

3 September 2025

Sent via email to [REDACTED]

LG25-0255 - Recycling and Waste Separation Processes

Dear [REDACTED],

REQUEST FOR OFFICIAL INFORMATION – RELEASE OF INFORMATION

Thank you for your request for information held by the Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC). On 31 August 2025 you requested the following information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA):

- 1. Can you confirm that separated household recyclables (e.g., glass, cardboard, plastic) are kept separate once collected?**
- 2. What is the downstream processing system? Where are these recycled products directed to (vendor, destination)?**
- 3. What control systems does the Council operate to ensure that business waste (e.g., shops and builders) separate their waste before going to landfill?**

QLDC RESPONSE

Release of information

In response to your request, we consulted with the QLDC Infrastructure Operations Team.

- 1. Can you confirm that separated household recyclables (e.g., glass, cardboard, plastic) are kept separate once collected?**

Recycling collected in the yellow-lidded mixed recycling bins is taken to the Districts Recycling Centre where contents from these bins go through a specialised piece of machinery called a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF). Materials are sorted into the different commodities such as tins, cans, plastics, paper, card, which are then baled and sold to various recycling markets. You can view this process by watching the “Doing yellow bin day the right way” video on the QLDC website: [QLDC - How We Recycle](#)

Glass collected in the blue lidded recycling bins is stored in bunkers at Council’s facilities prior to being transported to the glass hub in Christchurch. From there it is sent to New Zealand’s only glass recycling plant, Visy in Auckland, where it is recycled back into glass bottles and jars. You can find more information on this process on the Visy website: [Glass | Visy](#)

2. What is the downstream processing system? Where are these recycled products directed to (vendor, destination)?

Recycling products are commodities that are sold to various local and international markets. Many of our products are consolidated with other loads from other Districts, and our contractor has long standing relationships with a number of reputable buyers. Glass is sent to Visy in Auckland. Typically, plastics are sent to either Comspec in Christchurch or Pact Recycling in Wellington, while paper and card are sent to overseas markets.

3. What control systems does the Council operate to ensure that business waste (e.g., shops and builders) separate their waste before going to landfill?

Council only has direct influence over a relatively small portion of the waste stream, approximately 22 percent that is collected via kerbside collections. While there is some influence over what happens with certain materials at the Refuse Transfer Stations, typically by the time waste has reached these sites it is too late for any significant diversion. Council currently provides information and education to businesses in conjunction with our waste education partners. Here are a couple of case study examples: [Millbrook-Waste-Minimisation-case-study-final-AW.pdf](#), [Kinross-Waste-minimisation-case-study-Final-AW.pdf](#). Council also works with the construction sector to promote waste reduction. Groups such as the Better Building Working Group, Wastebusters, the New Zealand Green Building Council (NZGBC), and the Building Research Association of New Zealand (BRANZ) play key roles in driving change and influencing behaviour change.

Council's new Waste Management and Minimisation Plan 2025 (WMMP) goes to Council this week for adoption. This WMMP sets the pathway for our District to transition to a zero-waste community built on circular economy principles. In order to succeed it relies on everyone in the community working together to achieve this. Once adopted, the WMMP will replace the existing WMMP 2018 on our website. In the interim you can view a copy of the WMMP 2025 here [4 September 2025 Full Council Meeting | Queenstown Lakes District Council](#) (Item 6, Attachment D). One of the actions listed in this WMMP is that Council will adopt a Waste Management and Minimisation Bylaw that will set the rules for waste and recycling within the district.

We trust that the above information satisfactorily answers your request.

Kind regards,



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