change 45 (PC 45) to the Operative District Plan for the Northlake Special Zone between 2013-2015. The Zone was based on a comprehensive landscape-based masterplan which identified opportunities for differing scales and intensities of development of the area. The Zone was initially approximately 220ha and envisaged up to approximately 1,500 residential homes within several different neighbourhoods based upon density and land ownership. It also included a small commercial and community facilities node.

The planning framework proposed for PC 45 was consistent with standard practice at the time within the District, including a structure-plan based Zones in a dedicated chapter 12 of the district plan.

The Northlake Special Zone has gone through a series of smaller scale private plan changes to the policy framework since its initial inception. In 2019 Plan Change 53 was approved, it amended Activity Area D1 (where retirement villages and commercial activities are enabled), and associated rules.

The most recent change to the Northlake Special Zone was Plan Change 54 (2022-2024) which was approved without appeal and made the following changes:

- Amended the Zone's Structure Plan to include a required road to the boundary of Sticky Forest,
- Amended the boundaries of activity areas to enable additional development in the Zone,
- amended Section 15 (Subdivision, Development and Financial Contributions) to specifically address the adequacy of the Zone's stormwater management and
- included a Non Complying activity for any subdivision to Activity Area B6 dependent on the development of legal access.

Current interests and a notable consent

Currently there are understood to be three principal developer interests within the Northlake Special Zone:

- East of Outlet Road – Hikuwai - (Exclusive Developments),
- Northwest of Outlet Road - Northlake (Northlake/Winton)
- Southwest of Outlet Road – Allenby Farm (WFH Properties Ltd)

A notable consent was issued to Winton in 2020 for the Northbrook Wānaka Retirement Village under special legislation, the Covid 19 Recovery Fast track Consenting Act.

What is the Zone trying to achieve?

The Plan identifies six resource management issues:

Landscape and Amenity

High quality amenity outcomes are recognised as important to address landscape and amenity issues identified in the Zone. Identifying the urban edge within the Zone is also raised for its importance to preserve landscape values enjoyed from the Lake Wānaka and Clutha River.

Community

The Zone's provisions enable the development of a commercial precinct to address some of the daily needs of the local community.

Ecology

The impact of pastoral farming is identified as having degraded natural values of the land included within the Zone. To address this the protection of mostly kanuka vegetation and through encouraging tree planting some of these values can be enhanced. Development near the boundary of the Hikuwai Conservation Area is also managed to protect the associated values.

Open Space and Recreation

For open space and recreation, the Chapter recognises the Zone presents 'opportunities to provide open spaces and trails that will contribute to the Wānaka community's social and economic wellbeing'. Continued and increased opportunities to access Lake Wānaka and the Clutha River/ Mata-au outlet are identified as potentially being 'secured as part of the development of the land'.

Efficient Land Use

The intent of the Zone is for residentially zoned land to be used efficiently to promote housing affordability and to relieve pressure to develop more sensitive land in and around Wānaka.

Infrastructure

Issues for infrastructure are recognised in the Chapter, development within the Zone requires the provision of services including water supply, sewerage disposal, telecommunications, and electricity supply.

In response to these issues, the efficiency and effectiveness of the objectives and policies are discussed in detail later in this report.

The 'State' of the Special Zone

Methodology

Establishing the current state of the Zone involves two forms of data collection:

- A desktop review of resource and building consent data and,
- physical monitoring of the zone

This approach allows for the analysis of both data sets to obtain a clearer picture of the kind of development activity on different properties in the zone.

Additionally, information on enforcement and infrastructure issues was obtained from different internal teams within council. This information has been included within this report as well.

Council data³

Resource consents

A total of 296 resource consent applications were processed in the Zone over a period of 8 years between 2015 and 2023.

Activity Type	Count of Activity Type	Percentage
Development (New)	184	62%
Subdivision	59	20%
Variation	23	8%
Alteration	9	3%
Outline Plan	8	3%
Visitor Accommodation	6	2%
Land use	5	1%
Total	294	100%

Table 2 Activity type

³ The resource consent activities occurring in the zone has been compiled from Council’s TechOne system. In-person monitoring was undertaken by members of the Queenstown Lakes District Council policy planning team. The monitoring involved a walkaround survey noting if a site has been developed and the type of developments that have occurred (residential, commercial or industrial). This data collection was then compared with the resource consent data to detail the differences between the datasets.

This is the period between the establishment of the Special Zone through a private plan change and the start of the review process required by Section 35 of the Resource Management Act. The timeframe for the data begins in 2015 when the first consent was recorded (RM151090) and goes through to October 2023, a period of approximately 8 years.

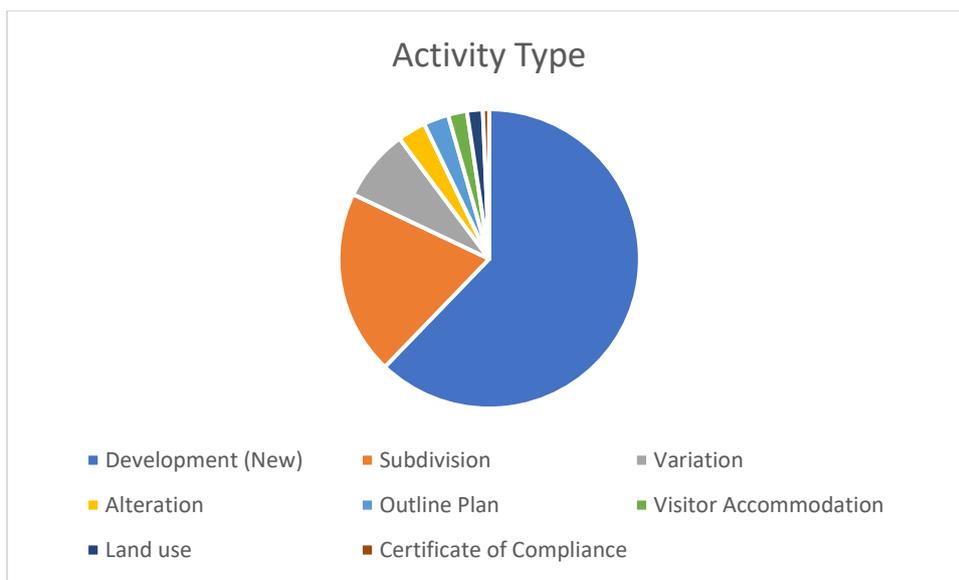


Figure 4 Activity Type

Type of Activity

- 62% of monitored resource consents in the Zone were for new developments, while 20% were undertaken to subdivide existing lots (Table 1).
- The remaining consents monitored were undertaken to make alterations/additions to existing structures, to establish visitor accommodation activities, and various other consent types as seen in the table below.

The strong distribution of consents for new developments and subdivisions is expected due to the recent creation of the Zone. This has led to the development of an urbanised landscape as expected by the policy framework of the zone.

Resource Consent	Count	Percentage
Residential	164	67%
Earthworks	30	12%
Consent variation	25	10%
Accessory Building	15	6%
Visitor Accommodation	6	4%
Commercial	3	1%
Total	243	100%

Table 3 Resource Consents

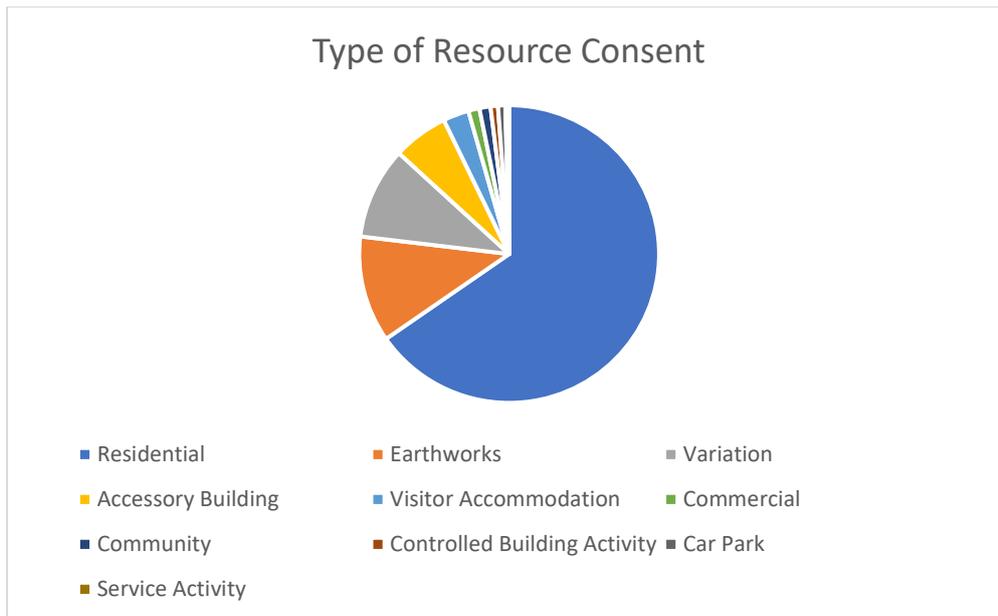


Figure 5 Type of Resource Consent

Resource Consent

Table 2 shows the consented development activity type sought through consenting, key highlights are:

- Sixty five percent of consents were residential. Notably, construction of building in activity areas A, and C1 to C4 is a controlled activity (rule 12.34.2.2).
- The largest consent monitored was undertaken for the creation of 20 units (RM180492) associated subdivision.
- Twelve percent of consents recorded for earthworks activities were undertaken for bulk earthworks, earthworks associated with residential developments and for earthworks associated with subdivision consents. The collected data is reflective of the Zone’s residential purpose, with the high proportion of consents for residential activities being in line with Objective 1 and Objective 2 for the Zone.

Consent variations

Variations to previous resource consent conditions, amendments to established structures and the development of accessory buildings on developed lots were also recorded within the Zone. The proportion of consents applied for to make variations to established activities and consents for additional structures on residential lots being lower than those for new developments is not unexpected. The previous tables show that the most common activity recorded within the Zone is for new residential developments which was the expected outcome for the zone and its provisions.

Visitor Accommodation

Six consents were granted for visitor accommodation activities within the zone. The number of days per year in which visitor accommodation activities can take place ranged from 180 (RM200147) up to 365 days (RM190823; RM220217; 221030). Five of the consents for visitor accommodation were undertaken on existing residential units while the remaining consent (RM210138) was for mixed-use activities, including commercial and residential activities and the creation of 31 unit titles through a

subdivision. The Zone provisions include controls on visitor accommodation activities. The Zone currently does not contain any provisions for residential visitor accommodation activities⁴. This is observed in the mixed-use consent (RM210138) where a visitor accommodation activity triggers a restricted discretionary activity in Activity Area D1.

Other activities

Two consents were issued for community activities while another was for the development of a retirement village. The community activities consisted of a mixed-use development which included a health care facility (RM161230) and for the development of an early childcare centre (RM170368).

Community activities are identified as an issue for the Zone in 12.33.1, stating that ‘Development in Northlake shall occur in a manner that provides for the integration of activities important for the social wellbeing of the community’. Resource consent for the first three stages of the zone (RM160509) breached policies and rules controlling large-scale developments *prior to* the development of community facilities, showing this particular set of rules and trigger was not effective in terms of the sequencing of development and facilities.

The consent for the retirement village (RM220193) was issued to the developer of Northlake as a fast track consent under special Covid legislation and triggered breaches of standards for earthworks, setbacks for a non-residential activity in the Zone. A condition of the Retirement Village consent was for the developer to lodge a Private Plan Change to provide for a road connection to the adjacent Sticky Forest land, this resulted in PC54 as previously discussed.

Decision Making and Consent Activity Status

The activity status of resource consents can provide useful insight into the effectiveness of a Zone’s Objectives and Provisions. A higher percentage of consents being undertaken as non-complying activities indicates a consistent breach to established standards, and the desire for developments which do not conform with the standards.

Activity Status	Count	Percentage
Deemed Permitted	18	7%
Controlled	47	18%
Restricted Discretionary	97	38%
Discretionary	50	19%
Non-Complying	47	18%
Total	259	100%

Table 4 Activity Status

The consents monitored had a variety of activity statuses, the largest proportion were restricted discretionary. 18% of consents were for non-complying activities.

Reasons for Non-Complying Status	Count	Percentage
Subdivision	11	20%
Maximum Building Coverage	7	13%
Maximum Building Height	5	9%
Reflectivity	8	15%
Visitor Accommodation	4	7%
Recession Plane	2	4%
Outline Plan	3	5%
Structure Plan	4	7%
Site Density	1	2%
Roof Pitch	1	2%
Building Restriction Area	3	5%
Non-Residential Activity	3	5%
Minimum Lot Size	1	2%
Noise	1	2%
Tree Protection Area	1	2%

Table 5 Non Complying Resource Consents

As shown in Table 4 above, the reasons for the triggering of non-complying activity statuses were varied. The most common breach was for subdivision activities (20%), in which breaches to standards for the number of lots being created, and the number of affordable dwellings included within the development plans were triggered.

The breaches for affordable housing relate to Rule 15.2.20.1 which establishes the need to build affordable housing within area D1. The Rule requires that “The development of Activity Area D1 shall result in 20 affordable lots”, and that “A legal method must be implemented which will ensure that each of the required 20 affordable lots are delivered to market. That legal method must include a three month option in favour of the Queenstown Lakes Community Housing Trust (QLCHT) whereby the Trust may purchase the lot or nominate the purchaser of the lot”⁵.

⁵ Operative District Plan 15.2.20.1

In 2023 the QLCHT established affordable housing in the zone⁶ as a result of these rules alongside a private developer agreement which was promulgated at the formation of the zone. Breaches were related to development-specific needs at the time of consent, showing that the rules were mostly effective at delivering the affordable housing outcomes sought.

Breaches were also recorded for building form, with breaches to site density, maximum heights, minimum lot sizes, and maximum building site coverages all recorded.

Notification Process	Count	Percentage
Non-Notified	277	94%
Limited Notified	0	0%
Publicly Notified	19	6%

Table 6 Notification Status

Table 5 shows that the vast majority of consents were processed on a non-notified basis (94%), meaning that either affected party written approvals were supplied where the effects were minor or that the effects were deemed to be less than minor. The 19 publicly notified consents were undertaken for larger scale developments with both subdivision and residential activities.

Building Consents

Like resource consent data, the building consent activities occurring in the zone have been compiled from Council's TechOne system. The data only includes applications for building consents issued between 2015 and 2023. Key highlights are:

- A total of 449 building consents have been issued since 2018.
- The majority were for new or relocated residential dwellings (86%) and is consistent with Resource Consents Data

Building Consent	Count	Percentage
Alteration to Dwelling	10	2%
Commercial	9	2%
Multi-Unit Dwelling	27	6%
New or relocated Residential Dwelling	387	86%
Total	433	96%

Table 7 Building Consents (Purpose)

In-Person Survey

⁶ [Northlake - Queenstown Lakes Community Housing Trust](#)

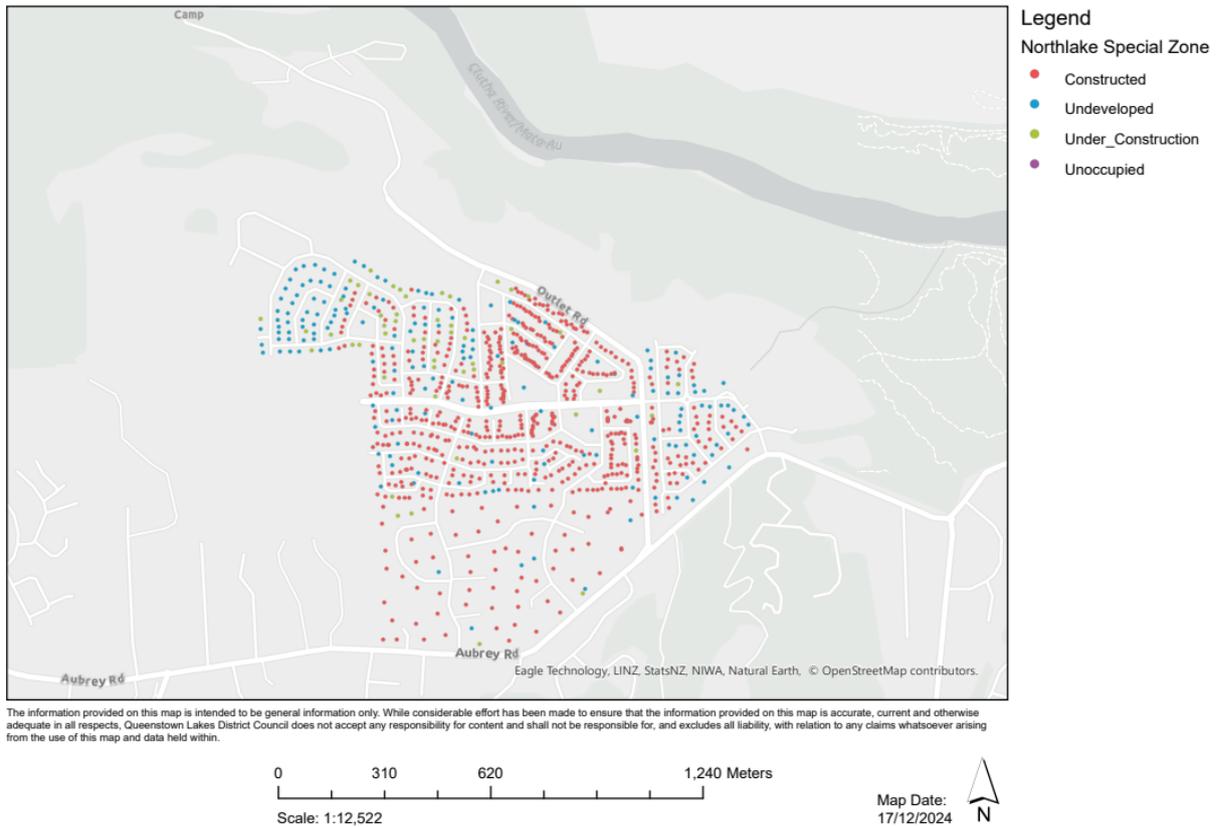
An in-person survey was completed in October 2023 to validate the outcomes of the monitored resource and building consents data. The in-person survey data sought to capture information on subdivision and activities taking place in the zone. This data is then compared with the consenting data to provide further insight into the efficiency and effectiveness of the zone.

State of Site	Count	Percentage
Constructed	626	74%
Undeveloped	172	20%
Under Construction	52	6%
Total	850	99%

Table 8 State of Lots

The number of lots within the Northlake Special Zone was 851. 74% of lots have been developed. The remaining lots were undeveloped (20%) and under construction (6%). As seen in Figure 5 there is a concentration of undeveloped lots at the north-western and eastern fringes of the Zone. This falls in line with the staged approach of development of the Zone and as such is to be expected.

Northlake Special Zone



The activities taking place on lots was also monitored through the in-person survey to establish if this was consistent with the consents granted. As seen in the table below 77% of developments within the Zone were for residential properties. The majority of the remaining consents (76% of remaining consents) were undeveloped while the remainder of the lots were used for a variety of purposes.

The outcomes observed are consistent with what is expected from the resource and building consent data. There are some differences between the number of consents for residential activities, as a result of consents for multi-unit development⁷. The establishment of reserves within the Zone also addresses the ecology and open space key resource management issues raised for the Zone.

⁷ RM180492 (20 units) and RM180795 (25 units)

Activity Taking place	Count	Percentage
Residential	652	78%
Undeveloped Lot	152	18%
other	23	4%
Commercial	9	1%
Grand Total	836	100%

Table 9 Building Type

Commercial and Retail Activities

Nine commercial activities were monitored in the consent data and in the in-person survey confirmed they were for offices for various companies across industries. The remaining commercial development was for a restaurant. These demonstrate the effectiveness of the Zone's provisions seeking the development of day-to-day commercial and retail activities for residents, including a small convenience store for daily needs.

As seen in the table below 85% of residential properties within the Zone are detached, single storey homes. The developments observed are consistent with Objective 1 for the Zone, with residential developments being of low and medium density. The development of semi-detached and terraced housing is also consistent with Objective 1 in the anticipated development of medium density housing within the Zone.

Residential Building Type	Count of Residential Building Type	Percentage
Detached House	536	85%
Semi-detached House	93	15%
Grand Total	629	100%

Table 10 Residential Building Type

Monitoring and Enforcement

The Zone has 43 recorded complaints to the monitoring and enforcement team. The complaints were recorded for various breaches, with Residential Visitor Accommodation activities being the most common (14).

A significant breach in the zone was related to repeated discharge of stormwater into Mata Au/Clutha River and resulted in enforcement action being taken by Otago Regional Council as a breach of section 15 of the RMA.

Department	Number of Complaints	Percentage
Monitoring and enforcement	37	86%
Noise Complaint	6	14%
Total	43	100%

Table 11 Complaints

Type of Complaint	Number of Complaints	Percentage
Residential Visitor Accommodation	14	38%
Building	10	27%
Resource Consents (earthworks)	5	14%
Reserve land	3	8%
Signs	1	3%
District Plan	2	5%
Litter	1	3%
No department listed	1	3%
Total	37	100%

Table 12 Type of Complaint

Density

The chapter provides density targets in the rules, shown below.

Density

The density of residential units within each Activity Area shall achieve limits set out in Table 1 plus or minus fifteen per cent (15%).

Table 1:

Activity Areas	Density (<u>residential units</u> per hectare)
A & C4	N/A
B1 – B6	10
C1 – C3	4.5
D1	15

Density shall be calculated for each Activity Area on an individual basis on the gross area of land available for development and includes land vested or held as reserve, open space, access or roading but excludes the Building Restriction Area and Tree Protection Area and any land developed or intended to be developed for activities other than residential activities.

This density measure is difficult to measure given the number of caveats set out in the plan. Spot monitoring of consents demonstrated that generally the densities within the zone were adhered to as part of the consenting process.

How Effective are the Special Zone Objectives, Policies and Rules?

Effectiveness of the Objectives

The Northlake Special Zone has six Objectives.

Objective 1: Residential Development ‘A range of medium to low density and larger lot residential development in close proximity to the wider Wānaka amenities.’

Objective 1 establishes that the desired outcome for residential development is a mixture of low and medium density residential properties, with higher densities in the centre of the Zone. The commercial precinct in Northlake is located centrally within the Zone, while the southern edge of the zone includes lots sizes which are comparable to the Proposed District Plan’s Large Lot Residential Chapter. The monitoring of developments establish that Objective 1 is effective.

Policies

Objective 1 contains nine policies which establish the desired outcomes for residential developments within the Zone.

Policy	Comment
1.1 To establish a mix of residential densities that will provide a residential environment appealing to a range of people.	Effective, there are a range of densities evident in the zone
1.2 To enable medium density living within the less sensitive parts of the zone in order to give Northlake a sense of place and to support a neighbourhood commercial and retail precinct.	Generally Effective – there is medium density housing established adjacent to the commercial precinct
1.3 To maintain and enable residential lot sizes in Activity Areas A and C4 consistent with the adjacent Rural Residential Zone.	Area A – achieved - effective Area C4 – achieved - effective
1.4 To enable and encourage low density residential activities within Activity Areas B1 – B6.	Achieved - effective
1.5 To enable and encourage larger residential lot sizes within Activity Areas C1 – C3.	Partially effective due particularly to the fast track consent, discussed further below.
1.6 To enable and encourage medium density residential activities within Activity Area D1.	Somewhat effective, the Retirement Village is at least medium density.
1.7 To provide for small scale neighbourhood retail activities including one small supermarket to serve the needs of the local	Generally effective. The zone provides a retail precinct at the scale anticipated by

community within Activity Area D1 and to avoid visitor accommodation, commercial, retail and community activities and retirement villages within Activity Areas other than within Activity Area D1.	the rules ⁸ . The retirement village consented through the fast track consent does not follow this policy due to the different consenting regime during Covid.
1.8 To provide for community activities, including educational facilities, to serve the needs of the Northlake community and to be available for use by the wider Wānaka community.	Somewhat effective. There are community facilities (parks, open spaces and paths, tennis courts, pump track for bikes) established as well as a daycare. Some community facilities suggested initially did not eventuate, however what has been established was considered and approved through a series of consents and PC 53.
1.9 To enable affordable housing by providing for cost effective development and by requiring a range of lot sizes and housing typologies, including 20 affordable lots (as defined in Rule 15.2.20.1).	Effective – Development in the zone is at range of scales and densities and provides (within the context of an expensive housing market) some affordable housing options and KiwiBuild housing ⁹ . The QLCHT has achieved housing in the zone, albeit at a lesser scale than set out due to development and market conditions.

Objective 2: Urban Design ***‘Development demonstrates best practice in urban design and results in a range of high quality residential environments.’***

QLDC produced a Residential Design Guideline (2021 Residential Design Guideline) which has been used to assess if developments within the Zone. The Residential Design Guidelines establish what the best practices are for developments through 11 actions. The in-person survey of the zone confirmed the majority of developments being consistent with the outlined best practices. It was observed that throughout the Zone most properties were in close proximity to open spaces and reserves. Two activities were monitored which triggered as non-complying for breaching recession plane standards. This indicates that such breaches are not common within the zone, showing that the majority are compliant with the established standards for the Zone and the Residential Design Guidelines.

A majority of the development in the zone falls under developer provided design requirements¹⁰ which are linked to the properties within the zone by conditions on the title^{11,12}.

⁸ see RM220677

⁹ [Northlake – KiwiBuild Partnership announced](#)

¹⁰ [northlake-home-lots-design-control-guidelines-06-dec-2018.pdf](#)

¹¹ Consent Condition: Dwellings shall comply with the ‘Northlake Design Control Guidelines’ and require approval from Northlake Developments (NDL) or appointee prior to construction commencing. Northlake Developments (NDL) (or its successors and assigns) are the authority responsible for the design approval process

¹² [20efa0_80f19d25cb394baf82d4e9e3eac19fa8.pdf](#)

Policies

The policies of Objective 2 have been partially effective in delivering their outcomes. Policy 2.1 has been effective in the establishment of the Zones Structure Plan, with well-established Activity Areas setting out the development densities across the Zone. The primary roading network provided for in Policy 2.1 has also been developed. The other Policies of Objective 2 (2.2-2.8) have been partially effective, as they have promoted appropriate developments across the Activity Areas established through the Structure Plan however, however there are a relatively high proportion of Non-complying consents (18%).

<p>2.1 To use a Structure Plan to establish:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The location of Activity Areas • The primary roading network • Required walking and cycle connections • Areas where buildings are prevented from occurring due to landscape sensitivity • Areas where existing vegetation forms an important landscape or ecological feature and should be protected 	<p>The structure plan is used and well-established—effective</p> <p>The primary roading network is established—effective</p> <p>Required walking and cycle connections</p> <p>Walking and cycling connections have been established, albeit there remain some connections which are still under formation.</p> <p>Ecological features are generally in place.</p> <p>Landscape sensitive controls – partially effective</p>
<p>2.2 To require development to be consistent with the Northlake Structure Plan.</p>	<p>Effective, the structure plan has been a clear guide for the development of the zone.</p>
<p>2.3 To require the use of Outline Development Plans in resource consent applications for Activity Areas B1 to B6, C1 to C4 and D1 in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implement the objectives and policies of the Zone and the relevant Activity Area and the Northlake Structure Plan; • determine the general location of anticipated future activities and built form within the Activity Area; • achieve any required density range within the relevant Activity Area; • achieve appropriate integration of anticipated future activities. 	<p>Partially effective -</p> <p>Three Non-complying activities for outline plans were triggered, related to outline development plans proposing developments within Building Restriction Areas, Tree Protection Areas and for development not in line with the Structure Plan for Northlake.</p>
<p>2.4 To achieve a high level of integration through residential lot layout, street design, recreational areas (including walkways/ cycleways, parks and open spaces) and</p>	<p>Effective, the zone works as an integrated development and ODPs have been used to achieve this outcome.</p>

landscaping through the resource consent process using Outline Development Plans.	
2.5 To ensure that development recognises and relates to the wider Wānaka character and is a logical extension of the urban form of Wānaka.	Effective, the zone is an extension of urban Wānaka in extent and form
2.6 To enable visitor accommodation, commercial, community activities, retirement villages and limited small scale retail activities including one small supermarket within Activity Area D1 to service some daily needs of the local community, while maintaining compatibility with residential amenity and avoiding retail development of a scale that would undermine the Wānaka Town Centre and the commercial core of the Three Parks Special Zone.	Mostly effective, the scale of non-residential development is appropriate within the zone context and does not seem likely to undermine other commercial zones within Wanaka. A small market/dairy has been established (an 'On the Spot', a Foodstuffs cooperative) within D1
2.7 To enable educational facilities to service the needs of the Wānaka community, while maintaining compatibility with residential amenity.	Effective. Preschool/daycare established in 2019, with a total roll of 84 tamariki ranging from 3 months to 5 years ¹³ .
2.8 Ensure the design and appearance of non-residential buildings is compatible with the character of the wider neighbourhood and considers variation in form, articulation, colour and texture and landscaping to add variety, moderate visual scale and provide visual interest, especially where facades front streets and public spaces.	Effective the urban form of the commercial units seem to be visually appropriate within the context.

Objective 3: Connectivity *'Development that is well-connected internally and to networks outside the zone'*

Effective. Two primary internal connection links have been constructed (Northlake Drive and Outlet Road) while four external connection points have also been constructed from Aubrey Road, giving access to Wānaka.

Policies

Policies under Objective 3 relate to the establishment of roading, cycling, and walking networks within the Zone. Such networks have been developed and can be considered effective. Policy 3.4 is the only policy not considered effective as it relates to public transport, which at this time is not present within the Northlake Zone or in the Upper-Clutha area.

Objective 4: Landscape and Ecology *'Development that takes into account the landscape, visual amenity, and conservation values of the zone.'*

¹³ [BestStart Pinnacles | Education Review Office](#)

Objective 4 establishes the importance of controlling development in ‘inappropriate’ areas in the Zone. The Rules and Provisions within the Zone have, in general, have been effective in preventing inappropriate developments from occurring.

<p>4.1 To identify areas where buildings are inappropriate, including ridgelines, hilltops and other visually prominent landforms, and to avoid buildings within those areas.</p>	<p>Effective, the Structure Plan addresses this policy. Three resource consents were approved which occur in building restriction areas, these consents were for outline development plans.</p>
<p>4.2 To maintain and enhance the nature conservation values of remnants of indigenous habitat, and to enhance the natural character of the northeast margin of the zone.</p>	<p>Plantings in the access through Northlake to the DOC land beyond is provided but not yet mature.</p>
<p>4.3 To ensure that roads are designed and located to minimise the need for excessive cut and fill and to respect natural topographical contours.</p>	<p>Effective, roads are well placed relative to land contour</p>
<p>4.4 To ensure that trees within the Tree Protection Areas are retained, and that any individual trees that are removed or felled within TPA3 or TPA4 are progressively replaced with non-wilding species so as to ensure development is reasonably difficult to see from the Deans Bank Trail (northern side of the Clutha River), to retain a predominantly treed foreground when viewed from the Deans Bank trail, and to retain a predominantly treed background when viewed from Outlet Road.</p>	<p>Zone consents were triggered as Non-complying activities for breaching standards for building restriction areas and tree protection areas (3 in building restriction areas and 1 for a tree restriction area). This does indicate potential pressures for development on areas identified.</p>

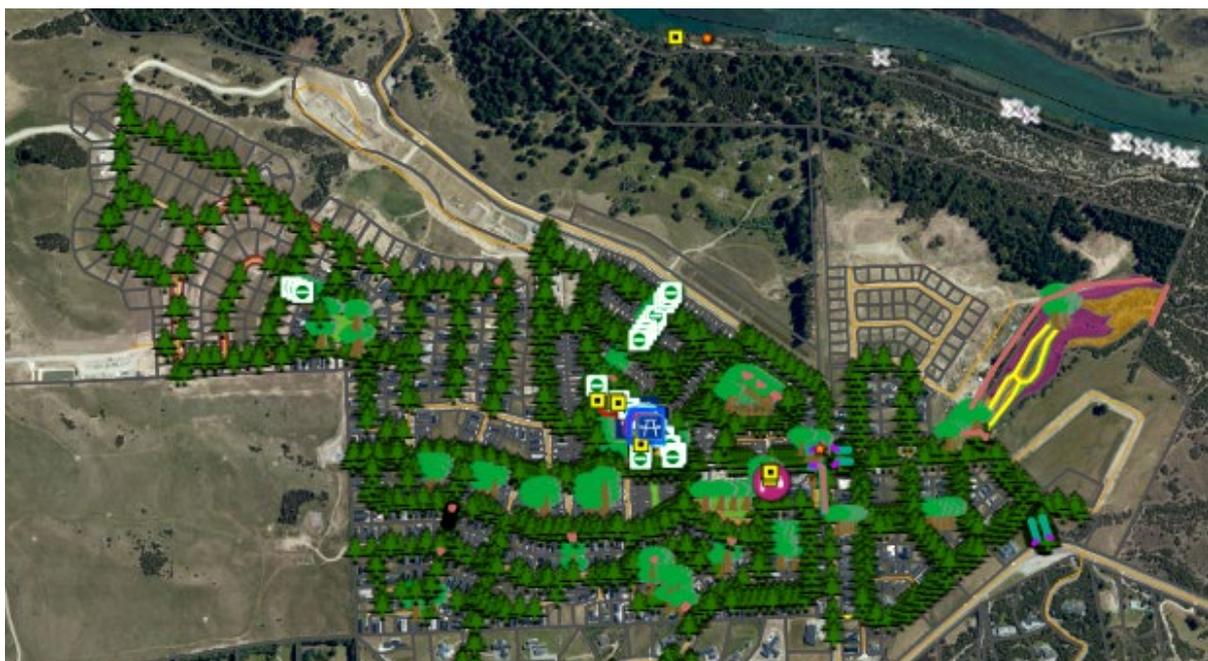


Figure 6 Open space and access in Northlake – QLDC map, Parks and Reserves Layer

Objective 5: Recreation ‘The establishment of areas of passive and active recreation’

Recreation reserves have been established in the Zone. Eleven sites in the Zone are reserves, which are spread across the Zone and perform a neighbourhood reserve function. A large open reserve is also present in the Zone (seen in image above), which consists of an open field, tennis court and skate park.

5.1 To identify areas for passive and active recreation and to encourage connections between recreational areas.	Effective – passive and active recreation opportunities are available in the zone
5.2 To ensure that community recreation areas are located on flatter areas within the zone.	Effective, reserves are not elevated
5.3 To encourage the provision of public access to the Clutha River.	Effective, access to Clutha/Mata Au remains via Outlet road.
5.4 To require provision of community facilities at an early stage in the development of the zone.	Not effective, the sequence of community facilities was not in step with initial development stages.

Objective 6: Infrastructure ‘Provision of servicing infrastructure to cater for demands of development within the zone in an environmentally sustainable manner and to enhance wider utility network systems where appropriate.’

The zone is well connected for transport and infrastructure, with a variety of access point in and out of the zone, as well as good connectivity to wider Wānaka and the adjacent Mata Au/Clutha River. Issues related to stormwater management mean that Objective 6 can only be considered partially effective.

6.1 To provide safe and efficient road access to the zone from Aubrey Road and Outlet Road.	Effective
6.2 To provide for transport network upgrades when required.	Effective
6.3 To design local streets to ensure safe, low speed traffic environments.	Effective
6.4 To utilise low impact design solutions that minimise adverse environmental effects resulting from storm water runoff	There have been stormwater management issues in the zone related to cumulative development site management.
6.5 To provide for water storage facilities for the benefit of the wider Council network as well as for the zone.	Effective, Northlake is supplied with water from a reticulated Council network from the Beacon Point Reservoir as well as a higher-level reservoir that services the higher lots within the Northlake development.

Effectiveness of the Rules

The effectiveness of the Rules of the Zone can be established through an analysis of the recorded activities taking place, and in turn through analysing the breaches that are occurring within the Zone. Breaches to standards indicate there is development pressure within the Zone in the rule. The percentage of consents being undertaken as non-complying activities (18%) indicates a difference between the desired outcomes outlined for the Zone and what standards proposed developments are wanting to achieve.

The most frequent breaches recorded related to the development of community activities and facilities in sequence with residential development, and for standards regarding the development of affordable housing lots. While the affordable housing and community facilities (to some extent) were eventually realised, the timing of these types of activities are important and were not sufficiently delivered alongside the course of the development. This demonstrates that the rules were not effective in achieving this outcome. Other breaches included:

- Maximum building coverage (6 breaches), all of which were relatively minor
- Maximum building height (5 breaches).

The five breaches for maximum building height standards varied in scale with the largest breach being 330 centimetres (over a maximum of 8 Metres), and the smallest 90 millimetres (over a maximum of 7 metres). Notably, the breaches to building height standards occurred on sloping sites

Eight consents recorded triggered as non-complying activities due to breaching standards for building materials and the light reflectance value (LRV) of such materials. It is of note that neither the Proposed District Plan's Lower and Medium Density Zones have standards for building materials, and under that zoning that would have been permitted¹⁴.

Is the Plan Efficient?

Consenting time and costs

The average Council resource consent charge in the zone was \$4,385 (including GST) as compared to an average across all ODP special zones of \$4,522, demonstrating that development within the zone is comparatively similar in terms of charges. National consenting data provided by the Ministry for the Environment shows that the average costs of a consent (any type) across NZ from 2014-2023 is \$3,062. The costs of consenting in Northlake are higher than consenting within NZ generally. Part of this may be due to the stage of land development within Northlake, most of which is for new subdivision and land use activities, and the requirement for consent in some of the activity areas for building construction.

¹⁴ Two resource consents (RM170368 and RM210550) were non-complying for the use of materials not listed as complying for the Activity Area in question. The remaining 6 consents were triggered due to the materials used containing a higher than permitted Light Reflectance Value (LRV), with such breaches ranging in scale. The largest breach is found in RM181066 where two skylights were included with a 100% LRV, with the maximum standard being 20%. The other non-complying breaches were more minor, with the remaining breaches ranging from 0.19% to 16%.

The framework of the zone requires an additional resource consent for Outline Development Plans to give effect to the Structure Plan prior to earthworks or subdivision. This approach may not have been as efficient as an alternate approach might have been.

Of the 231 consents in the dataset, 91% of the consents were processed within statutory timeframes, and only one decision was appealed, demonstrating that generally the provisions of the zone are able to be efficiently processed. However, changes sought outside the zone framework through fast track consenting and a private plan change signal that the zone may not always be working for landowners within the zone as the zone is developed.

Findings

In many cases, the Northlake Special Zone is successfully achieving its intended outcomes and meeting the expectations of both the community and the District Plan. This is further elaborated upon in the discussion of resource management issues and related objectives below.

Landscape and Amenity issues are addressed well through the development of the zone, it is a pleasant urban environment and retains views within the zone and beyond for a casual observer.

The **community** outcomes in the zone are not realised to the extent anticipated. There are some community facilities in Northlake, but were slower to be realised than the rules set out, and not at the same scale as implied at the formation of the zone. Small scale commercial development and a preschool contribute to the community development in the zone.

The **ecology** in the zone remains as anticipated, with pockets of native and non-native bush retained, alongside domestic residential plantings. Native plantings around stormwater and reserve land is evident in casual observation.

Open Space and Recreation are provided, there are paths throughout the neighbourhoods as well as open spaces and parks, play equipment, a tennis court and an outdoor gym. In more dense parts of the development there are open spaces at the rear of properties providing extra green space. Some open spaces also serve stormwater purposes which impact on their effectiveness relative to open space and recreation, and some paths remain still to be finalised as development continues to progress.

The zone is mostly developed as anticipated by the structure plan and the underlying outline development plans, and **efficient land use** is mostly realised as anticipated by the zone rules. A range of densities can be found across the Zone, with the building typology ranging from large lot residential to medium density residential housing. The desired spatial layout of the Zone is also achieved, with larger lots located in proximity to Aubrey Road and the fringes of the Zone while the residential areas adjacent to the Zone's commercial/retail precinct display have been developed at higher densities.

Infrastructure within the zone is provided for, however the zone has had challenges related to stormwater in particular. Prosecutions have been undertaken which show that at least some of the challenges related to stormwater may be outside the district plan rules.

Objectives and policies that have not performed as effectively are related to:

- The sequencing of community facilities alongside the stages of development.
- The scale of affordable housing
- The stormwater challenges in the zone

Additionally, over the last few years, planning changes sought outside the zone framework through fast track consenting and a private plan change signal the zone provisions may no longer be fit for purpose as Northlake and Wānaka continue to develop and evolve. Overall the zone has developed in line with what was anticipated by the Operative District Plan Northlake chapter.

Appendix 1 – Wider context of the Northlake Special Zone



Figure 7 Map of Wānaka Context

Appendix 3 – Photographs of Northlake Special Zone



Figure 8 Northlake Commercial (activity area D1), November 2024. Source: QLDC



Figure 9 Northlake Medium Density Development, views and Green Space, November 2024.