

6 Aoraki / Mount Cook Village Policies

The policies that follow have been prepared in terms of the National Parks Act 1980, the General Policy for National Parks 1983, other legislation listed in section 1.2 and the Canterbury Conservation Management Strategy. The General Policy has been applied and where necessary, its application to Aoraki/Mount Cook Village has been specified, expanded or interpreted.

Whilst individual policies may be read in isolation, it is necessary to read them together with their associated method statements and within the context of the Village section and in some cases the Plan as a whole, to gain a comprehensive understanding and to note that all policies in this Plan will be implemented and applied consistently with all other policies in the Plan.

The following conventions, with respect to the Department implementing policies or methods, have been used within this plan:

- policies or methods, where legislation provides no discretion for decision-making, state that a particular action or actions 'will' be undertaken;
- policies or methods that provide for strong guidance on decision-making without diminishing the roles of the Minister and other decision-makers, state that a particular action or actions 'should' be undertaken; and
- policies or methods specifically intended to allow flexibility in decision-making, state that a particular action or actions 'may' be undertaken.

6.1 VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT AND PRESERVATION

6.1.1 Village Layout and Site Allocation

Policies

6.1.1(a)

To base the Village layout upon what is already in place. It will:

- be compact in its form and make optimum use of the site available;
- recognise the needs of visitors, residents, concessionaires and Ngāi Tahu;
- be sensitive to the distinctive environmental quality and be responsive to the natural constraints and hazards of that part of the Park in which it is located;
- aim for high standards in the provision of services and facilities, consistent with the high national and international image of the Park and the Village.

6.1.1(b)

To make provision for:

- Park administration, visitor information and interpretation;
- a range of visitor accommodation;
- day visitor facilities;
- commercial activities to meet the appropriate needs of Park visitors and residents, that do not detract from the Park's unique natural and cultural environment;
- a Ngāi Tahu presence;
- accommodation and community facilities for essential staff required to service the needs of the above;
- open space and pedestrian pathways;
- emergency services;
- vehicle access and essential helicopter landings.

6.1.1(c)

To retain areas of open space within the Village to:

- preserve areas of indigenous vegetation;
- maintain clear floodways;
- provide a pleasant living environment;

- **allow for environmental compatibility between the Village and the surrounding Park;**
- **preserve views of the mountain landscape.**

6.1.1(d)

To require potential occupiers of Village sites and those seeking new concessions, to demonstrate why it is a necessity for them to be present in the Village and the benefits their presence will bring to the safe use and enjoyment of the Park by visitors.

6.1.1(e)

Existing buildings and functions, whose location is not appropriate in the Village, should be relocated to elsewhere within the amenities area or to outside the Park, as appropriate.

Explanation

6.1.1(a) & (b) - The current Village layout reflects the considerable planning effort since the 1976 *Mount Cook Village Review Committee's Report* and the 1999 major geotechnical works. What has occurred in the past will largely shape what can be done in the future, as considerable additional cost, time and disruption would be involved in departing significantly from the well-established layout. Policies 6.1.1(a) to (e) are largely those in the 1989 management plan and are still valid today. Their implementation however, now needs to occur in light of the preferred option finding of the *Mount Cook/Aoraki Village Development Issues and Options Report* 1997.

The Report makes clear that there is room for improvement in the Village. Key points noted were:

- the need for a Village heart;
- the need for more open space areas within the Village;
- the need for improved interpretation and information about the Park, within the Village;
- greater recognition of the interests of Ngāi Tahu within the Village;
- the need for improved traffic movement; and
- the need for improved car-parking and coach-parking.

These needs were addressed through the identification of three different zones within the Village, with interspersed open space areas and community and Park administration facilities. With some modification from the Report's recommendations these zones, areas and facilities are shown on Figures 6, 6A and 6B and are:

- **Commercial Zone**

A zone to provide for commercial activities, including visitor accommodation. The zone encompasses the area and functions contained by the Visitor Centre, The Hermitage (visitor accommodation, restaurants, café, shop and guiding concessionaires' base), the Chalets, Alpine Guides base and petrol station and the

café by the Visitor Centre. This is the heart and focal point of the Village; the 'Village centre'. Any future Ngāi Tahu presence would be within this zone.

- **Semi-independent Zone**

A zone to provide for visitor accommodation and day shelter facilities. The zone includes the Glencoe Wing (with a future use for either visitor accommodation or Hermitage staff), YHA & Hostelling International, the motels and the day shelter. The Issues and Options Report identified the potential for some zone expansion to the north of Kitchener Drive, although this area is currently outside the Village amenities area (see 5.1.2 The Amenities Area Status).

- **Residential Zone**

This zone is exclusively for residential accommodation for staff living in the Village. The zone covers the current main housing area. A limited number of unused sites are still available in this zone, but the exact number will be determined only after detailed subdivisional and architectural planning. Some housing density increase is possible.

- **Community and Park Administration Facilities**

These include the existing community facilities of school, community centre and tennis courts, the Department's Aoraki Area Office and workshop/depot and the Village oxidation ponds.

6.1.1(c) - Not all areas of the Village are suitable for development. Some areas need to be left clear of structures to protect indigenous vegetation areas, to provide for storm water drainage, or because they are flood risk areas, or are important landscape elements that assist the Village to integrate with the surrounding Park. Such areas contribute to the character of the Village environment (see also 6.1.2 Landscape Management).

Open space is available to be used for picnicking and pedestrian pathways and essential utility services which are placed underground as far as possible.

6.1.1(d) - In all zones only a few sites (as at 2004) remain unoccupied. It is vital that applications for the remaining limited number of sites are scrutinised carefully to ensure that any use proposed is appropriate for the zone and for the Village.

6.1.1(e) - Some existing buildings/uses and facilities that are incongruous with the activities surrounding them and with the layout plan (Figure 6A), and that may need to be relocated, are (as at 2003):

- In the commercial zone - Department houses 1, 2 and 3, the present generator shed, The Hermitage staff hostel and houses, and the emergency services facilities.
- In the residential zone - the Department plant nursery.

Any relocation will be undertaken if and as, resources permit and in accordance with a concession where applicable, in an ordered manner that allows the Village and the affected services to still fulfil their intended function.

Methods

6.1.1(a) & (b)

- 1. Development of the Village should largely maintain the layout in Figure 6, as influenced by the easement, areas and zones in Figures 6A and 6B. This layout is intended to be flexible enough to respond to changing needs and circumstances, while still ensuring that development is carried out in a controlled and directed manner.**
- 2. Figure 6B subdivides parts of the Village into zones. Policies and methods determine how each zone should be managed (see 6.2.4 Commercial Zone, 6.2.5 Semi-independent Zone, 6.2.6 Residential Zone).**

6.1.1(c)

- 1. Open space should generally be maintained in the Village in the form of the native vegetation areas and the streambeds shown in Figure 6.**
- 2. Open space should be actively managed. Sites may be re-contoured and vegetation may be supplemented by plantings, to improve the quality of sites as open space (see 6.1.2 Landscape Management and 4.1.4 Introduced Plants).**

6.1.1(d) & (e)

1. In considering a proposal for the allocation of a site in the Village, consistency with the layout plan (Figure 6A) is an important requirement and in addition to other statutory requirements, particular regard should be had for the following:

- can/should the proposal be carried on outside the Park?**
- will there be a detrimental impact on other Park users and Village residents or on other activities already taking place in the Park and the Village?**
- will the proposed activity detract from the Park's unique natural and cultural values or distract visitors from enjoying those values?**
- might further development result from the proposal and if so, what impact might that further development have on the Park, the Village, Park users or Village residents?**
- is the proposal within the capabilities of the utility services provided in the Village (see 6.2.9 Services)?**
- will the proposal lead to additional vehicle movements and parking requirements that can be sustained by the Village layout?**
- is the proposer well-enough equipped (expertise, finance etc.) to carry through and complete the proposal?**

These general considerations apply equally to the proposals of the Department, other agencies and existing and potential concessionaires.

2. Any proposal for residential use of less than permanent occupancy, where that use can realistically occur outside the Park or use existing accommodation within the Village, should not be approved.

Key to Figure 6: Aoraki/Mount Cook Village

Buildings and facilities		Native vegetation areas	
A	Visitor Centre	1	Bowen Bush - indigenous low forest
B	The Hermitage		
C	Old Mountaineers Cafe	2-3	Indigenous low forest
D	Hermitage staff accommodation	4	Indigenous low forest (NB two largest parts covered by a protective covenant)
E	Chalets		
F	DOC House 1		
G	DOC House 2	5-6	Indigenous low forest
H	Generator shed	7-17	Indigenous shrublands
I	DOC House 3	18-21	Grasslands (also with a substantial introduced plant component)
J	Alpine Guides/Petrol Stn/old Post Office		
K	DOC Aoraki Area Office	22-23	Wetlands
L	Tennis courts		
M	Motels		
N	Glencoe Wing	DOC	Areas held for future Department residential use (see 6.2.6 Residential Zone) and Department Visitor Centre/Village centre development (see 6.2.4 Commercial Zone)
O	Public day-shelter		
P	Parking areas		
Q	YHA & Hostelling International		
R	Community Centre		
S	Residential houses		
T	Mount Cook School		
U	DOC workshop/depot		
V	Oxidation ponds		

Note: Due to the multi-layer properties of Figure 6 it cannot be included with this PDF, if you would like a hard copy of Figure 6, 6A, 6B please contact planreview@doc.govt.nz

6.1.2 Landscape Management

Policies

6.1.2(a)

To preserve indigenous vegetation, flora and fauna, unless it is in the wider interests of the Park as a whole, that a site is developed for the provision of facilities.

6.1.2(b)

To actively manage areas of open space and areas of building sites that are not built upon, including the use of ground-reshaping where necessary, to:

- **achieve stable and self-sustaining landscapes with low cost maintenance requirements;**
- **provide attractive environments around buildings appropriate to the uses to which the buildings are being put;**
- **accelerate the plant colonisation process on stream fans to encourage taller indigenous vegetation species outside active riverbeds, than might establish naturally and so to assist the screening of buildings;**
- **restore sites which have been affected by earthworks or building construction so that the impact of facilities on the landscapes of the Village and the surrounding Park is minimised;**
- **maintain the quality of views both into and out of the Village;**
- **restore the predominance of indigenous vegetation species;**
- **Maintain the appropriate ecological or underlying indigenous vegetation associations as far as practicable;**
- **extend and enhance indigenous vegetation remnants;**
- **Maintain natural features as far as practicable.**

Explanation

6.1.2(a) - It has been fundamental to previous planning that Village development will recognise the location of the Village in the Park and the need to minimise its visual impact and will protect the remnant or regenerating indigenous vegetation areas, especially those of high value. The indigenous vegetation areas have been mapped and recorded in *Appendix A: Summary Asset Register, Asset Group G: Landscape - Native Plant Amenity* of the *Asset Management Plan Aoraki/Mount Cook Village 2000*, as shown on Figure 6. It is accepted that grassland sites 18 (north of the stopbank) and 21 are at least in part, identified for residential development (see Figure 6A).

6.1.2(b) - In developing a Village on the Black Birch and Glencoe Fans and on the Hermitage promontory, some impact on Park values is inevitable. This applies to both building construction and to the follow-up work, in providing attractive environments around buildings and in screening them to reduce their visual impact.

The result is substantial landscape change from the natural state, yet a change which is sensitive to its surrounding environment.

Landscape expertise should be involved throughout all building design and construction stages, because of the impact that building form, siting, exterior materials and colour schemes can have on the final landscape effect (see 6.2.1 Buildings And Architectural Standards).

Methods

6.1.2(a)

No approval should be given to further modify indigenous vegetation areas of high value within the Village, such as Bowen Bush and the dense indigenous plant associations on The Hermitage promontory.

6.1.2(b)

1. A consistent high standard of landscape management will be applied to the whole Village. To achieve this and to make the best use of landscape management techniques developed specifically for Aoraki/Mount Cook, landscape works are to be carried out in accordance with Department landscape guidelines and Department approved plans and contractors.

2. Some variation in implementing landscape works between the zones in Figure 6A is necessary to recognise the different uses of the zones' buildings. Thus in the commercial zone (see 6.2.4), clear views to the mountains are essential, less so in the semi-independent zone (see 6.2.5), while in the residential zone (see 6.2.6) the emphasis is on shelter, personal outdoor space and privacy.

3. In order to be compatible with other activities in the Village, landscape management has to:

- **facilitate snow clearing;**
- **avoid causing drainage problems;**
- **maintain easy access to underground services (see 6.2.9 Services);**
- **ensure integration of pathways and picnic areas (see 6.2.3 Pedestrian Access).**

4. As part of landscape management, the following measures may be applied:

- **earthworks and ground reshaping, provided they do not increase the potential for erosion or for obstruction of drainage;**
- **spreading of soil to a greater depth than occurs naturally, provided the soil is taken from the Park or its vicinity (see 4.3.7 Mining and Shingle/Rock Removal) and does not lead to the spread of introduced plants;**
- **application of fertiliser on a selective or spot-application basis;**

- **planting out of indigenous plants propagated from locally collected seeds or cuttings;**
- **laying of lawns (see policy 4.1.4(c)) and setting out of plant beds immediately around buildings (see 4.1.4 *Introduced Plants*).**

6.1.3 Waterways and Floodways

Policies

6.1.3(a)

To manage flood and debris flow hazards in accordance with best current information.

6.1.3(b)

To locate and design buildings and infrastructure so as to ensure a standard of protection appropriate to their use.

6.1.3(c)

To undertake ongoing monitoring to ensure that flood and debris flow protection works retain their effectiveness.

Explanation

6.1.3(a) & (b) - Three major stream channels affect the Village. Kitchener Creek and Black Birch Stream are located at either end of the Village, and Glencoe Stream passes through the middle of the Village. During heavy rainfall, smaller streams issue from Governors Bush, from built-up areas on Black Birch Fan and from water tables alongside Village roads. The swale that collects water from the Governors Bush streams also carries the overflow from the underground storage tanks for the Village water supply, which are fed from Black Birch Stream.

Building consents from the Mackenzie District Council under the Building Act 1991, are required for all buildings, including extensions to existing buildings. The District Council is required to determine whether the land on which the buildings are to be placed is subject to erosion, avulsion, alluvion, falling debris, subsidence, inundation or slippage. The Council must be satisfied that there is adequate provision to protect the land or buildings from any of these hazards. To determine these matters the Council uses appropriate experts to undertake detailed assessments of the natural hazard risks in the Village area.

Various stream channel training works to protect the Village and the Glencoe Stream bridges and road culvert have been constructed and maintained in the past. More recently, a number of technical reports (*Geotechnical Report No 1...*, 1997; Hurley, 1996; McSaveney, 1995) reassessed the natural hazards from the above waterways. The reports determined (a) that considerable extra protection works were needed; (b) that some amenities needed to be moved to avoid unacceptable risks; and (c) that the layout of the Village would be constrained by flood hazards. The required mitigation actions were consistent with the Park management plan and have been implemented.

6.1.3(c) - All major streams are highly dynamic and carry rock and stone material whose erosion and deposition can alter channel profiles markedly. Too much deposition in one place could reduce or eliminate the effectiveness of flood protection works. Monitoring needs to be maintained to ensure that protection works continue to fulfil their function. Ongoing reassessments of the hazard

situation will be required and potentially, further adjustments to protective works and the Village layout.

Methods

6.1.3(a)

1. Waterway and floodway management will be in accordance with the recommendations of the hazard assessment and geotechnical reports referenced above and as may be updated from time to time. The premise being followed, is that the Village is justified in remaining in the Park at its current site and that flood hazard mitigation measures will be taken while they can be economically justified and any adverse effects on Park values can be avoided, remedied or mitigated.

2. In the design of all development works, particular attention will be paid to the needs of stormwater runoff. As a general rule, stormwater will be channelled or piped to the nearest open swale.

6.1.3(c)

Liaison will be maintained with the Mackenzie District Council and Environment Canterbury in the monitoring of the effectiveness of floodways and flood protection works in the Village.

6.2 VILLAGE DESIGN AND USE

6.2.1 Building and Architectural Standards

Policy

6.2.1

To require buildings and all other structures to be designed and maintained to a high architectural standard appropriate to the location of the Village within the Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park and in the foreground of Aoraki/Mount Cook.

Explanation

6.2.1 - This policy applies to buildings that have been approved in accordance with policies under 6.1.1 Village Layout and Site Allocation and the specific zone-related policies. It is thus subordinate to these other policies.

The requirements are related to the siting of the Village within the particular context of Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park. Very high standards need to be set and maintained for the area with its high national and international profile. In designing buildings, it must be recognised that while the purpose of the Village is to service Park visitors, nevertheless buildings should not detract from the visitor experience of the Park and its natural values and should aim to ensure that visitors have a pleasurable experience.

The *Issues and Options Report* as a follow-on from the 'Village vision' and 'key principles' (see 5.1.5) emphasised the need for a distinct building imagery for the Village. This is consistent with the intent of previous planning controls in the Village, although it is apparent that the intent has not always been delivered.

Since 1978 a panel of architects has examined and made recommendations to the Department on most new building proposals in the Village. When used, this panel has assisted in ensuring high consistent standards of design.

The advent of improved television repeaters and satellite transmission systems has resulted in increased numbers of aerials and discs obvious within the Village. A similar effect has arisen with some clotheslines, woodpiles/shelters and outside storage facilities. The individual effect of poorly sited aerials/discs and other accessory structures and the cumulative effect of them all, detract from the Village's architectural standards and aesthetic appearance. Many of the accessory structures have not received specific approval.

The above policy requirements are additional to those of the Building Act 1991 and section 25 Disabled Persons Community Welfare Act 1975, both as administered by the Mackenzie District Council.

Methods

6.2.1

1. In the event of a site being allocated for a building (see 6.1.1 Village Layout and Site Allocation), it will be the responsibility of the site holder to present a building design for approval by the Minister. Other statutory approvals, such as a building consent, will need to be obtained after Department approval has been obtained.

2. The following criteria will be applied when considering applications for the construction, relocation and maintenance of buildings in the Village:

- **any new building form, while acknowledging historical New Zealand alpine precedent, should clearly be a product of contemporary thought and consideration, related to its own time of concept and design development;**
- **profiles and finishing treatments should ensure that the Village, as viewed from outside its boundaries, remains subservient to and reflects the natural character of the surrounding Park;**
- **construction standards and materials should be applicable to the local alpine environment and evoke an environmentally sympathetic relationship with local, natural materials;**
- **colours of building materials should be restricted to the local natural palette of greys, greens and tussock tones, with a maximum reflectivity or reflectance value of 37%²;**
- **new buildings or extensions to existing buildings should not interrupt significant view-shafts, especially of Aoraki/Mount Cook, from existing buildings (except those to be moved before building construction commences) or frequently used public open space and pedestrian pathways;**
- **building design shall recognise the provisions of section 6.1.2 Landscape Management;**
- **new buildings should incorporate energy conservation within their design and be designed to eliminate all forms of uncontrolled waste, noise pollution or light spill to the surrounding Village and Park;**
- **where buildings with historic value (see 4.1.6 Historic Resources and Memorials) are being relocated within the Village, some relaxation of the above criteria may be permitted where the criteria would significantly impact on the historic value of the building;**
- **all intended accessory structures³ must be included within the building application and be subjected to the above criteria.**

² The reflectivity or reflectance value of a colour indicates the amount of light a colour will reflect, as specified on paint manufacturers' colour charts. Black has a 0% value, white a 100% value.

³ **Accessory structure:** any structure attached to a building or on an approved building site. Such structures would include television or other aerials/discs, flagpoles, fences, sheds, carports or garages, firewood shelters, hoists or lines of flags or other like structures.

3. Building proposals will be submitted to an advisory panel of architects and a landscape architect, which will make recommendations to the Department. The panel will be comprised as follows:

- **two architects and a landscape architect appointed because of their familiarity with buildings, their construction and their setting within the alpine environment; plus**
- **one architect appointed on the recommendation of the New Zealand Institute of Architects, for buildings within the commercial or semi-independent zones.**

4. The Minister may require changes to any building's form, location on site, materials and their treatment standards, levels, or colour schemes before approving any building design (see also 6.2.10 Village Fire Control).

5. All authorisations for buildings will require that they be maintained to a high standard, so as to ensure that the Village does not detract from the Park environment.

6. The Department will work with Village residents to achieve the discreet siting of accessory structures, such as aerials and discs, that were not specifically approved at the time of a building's most recent concession approval and if necessary will require specific approval for them.

7. For the use of stone, gravel or similar substances in authorised buildings see 4.3.7 Stone/Gravel Removal and Mining.

8. Advertising signs erected on the exterior of commercial buildings will be for identification purposes only and fit in with accepted colour schemes and building styles. They will preferably be wall-mounted, although free-standing signs in close association with the building, may be considered; roof-mounted signs will not be permitted. Signs will be considered as part of any building concession application.

6.2.2 Vehicle Access

Policies

6.2.2(a)

To provide vehicle access from the road network to building sites, in a manner that links with and complements, pedestrian access patterns.

6.2.2(b)

To provide public parking areas at the Village centre and at the day shelter, and discourage roadside parking.

6.2.2(c)

To require concessionaires to provide off-road parking for staff and overnight guests, unless it is agreed that public parking areas may be used for such purposes or that on-site staff parking is to be discouraged.

6.2.2(d)

To keep under review the options for additional Village-edge parking areas and alternative public transport systems around the Village.

Explanation

6.2.2(a) - Development activity in the Village since the 1976 *Mount Cook Village Review Committee Report* and 1989 *Mount Cook National Park Management Plan* has sought to channel vehicles around the edge of the Village. Parking areas were located at the road ends, leaving a pedestrian linkage from the Village centre to The Hermitage. The *Issues and Options Report* largely reinforced this layout although the Report's proposed road access change to The Hermitage has since been rejected because of cost, road gradient, geotechnic and the likelihood of indigenous forest disturbance.

Proposed road/vehicle access changes favoured include the SH 80/Lower Terrace Road junction realignment, Glencoe new entrance, realignment alongside the new Village centre parking area and re-design of vehicle access in the immediate area of The Hermitage.

6.2.2(b) - Parking areas are provided to avoid roadside congestion and allow free traffic movement. Roads must also be kept clear for emergency vehicles. The Village centre parking area adjoining the Visitor Centre, will be the main carpark for day visitors to the Village.

Park roads in the Village are roads for the purposes of the Land Transport Act 1998 and as such, the usual road code conditions regarding their use and control apply.

6.2.2(c) - Off-road parking also has to be provided on individual sites for the same reasons as in (b) above. However, where it is not essential that staff have parking at their work place then, as a means of reducing vehicle movements, parking may be actively discouraged in favour of staff using pedestrian or other access means.

6.2.2(d) - Currently there is a need for a parking area away from the visitor-use and residential areas of the Village, for over-night parking of concessionaire client-transport vehicles. Some day-time use by the same vehicles may also be required to reduce parked vehicle numbers, especially in the commercial zone. A suitable area could be provided with careful design, off Kitchener Drive, in the vicinity of the Department workshop/depot and oxidation ponds.

Within the next 10 to 20 years, increased visitor numbers to the Village may necessitate an additional public parking area at or near the Village boundary, with a shuttle bus or similar service around the Village. The need or otherwise, for such a facility and service will be kept under review.

Methods

6.2.2(a)

1. Rooding in the Village will largely maintain the layout in Figure 6. Additional roads, including service access roads for restricted vehicle use, will be constructed only where necessary to provide access to newly developed sites.

2. Roads will be designed to meet the following criteria:

- maximise the use of sites;
- meet the needs of emergency services;
- facilitate snow clearing;
- avoid where possible, grades which would cause problems with icing or scouring by run-off waters;
- remain usable during storms with an intensity equivalent to 1 in 10 year flooding frequency (see 6.1.3 Waterways and Floodways);
- blend into the landscape character being preserved and developed in the Village (see 6.1.2 Landscape Management);
- be adequately lit where necessary (see 6.2.9 Services).

3. Where potential conflict between vehicles and pedestrians requires it, roads may be given a special design treatment that slows the speed of vehicles. Such treatment may be appropriate in residential areas or on the road through the Village between the day-shelter area and the Visitor Centre/Village centre.

4. Consultation will occur with and approvals be gained as necessary from, Transit New Zealand regarding any re-alignment of the SH 80 / Lower Terrace Road junction and regarding any change to the Village roading network that may affect this junction.

6.2.2(b)

1. Parking areas will be designed to meet the same criteria as for roads (see 6.2.2(a) above). Parking areas may be developed in any of the use zones, (see Figure 6A) provided the criteria for these zones are adhered to. They should not interrupt or dominate significant view-shafts, especially of

Aoraki/Mount Cook, from existing buildings or frequently used public open space and pedestrian pathways.

2. Public parking areas may not be used by visitors for the overnight parking of caravans and campervans - provision is made for overnight camping at White Horse Hill (see 4.2.6 Camping, Picnicking and Shelters) and outside the Park at Glentanner Park. An exception may be allowed for safety reasons, primarily during winter, when snow, ice or flood risk conditions render the White Horse Hill campground unusable. In these exceptional circumstances the following conditions will apply:

- a maximum of 10 vehicles with ranger approval;
- no tenting;
- no on-site waste disposal;
- payment of the campground charge.

3. The Department will provide roadside signs around the Village as required, with information or hazard warning messages. Such signs may include directional messages to locate concessionaires. Roadside advertising signs and directional signs erected by concessionaires should not be permitted. In this way a consistent pattern of sign-posting appropriate to the Village can be provided (see 6.1.2 Landscape Management and 6.2.1 Buildings And Architectural Standards).

6.2.2(d)

As for 6.2.2(b) 1.

6.2.3 Pedestrian Access

Policies

6.2.3(a)

To build upon and upgrade the system of pathways already in existence and to provide a network of pedestrian access routes around the Village, in a manner that links with and complements the Village centre and vehicle access patterns, to meet the needs of both residents and visitors.

6.2.3(b)

To provide clear connections to Park tracks outside the Village.

Explanation

6.2.3(a) - The intention since the 1976 Village review has been to recognise the Village's position in the National Park at the end of State Highway 80, where vehicles may park and visitors may then explore the Village and the Park on foot. The network of paths and tracks in and around the Village is one of the few opportunities some visitors have to move away from roadsides and safely experience the natural surroundings.

The *Issues and Options Report* however, noted that a combination of poor access, signage and alignment meant existing pathways are not being well used, with frequent pedestrian use of roads. A predominance of pedestrian access within the Village centre was seen as a future key feature.

Two types of pedestrian access currently exist in the Village. These are the main pathway between The Hermitage and the Visitor Centre, which should be the minimum standard for the Village centre, and the other pathways between and within the Village zones (see Figure 6).

It is desirable to reduce vehicle use within the Village and providing good pedestrian access helps achieve this.

6.2.3(b) - Tracks to Bowen Bush, Red Tarns, Governor's Bush, Glencoe Walk, Kea Point, Sealy Tarns and the Hooker Valley are all accessible from the Village. The tracks require clear connections to the Village pedestrian and vehicle access networks.

Methods

6.2.3(a), (b) & (c)

1. Pedestrian access within the Village centre will be designed to:

- **be adequately lit along its full extent;**
- **facilitate snow clearing and drainage to its sides;**
- **comply with 6.1.2 Landscape Management;**
- **be of sufficient width to allow emergency and servicing vehicles to use it, yet be sufficiently distinguishable from a road to be able to discourage casual use by unauthorised vehicles (including bicycles);**

- be negotiable by persons with disabilities (i.e. suitable for wheelchairs);
- have clear signage;
- be covered in particularly high-use circumstances, e.g. in front of public or commercial buildings.

2. Pedestrian pathways will be developed generally as shown in Figure 6 and be designed to:

- be adequately lit where they are likely to be used at night;
- be surfaced to a standard appropriate to the type and frequency of their use. In this regard, the highest standards in the Village will apply to the pathway between Glencoe Wing and the Village centre;
- comply with 6.1.2 Landscape Management;
- be distinguishable from roads in the Village and as far as possible, be of a lesser width than required for vehicles, so as to emphasise that vehicles (including bicycles) are not to use them;
- remain usable during storms with an intensity equivalent to 1 in 5 year flooding frequency (see 6.1.3 Waterways And Floodways);
- have clear signage, as appropriate;
- provide interpretive information.

3. Park tracks outside the Village will be clearly sign-posted from within the Village.

6.2.4 Commercial Zone

Policies

6.2.4(a)

To provide for commercial activities, including visitor accommodation, in a single area of the Village, to meet the needs of Park visitors and residents.

6.2.4(b)

To seek to maintain a range of visitor accommodation, excluding camping.

Explanation

6.2.4(a) & (b) - The terminology of the *Issues and Options Report* is used here. “Commercial” in this sense means the present concessionaire services at The Hermitage (accommodation, restaurants, café, souvenir and grocery shops, guiding concessionaires’ base, New Zealand Post agency) and the Chalets. Also the Alpine Guides shop and office, former Post Office building, petrol station, the Department’s Aoraki/Mount Cook Visitor Centre (see 6.2.7 Interpretation, Information and Park Administration) and the adjoining café. A common aspect of most of these is that clear sight lines to Aoraki/Mount Cook are available, unlike from most buildings in the semi-independent and residential zones.

Of these, the group of Alpine Guides, former Post Office, and petrol station (recently upgraded, with a bus wash-down pad) are separated from the main zone area. Future use of the former Post Office buildings is uncertain.

Visitor accommodation within the commercial zone is currently provided by The Hermitage and the Chalets. The Chalets site is identified within the *Issues and Options Report* as a potential redevelopment site for more intensive visitor accommodation. Should this happen and because the accommodation range here and elsewhere in the Village is seen as beneficial in catering for a variety of visitors, provision for the current on-site accommodation range may be needed elsewhere in the Village (see 6.2.5 Semi-independent Zone). See also 6.2.5 regarding camping.

Proposals have been considered, but not come to fruition, for building and access linkages between the Visitor Centre and nearby concessionaire operations. To keep future Department-controlled options open the un-built-upon area around the Visitor Centre and to the west, between The Hermitage and the Old Mountaineers Café lease areas, will be reserved for future Department building and/or public access use.

The desirability of a Ngāi Tahu presence in the Village is acknowledged in sections 5.1.4 and 5.1.5. In addition to being involved in any redeveloped Village centre or Visitor Centre, the tākata whenua particularly desire a whare mahana. This is literally, a ‘warm house’, a place where their spiritual contact with Aoraki can be maintained; where the practice of ahi kaa roa (keeping the ancestral home fire burning) can be continued; and that can also be a whare wānaka (a house of learning). In the terminology of the marae, the tākata whenua hold that Aoraki is the tipuna whare (the ancestral house), while the marae-atea (the courtyard), the

paepae tapu (the speakers' bench) and the other parts of a marae are there in the natural world around and in front of Aoraki. To build a tipuna whare would demean Aoraki, but a whare mahana is appropriate, where it can look up to and be on the marae of, Aoraki. The Department proposes that one of the houses/house sites referred to in Method 6.1.1(e) be transferred, via a concession, to the tākata whenua for a whare mahana.

Methods

6.2.4(a) & (b)

1. A commercial zone will be retained and developed in the area shown in Figure 6A.

2. The area marked "DOC" within the commercial zone on Figure 6 will be retained by the Department for future Visitor Centre expansion and/or Department developed building and public access linkages with the adjoining concessionaire operations.

3. Approvals for developments within the commercial zone must be consistent with all objectives and policies of this management plan that apply to the Village, where relevant.

4. The commercial zone will be designed to:

- **maintain the basic separation between vehicles and pedestrians which is being promoted throughout the Village generally;**
- **provide for visitor information services, interpretation, bookings, souvenir retailing, mountain recreation equipment, household and personal item retailing for goods that people may reasonably need to be able to buy at any time, and food and beverage facilities, ensuring that individual developments are compatible and closely linked with one another;**
- **allow for a whare mahana site for the tākata whenua;**
- **provide parking areas;**
- **facilitate snow clearing;**
- **be adequately lit and fully serviced (see 6.2.9 Services);**
- **meet the needs of emergency services;**
- **comply with 6.1.2 Landscape Management.**

6.2.5 Semi-independent Zone

Policies

6.2.5(a)

To provide for visitor accommodation and for day-shelter facilities.

6.2.5(b)

To seek to maintain a range of visitor accommodation and directly associated bar, dining and retail facilities, but excluding camping.

6.2.5(c)

To allow for staff accommodation to be provided in association with and in addition to, visitor accommodation, to the extent necessary to service the visitor accommodation with which it is associated.

6.2.5(d)

To permit accommodation sites to be redeveloped where this will make optimum use of the site available.

Explanation

6.2.5(a)&(b) - Accommodation within the semi-independent zone complements that in the commercial zone, with the range at present (2001), from high to low in terms of cost, being:

- Glencoe Wing (130 beds);
- Motels (64 beds);
- YHA & Hostelling International (60 beds).

A day-shelter and associated parking area provides shelter, a cooking area, showers and toilets for visitors to the Village.

The extent of this accommodation range and day-visitor facility is seen as beneficial in catering for a variety of visitors. Some fluctuation within the range does occur from time-to-time as visitor and staff demands change, but there is no indication at present, other than a change of function for Glencoe (see (b) below), that the current range will not be maintained.

The Park Bylaws (see Appendix A) prohibit camping (including staying overnight in any vehicle) without Department approval, within 200 metres of any formed road, which is effectively anywhere within the Village. This form of accommodation is provided at the nearby White Horse Hill campground (see 4.2.6 Camping, Picnicking and Shelters) and outside the Park at Glentanner Park. Persons wanting to camp will be directed to these areas. Method 6.2.2(b) provides for an exception for campervans for safety reasons.

6.2.5(c) - The nature of the facilities requires at least some nearby or live-in staff accommodation.

It is possible that Glencoe Wing may become the staff accommodation hostel for The Hermitage, thereby allowing the present staff hostels to be removed from their incongruous position within the commercial zone and their site re-developed.

Methods

6.2.5(a) to (d)

Visitor accommodation, staff accommodation associated with visitor accommodation and visitor day-shelter facilities, may be developed in the area shown in Figure 6B.

6.2.6 Residential Zone

Policies

6.2.6(a)

To provide for a range of accommodation to meet the needs of staff who must of necessity live in the Village.

6.2.6(b)

Residential sites may be redeveloped where this will make optimum use of the sites available.

6.2.6(c)

To minimise the intrusion of non-residential activities within the residential zone.

Explanation

6.2.6(a) - Some staff of the Department and concessionaires must reside close to their workplace in order to provide the service expected by Park visitors and to manage the Park efficiently. Other staff do not need to reside so close to their workplace and the service to Park visitors can be maintained if they live outside the Park. Some Department and concessionaire staff live in Twizel or Tekapo and commute to work in the Park. This is consistent with the objective of this Plan to contain development within the Village and have demonstrated the necessity for a presence within the Village (see 6.1.1(c) & (d)).

A variety of accommodation types have been developed in the residential zone, including single and two-storey, single and multi-bedroomed houses and flats, with taller buildings generally towards the rear (southern side) of the zone, where their height is less apparent.

Three Department houses are located in the commercial zone and in time, subject to a whare mahana proposal for one house or site (see 6.2.4), they will be relocated into the residential zone to free up their current site-use options. The Department will hold residential sites for this purpose and for other future staff needs (see Figure 6). The hostel-type staff accommodation adjacent to The Hermitage has significant cost and space utilisation advantages. The option of such development in the residential zone, albeit at a smaller scale than the existing hostels, would depend on available and suitable sites and the ability to satisfy landscape management requirements and building and architectural standards (see 6.1.2 Landscape Management and 6.2.1 Building and Architectural Standards).

6.2.6(b) - With redevelopment, some residential sites may be able to accommodate more staff members than they do at present.

6.2.6(c) - Residential amenity values can be adversely affected by commercial or non-residential activities, such as heavy vehicle use and parking and concessionaire client traffic. These potential adverse effects need to be avoided and can be addressed through concessions and enforcement of bylaws.

The current Department plant nursery occupies potential residential space and is incongruous within the residential zone. It will in time be relocated, probably to beside the Department workshop/depot.

Methods

6.2.6(a) & (b)

1. Residential accommodation may be developed in the area shown in Figure 6B.

2. A range of residential buildings adaptable to a variety of household units and living styles, should be provided. New residential buildings should be required to make optimum use of the limited space available. This should include consideration of double-storey buildings.

6.2.6(c)

The avoidance of any adverse effects of commercial or other activities within residential areas, will be specifically addressed during the consideration of any concession involving staff accommodation within the residential zone, by bylaw enforcement and by relocation of the Department plant nursery.

6.2.7 Interpretation, Information and Park Administration Facilities.

Policy

6.2.7

To provide facilities in the Village to:

- **allow for interpretation to visitors of the Park and its values;**
- **provide information to Park visitors;**
- **allow for storage, display and interpretation of artefacts and items associated with the Park or with human endeavour in the alpine environment;**
- **meet the working needs of staff involved in the administration and management of the Park and the Village;**
- **cater for emergency services for both the Park and the Village.**

Explanation

Park interpretation, information and administration facilities are on three sites within the Village - the Area Office, the Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park Visitor Centre and the depot/workshop (see Figure 6).

The Visitor Centre building serves a multiple function providing:

- offices;
- public information desk;
- displays and audio-visual programmes;
- rescue operations base and equipment storage;
- Mount Cook industrial fire brigade base;
- radio communications base;
- first aid station and St John ambulance base; and
- the alarm system in the event of a breakdown in village utility services.

The Visitor Centre is, as at 2004, soon to be upgraded as a stand-alone facility to become the focal point for the Village centre. Some of the above functions will be located away from the upgraded facility (see 6.1.1(d)).

Interpretation does not need to be confined to the Visitor Centre. Outdoor opportunities, such as guided walks and interpretive displays, would also be suitable around the Village. A variety of interpretation methods will help to increase the understanding and appreciation of the Park and the place of the Village in it.

A Museum Trust is investigating/promoting the establishment of a museum in the Village, which would focus on use of the Park and particularly, on the history of alpine recreation and tourism. This museum function may become part of the upgraded Visitor Centre.

The Aoraki Area Office is a recently refurbished facility on a site adjoining the commercial zone. The depot and workshop complex, with a nearby helicopter pad,

is located on the southern edge of the Village amenities area, against the Black Birch Stream stopbank.

Methods

6.2.7

- 1. Facilities for interpretation, information and Park administration will be retained in or near their current localities, as shown in Figure 6A. These are management and administration facilities that cannot be located outside the Park.**
- 2. Accommodation for the Mount Cook Industrial Fire Brigade and the St John organisation will be continued in the Visitor Centre complex until any decision is made to relocate such facilities. There will be close liaison with the brigade (see 6.2.9 Services) and St. John.**
- 3. The large amount of information about the Park and the use made of it, which is held by the Aoraki Area Office, will be kept accessible to the public upon reasonable request.**
- 4. Artefacts of historic value and specimens of protected fauna will be acquired for display at the Visitor Centre, with the necessary approvals being sought under the Antiquities Act 1975 and the Wildlife Act 1953.**

See also 4.2.9 Interpretation.

6.2.8 Community Facilities

Policies

6.2.8(a)

To allow or provide for community facilities in the Village, primarily to meet the needs of residents in an alpine environment.

6.2.8(b)

To allow commercial activities to be carried out in community facilities where the activity does not adversely affect the needs of Village residents and is not inconsistent with the objectives and other policies for the Village.

Explanation

6.2.8(a) - Residents of the Village should be able to enjoy a range of communal amenities and facilities, preferably in multi-use buildings, comparable to those found in any other similar communities in New Zealand, while recognising the Village's location within a national park. The relative isolation and the alpine climate may impose an extra stress on residents.

At present (2004) the residents have a school (with swimming pool), a community centre providing a hall and kitchen, and fenced tennis courts. Plunket and other medical services have operated when needed from a motel unit or hotel room.

Some interest has been expressed for a non-denominational chapel/sanctuary centre in the Village, for the purposes of local services, personal prayer/meditation, funerals/tangi, and local weddings and other religious events. There has also been concern over how such a facility could avoid becoming commercialised and a tourist attraction in itself, especially as the interest is in having it sited with a view of Aoraki/Mount Cook i.e. within the commercial zone. This is arguably inconsistent with the purposes of a national park and the purposes of an amenities area. Many of the activities suggested for the building can already occur in existing multi-purpose buildings. A viewpoint of some people is that the whole Park is a chapel/sanctuary centre and that a building for this purpose is not appropriate.

6.2.8(b) - The community centre may be used for activities of a commercial nature, such as the showing of films to a paying audience, the holding of private functions, or conferences on topics relevant to the National Park, subject to the consideration of any adverse effects on the adjoining residential area.

Methods

6.2.8(a)

1. Community facilities may be maintained or developed in the areas shown generally in Figure 6B, subject to 4.3.2 Concessions General and the policies of this plan.

2. Approval for a 'chapel/sanctuary' within the Village should be given only where it would meet the following criteria:

- **There is a proven necessity for a separate facility to meet the needs of residents within the Village;**
- **The facility is sited outside of the commercial and semi-independent zones and away from visitor use areas, to avoid it becoming a tourist attraction in itself;**
- **The facility being managed as a multi-denominational community facility, for non-commercial purposes, irrespective of Method 6.2.8(b) 1 below.**

6.2.8(b)

1. Any concession granted should allow the concessionaire to apply to the Minister for permission to allow the community facilities to be used on an occasional basis by activities of a commercial nature. The proposed activities should be consistent with the uses for which the facilities have been designed and consistent with the Village objectives and policies of this management plan.

2. In assessing whether an activity will adversely affect the needs of Village residents, the Department will invite and have regard for, the views of the residents, preferably expressed by the Residents' Association, rather than by individuals.

6.2.9 Services

The Department, pursuant to the National Parks Act, currently provides utility services within the Village, such as roads, water supply and the sewerage system.

Policies

6.2.9(a)

To ensure the provision to a high standard of those utility services that in other communities would be the primary responsibility of the local authority.

6.2.9(b)

To place all utility services underground, where possible.

Explanation

6.2.9(a) & (b) - All previous planning in the Village has placed a high priority on the provision of services, underground wherever possible and where applicable, to sites in the Village.

Some of these services are provided directly by the Department and are termed 'the Village Local Body Assets'. Others are provided by agencies in arrangement with the Department and the Department provides some as part of its wider National Park activities. As at 2004 these services are:

Village Local Body Assets;

- roads (includes street furniture/road signs). Their provision, maintenance and snow clearing (See 6.2.2 Vehicle Access and 6.2.3 Pedestrian Access);
- water supply. The domestic supply is from intakes on Black Birch Stream and Glencoe Stream to storage tanks and then, under pressure, around the Village (see 4.1.3 Water, Snow, Ice and Riverbeds). The *Issues and Options Report* encourages a more sensitive integration of the tanks into the landscape. The fire fighting water supply is supplied from the same source as the domestic water supply, but with a separate reticulation network. Fire hydrants are positioned strategically around the Village (see 4.1.8 Fire Control);
- sewerage. From each building site by gravity flow (apart from one pumped section and one septic tank served section) to a treatment site and oxidation ponds at the south end of the Village (see 4.2.10 Waste Disposal);
- stream control. The stream control structures and streambed and flood flow monitoring equipment (see 6.1.3 Waterways and Floodways);
- industrial fire brigade (see 6.2.10 Village Fire Control);
- solid waste. Rubbish is collected from within the Village and disposed of outside the Park to the Mackenzie District Council's landfill at Twizel (see 4.2.10 Waste Disposal);
- landscape works (includes Village lighting, Village pathways not managed as part of the National Park and plantings generally outside the leased areas). Provision and maintenance of same (see 6.1.2 Landscape Management);

Other agency provided services;

- electricity supply. Apart from transformers strategically placed around the Village, all electricity supply is by underground reticulation. Private standby generators can maintain power to The Hermitage and the Visitor Centre in the event of a failure of the public supply;
- telephone. Provided by underground cable to all sites from an exchange at the rear of the old Post Office building;

Department's National Park services;

- pathways and signage (not included in Landscape or Roads above). Pathways (e.g. as in Bowen Bush) and the DOC livery signs around the Village.

The Department currently undertakes responsibility for the above Village Local Body Assets, under cost-sharing arrangements made with the Village concessionaires. The *Asset Management Plan Aoraki/Mount Cook Village* has been prepared to assist this process and the ongoing provision of high standard services.

The *Issues and Options Report* identified several services where change was desirable, future services possible and improvements needed. These included the relocation of The Hermitage generator building (see 6.1.1 (e)), the variety of signage around the Village and the quality of lighting, without compromising the National Park experience.

Given the several sources of signage and lighting management ('local body' function, Department management and lease-holding concessionaires) good co-ordination between all parties will be necessary.

Methods

6.2.9(a)

1. Services will be provided in conformity with the Village layout as shown in Figure 6. They will be positioned so as to be easily accessible for subsequent repair and maintenance work and so as to avoid as far as possible, being threatened by flooding or other natural hazards.

2. The *Asset Management Plan Aoraki/Mount Cook Village* once approved, will be used to manage those assets in the future.

3. Utility services will be provided to the edge of new building sites. Connection, repair and maintenance within a building site, will be the financial responsibility of the site occupant.

4. Co-ordination will be maintained between the Department and lease-holding concessionaires to ensure the integrated provision and management of Village lighting and signage, taking on board the recommendations of the *Issues and Options Report* recommendations.

5. All lighting will be required to shed light downwards and minimise light spill into the wider National Park; to avoid affecting people's night vision and to minimise any detraction from the natural dark values of the Village's setting within the Park.

6. Close liaison will be maintained with the companies providing electricity supply and telephone services. Any future requests for provisions for cellular phone or cable television services will be assessed through the concession process.

6.2.9(b)

When underground services are installed, a requirement will be that all sites of earthworks be rehabilitated (see 6.1.2 Landscape Management).

6.2.10 Village Fire Control

Policies

6.2.10(a)

To prevent or extinguish all uncontrolled fires in the Village.

6.2.10(b)

To require all buildings, especially those close to areas of indigenous scrub or forest, to be subject to appropriate fire control and protection measures.

6.2.10(c)

To maintain the reticulated fire-main and hydrant system throughout the Village and to extend it where necessary, in the light of future building development.

6.2.10(d)

To support and where appropriate maintain a Village fire brigade to professional standards.

Explanation

6.2.10(a) - The presence of many buildings and people in a small area of the Park is in itself a fire risk. Efforts have been made to reduce this risk to a minimum by setting up a fire brigade, providing an alarm system, public education and strategically placing fire hydrants around the Village. Some buildings also have heat detectors, smoke detectors, and/ or sprinklers.

The lighting of fires is subject to strict controls as set out in the Park Bylaws (see Appendix A).

6.2.10(b) - Care in the location and design of buildings can assist in preventing damage from fires. Fireplaces with capped chimney flues may be constructed in buildings, unless it is felt that they would pose an unacceptable fire risk to areas of indigenous vegetation. In this regard, the vegetation of most concern is that of Governors Bush, Bowen Bush and other areas of indigenous scrub and forest. Where fireplaces with capped chimney flues are not acceptable, electricity or gas must be used for heating and cooking. Building walls adjacent to indigenous vegetation will be required to have a fire-rating equivalent to the rating that would apply if the vegetation were another building. The location of buildings must allow for fire fighters to get between any building and the Village edge or vegetation.

Linkage to the Village alarm system will be required for all commercial and visitor accommodation buildings. Protection measures supported for buildings will include:

- fire safety inspections and licensing of concessionaire accommodation buildings by the Fire Service and Mackenzie District Council;
- fire protection inspection and maintenance of equipment in Crown-owned buildings by the Government Department responsible for them.

6.2.10(c) - The fire fighting water supply and hydrant system will be maintained in a safe operating condition at all times. Any comments on the system from the Fire Service or from insurance companies, will be conscientiously considered.

6.2.10(d) - Additional to the Department's overall responsibility under the Forests and Rural Fires Act 1977 (see 4.1.8 Fire Control), the Department manages the Mount Cook Industrial Fire Brigade as owner pursuant to Section 36 Fire Services Act 1975. The purpose of the brigade is to protect any property in the Aoraki/Mount Cook Village, environs and the airport from fire. The New Zealand Fire Service Commission is responsible for determining that a proper standard of efficiency is maintained. A fire plan for the Village and environs was revised in 1998.

Methods

6.2.10(a)

Promote awareness of the Park Bylaws and the restricted and prohibited fire seasons and specifically, the strict control of non-complying fires.

6.2.10(d)

The Industrial Fire Brigade or similar, will operate in terms of a fire plan, which will detail the organisation, equipment, call-out procedures and brigade responsibilities. The plan should be compatible with and complement the fire plan drawn up by the Department of Conservation in terms of the Forests and Rural Fires Act 1977 to cover outdoor fires.

