

## Section Two: Background Information

### Benefits of a Walking and Cycling route network

There are benefits to the entire community in numerous ways:

#### Recreational benefits

- Provides infrastructure for recreational use by a large proportion of community.
- Enhance involvement in recreation for a wide range of users.
- Provides for safe, easily accessible recreation close to people's "backdoors".
- Provides access to lakes and rivers, and other significant natural features.

#### Environmental benefits

- Encourages community involvement in protection and conservation of the environment.
- Enhances public appreciation of the natural environment and landscapes.
- Benefits from improved open space and urban design
- Facilitates walking and cycling as an alternate means of transport.
- Reduction in vehicle emissions/pollutants

#### Social benefits

- Improvements to health and mental well-being by higher level of physical activity
- Helps to cultivate an outdoor culture
- Enhances community interaction
- Improves the living environment of a community
- Builds on the sense of community by providing important access links

#### Economic benefits

- Provides another attraction for tourists and visitors to the area.
- Adds value to living in the Upper Clutha area.
- Provides a cheaper alternative to car use.
- Alternate transport system resulting in reduced impact on infrastructure maintenance.
- Improved physical activity reduces healthcare costs.

### Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Providers

Queenstown Lakes District Council has a role to play in the provision of walking and cycling infrastructure to help maximise the benefits to community and visitors to the region. The council's priority will tend to be within, adjacent to and between the various **residential** areas. They will work in partnership with other providers such as Department of Conservation, Transit, Otago Regional Council and private landowners to ensure the overall network is managed consistently and effectively. The Upper Clutha Tracks Trust will be integral to ensuring there is effective management and good communication across the agencies with regard to walking and cycling needs.

## Guiding Planning Documents

### Getting There – on foot, by cycle (Ministry of Transport)

Central Government has given a strong emphasis to the advancement of walking and cycling in New Zealand transport and the above strategy reflects this. The Strategy's vision is *"A New Zealand where people from all sectors of the community walk and cycle for transport and enjoyment"*.

This vision is supported by three goals:

- Community environments and transport systems that support walking and cycling
- More people choosing to walk and cycle, more often
- Improved safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

### Wanaka 2020 (QLDC)

A public workshop was held in 2002 in Wanaka in order for the community to help develop a shared vision for the future of the district. Facilities for walking and cycling were considered a vital part of that future vision, with the following recommendations made:

- A network of linked walkways and cycleways was seen as highly desirable for both locals and tourist use (Having cycle and walkways together is acceptable)
- The route should be declared now to plan for the future. Acquisition should include requirements through the subdivision process.
- An outer walkway/cycleway rim track with radial routes to the town centre was favoured.
- A map of tracks with colour coding and times would make the network a feature for tourists.
- The range of walkways should include some provision for wheelchair access.

As part of the 2020 process other workshops were held at the following small communities:

### Makarora 2020 (QLDC)

Recommendations:

- "There should be a cycle track and/or walkway along the State Highway between the three townships. This could link up with a cycle track and/or walkway along the Makarora River.
- There should be a walkway/bridle track from Makarora to the Matukituki Valley."

### Luggate 2020 (QLDC)

Recommendations:

- "Walkways should be established and maintained accessing the Luggate Creek and Clutha River.
- Paper roads should be retained for public use as walkways/cycleways.
- Any new developments should provide new walkways/cycleways providing linkages between residential areas, the rivers and surrounding rural areas.
- There should be a linked walking track around the village utilising existing creek and reserves where possible. In particular, a walkway should access the Nook, and link back to the main road. Walkways should link Luggate to Wanaka and Cromwell.
- Fishing accessways should be formalised.
- An historic precinct walk could be established, encompassing the tavern, old school site, Mill house and miners tailings."

### **Hawea 2020 (QLDC)**

#### Recommendations:

- “Additional pedestrian/cycle and bridle linkages are sought throughout the whole area to link the residential areas with each other, community facilities, the river and lake.
- The following accessways should be established and maintained:
- Along the Hawea River between the township and Albert Town.
- From Butterfield Road to Hawea River.
- From Hawea Flat to the school, through to the Domain, and to Lake Hawea.
- Round Hill through to John’s Creek.
- Re-open Newcastle Road to access the river and DOC reserve.
- Access to high country – in consultation with farmers – Grandview, Mount Maude.
- Access between Hawea and Muir Heights.
- Provide walkways through new developments.”

### **Cardrona 2020 (QLDC)**

#### Recommendations:

- “Walkways should be established and maintained to connect the two parts of Cardrona, and accessing the river.
- A walking track associated with historic mining sites and locations should be established.
- The linkage of Cardrona with Wanaka for pedestrian/cycleways as proposed by the Trails Trust is also encouraged.
- A walking track up to the lookout above the hall.”

### **Wanaka Structure Plan (QLDC)**

The Structure Plan developed in 2004 aimed to establish a development planning vision which would guide future zoning for Wanaka to keep abreast of predicted population growth in the area. Of relevance to this strategy, the Structure Plan identified potential sites for further open space provision and indicated a future roading network that would allow good traffic flow. Of interest also are proposals for future community facilities such as a hospital. The Open Space Plan of the Structure Plan has provided a strong basis for formulating an effective network for cyclists and walkers within this document.

### **Parks Strategy (QLDC)**

The Parks Strategy provides policy for future management of these reserves, including the following policy on walkways:

- Develop a walkway/cycleway strategy, which will investigate linking existing reserves, communities, natural features and amenity areas through green corridors.

The Parks Strategy offers the following specific direction for the future development of a walkway network for the Wanaka and Albert Town communities:

- “The development of Wanaka Station Park to a district reserve and linking Wanaka Station Park via the lake front walkway to the existing Lakefront Playground Reserve in Wanaka town will be a major long-term enhancement.”
- “The creation of formalised footpaths to the northern suburbs will complete the development.”
- “While the walkway strategy will address the development of future walkway linkages, there are clearly opportunities in Wanaka and Albert Town to expand the walkway network along the river and lake fringes.”

The Parks Strategy notes that there is “high community value of linking parks and reserves and open space with communities and natural features”.

## Existing Trail Network

Wanaka town and environs already has a reasonable network of walkways in place. These are mainly concentrated along the lake and river edge, and up to scenic viewpoints such as Mt Iron, and within the land known as the Plantation mountain bike area directly to the east of Peninsula Bay. The plantation area represents a significant portion of the off-road cycling tracks network and is currently not within the management of either DOC or QLDC. The Mt Iron track, maintained by Department of Conservation, is very popular with visitors and locals alike and is used by 60,000 walkers each year. With an increasing traffic flow and consequent limited parking the road network in and about Wanaka could be improved to cater for both commuter and recreational cyclists.

Hawea and the other rural towns such as Luggate, Cardrona, Hawea Flat, Makarora are not so well-endowed with walkways.

### Shortfalls or problems with existing network

- variable walkway standards
- gaps in provision of walkways for the Upper Clutha region
- lack of arterial routes
- poor signage
- inadequate maintenance
- at times conflict between users due to narrow width and poor visibility lines.
- there is a requirement to prohibit vehicle use from some existing trails
- inadequate information re legal access opportunities
- poor coordination between agencies
- large portion of the trail network not managed by DOC or QLDC leading to future uncertainty and potential loss of trails from development.

## The Roothing Network

The roading network will remain as the preferred route choice for most cyclists, whether they are commuters or recreational riders. In Otago road cycling has become a very popular sport. Alongside this an increasing number of tourists are using cycles to tour the country. Many of the roads were created without these uses in mind and their limitations such as narrow carriageway can be a disincentive. Gradual improvements to roads to allow ease of use and safe cyclist use is required.

Footpaths catering for pedestrians in urban/residential areas are a vital part of the roading infrastructure. Pedestrians also require safe crossing points and these need to cater for disabled, elderly and buggy pushing users.

Any road design for new or upgraded roads needs to be cognisant of the needs of cyclists and pedestrians. As roading infrastructure is an expensive business priority should be given to safety issues and roads that are used for cycle commuting and the most popular road cycling routes.

### Shortfalls or problems with existing network

- key roads do not provide for safe use by cyclists
- narrow road carriageway is the main shortfall
- poor crossing facilities particularly at busy intersections

## Pedestrian and Cycleway Design

- All walkways are constructed and maintained to the standard appropriate to the users and the environment.
- Trails used by walkers will comply with the NZ Standards Handbook: SNZ HB 8630:2004
- Refer to International Mountain Biking Association guidelines for constructing mountain bike specific trails
- Unlawful/informal track building will be discouraged
- Avoid damage to the environment by poor design particularly in fragile environments.
- Signage should comply with landowner sign standards, which in most cases will be DOC or QLDC.
- Allow for horse-riding on rural trails where practical and appropriate.

## Components of the Network

For the purpose of this strategy walking and cycling access ways can be identified as either: **Community accessways, Arterial links, Recreational trails, Rural roadside tracks or Roding improvements.**

These are defined as:

### Community accessways

These may be only short links mostly within towns, often linking key destinations such as community facilities, town centres, retail areas, tourist attractions and natural features. They also can be links between residential streets providing a more direct and pleasant route mostly for walkers. They will often follow the desire lines of pedestrians and cyclists and often dissect local reserves or other green corridors. They are used for utility purposes as much as recreational.

Community access ways will have the following features:

- wide enough for dual use by cyclists and pedestrians (minimum 1.5m) where practicable for cyclists

- may have a sealed surface in high use areas otherwise will be of compacted aggregate or mown grass surface.
- will have obvious start-finish points with the use of signs naming the walkway
- street signs may be used to direct people to them
- longer trails may have orientation panels at the start
- may have lighting if it is high use
- will generally be path or short walk standard

### Arterial links

An arterial link is a walkway which links together two or more communities and may be used by non motorised commuters. They will often double as recreational trails where there is a scenic outlook to be gained.

- will have compacted aggregate surface
- width allows for dual use
- may require some trail marking along the length
- will be well sign-posted
- will generally be either short walk or walking track standard

### Recreational Trails

These are the trails used in people's leisure time for walking, biking, running, walking the dog, and in some instances horseriding. They are popular facilities in the Upper Clutha due to an active population. They are often located where natural features occur and scenic opportunities (such as lake and/or mountain views) feature highly. The Mt Iron track is an example, and has become an icon trail for Wanaka.

- will have either an aggregate or natural surface
- trail may allow for dual use – decision to be made by the landowner.
- dogs may be prohibited if over farmland
- will have track marking where required
- will have signs at start and finish
- may require other facilities such as toilets, carparks and picnic tables
- trail standard may range from walking track to route

- there may be some limits on access due to farming activities e.g. lambing.

### **Roading Improvements**

There are many roads in the Upper Clutha area that can be improved to cater better for pedestrian and cyclist use. This category looks at additional work to road carriageways, footpaths and crossing points but excludes walkways separate from the road.

- standards used are as per Transit requirements
- for roads catering for cyclist use a minimum 1.2m wide sealed shoulder may be provided either side of the vehicle carriageway.
- signage and roadmarking will be used to alert motorists to dual use where required.

