



17 December 2020

Via email: otago_cms@doc.govt.nz

Dear Sir / Madam,

DRAFT OTAGO CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY PARTIAL REVIEW FOR CYCLE TRACKS AND TRAILS

Thank you for the opportunity to present Queenstown Lakes District Council's (QLDC) submission on the Draft Otago Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) partial review for cycle tracks and trails.

The Queenstown Lakes District is one of New Zealand's premier visitor destinations, and also one of the fastest growing populations in New Zealand. The district's increasing population and geographical constraints provides a unique set of conditions for active travel and in partnership with Waka Kotahi New Zealand Transport Agency and Otago Regional Council, through Way to Go, QLDC is committed to safe and accessible active travel as part of our policy development and investment portfolio. The partial review to allow new cycle tracks and trails for consideration will allow for a more extensive network serving the district.

The trails in the existing Queenstown Trails network are the most visited and used NZ Cycle Trail out of the country's 22 Great Rides¹ and mountain biking opportunities in the Wakatipu are considered world class. Not only are recreational tracks and trails important to the region socially, recreationally and economically, but cycling has significant benefits to individuals and communities, increasing physical and mental health, and playing a part in reducing the numbers of private motor vehicles on the roads. This not only reflects the pillars of QLDC's Vision Beyond 2050, but will play a part in the Climate Action initiatives currently being undertaken.

Council staff would ask to speak to this submission at any hearings or further discussions that may result from this consultation process. QLDC would like to thank the Department of Conservation again for the opportunity to comment.

Please note that this submission reflects the position of officers and has not been ratified by Council.

Yours faithfully,



Mike Theelen
Chief Executive

¹ NZ Cycle Trail Evaluation Report 2016.

1.0 Changes and Additions to Trails and Tracks in Part Two of the CMS.

- 1.1 QLDC would like to acknowledge that the partial review of the Otago CMS has accurately represented the additional trails of the Wakatipu Active Travel Network proposed to be included in the partial review. This will allow QLDC along with partners of Way to Go to continue press forward with upcoming active travel projects and the connection of all suburbs and townships within the Wakatipu Basin.
- 1.2 QLDC supports all the tracks and area that are included in Part Two – Places, and the interactive mapping tool provided by the Department of Conservation. There is some concern however, that future initiatives that are not currently anticipated may be unduly constrained where certain areas or tracks are not currently included.
- 1.3 QLDC opposes the identification of individual parcels of Marginal Strip for inclusion in the CMS and instead propose all marginal strips are considered for assessment criteria, as they are the means of providing for public access to and along waterways and lakes.

2.0 Specific Policy Requirements

- 2.1 QLDC partially supports the Specific Policy Requirements within the document. QLDC believes that to first request the inclusion of proposed tracks and trails within Part Two – Places, and then be subject to the policy requirements in Part Three may lead to unnecessary delays and administrative costs.
- 2.2 The additional tracks and trails proposed as part of the Wakatipu Active Travel Network have been subject to much consideration. Through the business case, consultation with local iwi, landowners and the community has taken place and consideration of the ecological, cultural and social impact of these trails has been undertaken. Additional constraints may delay forward movement.
- 2.3 The approval process set out, does not provide any indication of timeframes or costs, and does not appear to be responsive, streamlined or agile. Given the increasing popularity of cycling in the District the approval process does not seem to be user friendly or efficient.
- 2.4 QLDC considers that a process to include any new trails that are not currently anticipated should be included into the document so that these can be evaluated as potential trails to be approved and added to the list.

3.0 Other Matters

- 3.1 QLDC is fully supportive of the CMS identifying specific areas where cycling is not allowed in order to protect the values of those areas.
- 3.2 QLDC is supportive of the submissions entered by the Upper Clutha Tracks Trust and the Queenstown Trails Trust.