

QLDC Council
17 March 2022

Report for Agenda Item | Rīpoata moto e Rāraki take : 4

Department: Corporate Services

Title | Taitara 2022-2025 Climate and Biodiversity Plan for the Queenstown Lakes District

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT | TE TAKE MŌ TE PŪRONGO

- 1 The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval of the draft 2022-2025 Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan for public feedback.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | WHAKARĀPOPOTOTANGA MATUA

- 2 The 2019-2022 Climate Action Plan has been reviewed and the draft 2022-2025 Climate and Biodiversity Plan has been co-designed with the Climate Reference Group, community stakeholders, partners, experts and staff. The plan has been re-named to reflect a greater emphasis on the role of biodiversity and the fact that QLDC declared a climate and ecological emergency in 2019.
- 3 Following stakeholder review and a benchmarking exercise, the plan has been redrafted and reviewed by the Climate Reference Group. The plan is intended for public engagement and feedback alongside the Annual Plan.

RECOMMENDATION | NGĀ TŪTOHUNGA

That Council:

1. **Note** the contents of this report;
2. **Approve** the draft 2022-2025 Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan for public feedback.

Prepared by:



Katherine Durman
Climate Action Programme Manager

3/03/2022

Reviewed and Authorised by:





Meaghan Miller
General Manager,
Corporate Services

3/03/2022

CONTEXT | HOROPAKI

- 4 In June 2019 QLDC declared a climate and ecological emergency and released a draft version of its first Climate Action Plan for public feedback. The 2019-2022 Climate Action Plan was adopted by Council on 12 March 2020 and has since guided QLDC’s response to the climate emergency.
- 5 Delivery of the 2019-2022 Climate Action Plan has led QLDC on a journey of major organisational, systems and behavioural shift. Working in partnership with other local organisations, much has been achieved over the last three years.
- 6 Climate change is a crisis for which solutions rely on collaboration and partnerships. QLDC is committed to demonstrating ambitious climate leadership whilst codesigning solutions and taking action together with the Queenstown Lakes community. Therefore the development of the 2022-2025 Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan has involved genuine and in-depth engagement with the community and experts.
- 7 The Climate Reference Group has provided guidance to QLDC throughout the development process, providing expert advice and prioritising the actions in the plan.
- 8 Summary of plan development:

TIMELINE	STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	SUMMARY
April 2021	Long Term Plan Submissions	Of the 504 submissions on Long Term Plan, 240 provided feedback and recommendations on climate action, showing an appetite for Council to take more action.
	Review process kicked off	The Climate Reference Group provided recommendations on the outcomes and structure of the plan. A key recommendation was to create a sixth outcome for biodiversity.
June 2021	QLDC internal climate action hui	Staff shared ideas for accelerating climate action both within the organisation and across the district.
July 2021	Workshop with QLDC Councillors and Wanaka Community Board	Elected members shared their passion to see more climate action in the district. A topic of particular interest was the development of communities that allowed for live, work and play within neighbourhoods.
	Climate Reference Group	Strong sentiments came through around both education for local communities and on the role of QLDC in advocacy to Central Government.
	Regenerative Recovery Advisory Group	Suggestions included a focus on collaboration and cooperation between organisations, community groups and QLDC, and to look at a 100-year horizon. The group also presented their final report in

TIMELINE	STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	SUMMARY
		July ¹ , following a year of work in support of the district’s recovery programme. Report recommendations were fed into climate action planning.
August 2021	Community stakeholder Hui	Climate Action Team assisted the Climate Reference Group in organising a stakeholder hui for local advocates and experts to provide input and ideas. The most popular topics were around transport mode shift and biodiversity.
	QLDC staff suggestions	Numerous staff provided detailed input into the plan. Feedback was varied, ranging from technical infrastructure or planning suggestions to embedding climate action into culture and decision making.
	Whakatipu Conservation Collective	Discussion focused on exploring actions in the new biodiversity outcome could look like.
October 2021	WAO Summit	WAO Summit attendees voted on their priorities for the Climate Action Plan. ‘Regenerating our natural environment’ and ‘designing neighbourhoods where we can live, work, learn and play without getting in the car’ came out on top.
	 <p><i>Queenstown Primary School's Enviro Group learning about the Greenhouse Effect in their tunnel house.</i></p>	 <p><i>Climate action kōrero at the 2021 WAO Summit</i></p>
	Enviroschools Climate 101s	The Climate Action Team collaborated with Enviroschools to provide Climate 101 sessions and feed tamariki ideas into the Climate Action Plan. The feedback focused on transport, food, energy, and waste. Transport was a particular interest, with the students keen to see more active travel options for them.
November – December 2021	Suggestions refined and prioritised	All community and stakeholder input was collated into a list of 600 suggestions. Suggestions were prioritised, combined, cut and refined to a list of 134 actions. The Climate Reference Group identified 68 of these actions as priority actions and provided recommendations on the plan

¹ <https://www.qldc.govt.nz/media/rosjz4s5/regenerative-recovery-advisory-group-final-report.pdf>

TIMELINE	STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	SUMMARY
		<p>outcomes. A key recommendation was for the plan to be renamed the Climate <i>and Biodiversity</i> Plan.</p> <p>The Climate Action Team then further developed and refined the prioritised actions with action owners and partners.</p>
December 2021 – January 2022	Stakeholder feedback received and plan updated	<p>The plan was circulated with key stakeholders and feedback sought. 30 stakeholders responded with comments. Comments were constructive, with many good suggestions and the inclusion of biodiversity being very well received. Some stakeholders felt that more ambition and urgency was needed, with a focus of comments on aviation, transport and growth. All comments were thoroughly considered, and the plan was updated.</p>
February 2022	Benchmarking exercise	<p>A benchmarking exercise was conducted against other local government bodies internationally, based upon climate emergency UK’s checklist².</p>
February 2022	Draft plan finalised	<p>The plan was improved and finalised based on recommendations from the Climate Reference Group, Councillors and the Executive Leadership Team.</p>

9 The 2022-2025 Climate and Biodiversity Plan document is intended for an audience that takes particular interest in climate action. It is recognised that this is a detailed and technical document, and optimal ways to communicate the plan to the public are being explored. This will likely include the creation of a main document, summary and film or video content.

10 In advance of the final plan being adopted, a peer review exercise will also be conducted.

ANALYSIS AND ADVICE | TATĀRITANGA ME NGĀ TOHUTOHU

11 Option 1 - Approve the draft 2022-25 Climate and Biodiversity Plan for public consultation.

Advantages:

- 12 The public consultation for the plan will proceed in parallel with the Annual Plan.
- 13 Council will demonstrate its commitment to the declared climate emergency and an effective response to climate change risks for the district
- 14 Council’s climate action programme will proceed according to plan with resources focussed on delivery of mitigation, adaptation and biodiversity actions.

Disadvantages:

² <https://www.climateemergency.uk/local-authority-checklist>

- 15 There are no discernible disadvantages to this option
- 16 Option 2 Do not approve the draft 2022-25 Climate and Biodiversity Plan for public consultation.
- Advantages:*
- 17 Officers can re-prioritise workload and public engagement.
- Disadvantages:*
- 18 A major strategic milestone for the Council climate change programme will be missed, risking progress for a wide range of mitigation, adaptation and biodiversity initiatives.
- 19 Council's response to its declaration of a climate emergency and the climate change risks for the district may be compromised
- 20 This report recommends **Option 1** for addressing the matter because the plan has had in-depth and genuine co-design with the Climate Reference Group, key stakeholders, experts, interest groups and staff. The plan balances and reflects the input from these groups and would benefit from public engagement as the next step.

CONSULTATION PROCESS | HĀTEPE MATAPAKI:

> SIGNIFICANCE AND ENGAGEMENT | TE WHAKAMAHI I KĀ WHAKAARO HIRAKA

- 21 This matter is of low significance, as determined by reference to the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy. However, it is acknowledged that the subject matter is of higher significance in terms of general community interest.
- 22 The persons who are affected by or interested in this matter are residents of the Queenstown Lakes district community, key organisations and partners, businesses, community groups, climate change experts and advocates.
- 23 The Council has engaged with community stakeholders and experts throughout the development of this plan and an informal stakeholder review has been undertaken. A summary of stakeholder input and feedback is provided in this report. It is now proposed that the plan is approved for public engagement and feedback.

> MĀORI CONSULTATION | IWI RŪNANGA

- 24 The Council has engaged with mana whenua throughout the development of this plan, through hui, discussions with tangata whenua and through Kāi Tahu representation on the Climate Reference Group. Iwi views have been incorporated into the plan and Te Tāhū o te Whāriki - He Rautaki Mō te Huringa o te Āhuarangi (Anchoring the Foundation – Ngāi Tahu Climate Change Strategy) has been a key input. Iwi feedback will be sought again during public engagement through Aukaha and Te Ao Marama.

RISK AND MITIGATIONS | NGĀ RARU TŪPONO ME NGĀ WHAKAMAURUTANGA

- 25 This matter relates to the Environmental risk category. It is associated with RISK00019 Ineffective mitigation response to the declared climate and ecological emergency and RISK00059 Ineffective planning to support Climate Change Adaptation within the QLDC Risk Register. These risks has been assessed as having a very high inherent risk rating.
- 26 The approval of the recommended option will support the Council by allowing the organisation to implement additional controls for this risk. This shall be achieved by implementing a programme of work to address climate adaptation and mitigation, as well as enhancing biodiversity in the district.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS | NGĀ RITENGA Ā-PŪTEA

- 27 Many projects across Council's ten year plan programme of work help deliver on or underpin our commitment to mitigating against or adapting to our changing climate In terms of budget specific to delivering the actions from the Climate Action Plan, \$257,000 is committed to climate action each year in the 2021-2031 Long Term Plan.
- 28 The current investment level for 22/23 will mean 28 actions can be prioritised from the proposed list. Using the budget allowance of \$257k (the allocated funding for Year Two of the Long Term Plan), these actions have been prioritised because they are ready for implementation, and/or are an important foundational activity. It's possible some reduced scope may need to apply to deliver all actions in the coming year.
- 29 Alternatively, Council can choose to commence all 46 actions recommended for 22/23. This would require an estimated increase of \$420k in 22/23, which would breach the Council's desire to stay within a rates limit of 6%. The implication of the additional \$420k would be a further increase of 0.43%, taking the average rates increase to 6.39%.
- 30 This additional spend is presented as an option for public submission in the Annual Plan consultation document.

COUNCIL EFFECTS AND VIEWS | NGĀ WHAKAAWEAWE ME NGĀ TIROHANGA A TE KAUNIHERA

- 31 The following Council policies, strategies and bylaws were considered:
- The Climate Action Plan is aligned to the principles of the Vision Beyond 2050, particularly Zero Carbon Communities, Disaster-Defying Resilience and Deafening Dawn Chorus.
 - Related policies, strategies and bylaws (including Management plans) are:
 - 2021-31 Infrastructure Strategy
 - 2018 Waste Minimisation and Management Plan
 - 2021-31 Queenstown Lakes Homes Strategy
 - Draft Destination Management Plan
 - Draft Tree Policy
 - The QLDC Disability Policy was considered in the development of the CAP

32 The recommended option is consistent with the principles set out in the named policy/policies.

33 This matter is included in the Ten Year Plan/Annual Plan throughout the plan but particularly in the 'Taking Climate Action' section.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2002 PURPOSE PROVISIONS | TE WHAKATURETURE 2002 O TE KĀWANATAKA Ā-KĀIKA

34 Section 10 of the Local Government Act 2002 states the purpose of local government is (a) to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities; and (b) to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities in the present and for the future. Mitigating the climate and ecological crisis directly benefits the environment and is expected to also deliver social, economic and cultural benefits. As such, the recommendation in this report is appropriate and within the ambit of Section 10 of the Act.

35 The recommended option:

- Can be implemented through current funding under the Ten Year Plan and Annual Plan (subject to the outcome of the additional funding option intended to be presented during consultation);
- Is consistent with the Council's plans and policies; and
- Would not alter significantly the intended level of service provision for any significant activity undertaken by or on behalf of the Council, or transfer the ownership or control of a strategic asset to or from the Council.

ATTACHMENTS | NGĀ TĀPIRIHANGA

A	2022-2025 Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan
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