

Smart Growth Committee

3 March 2026

Report for Agenda Item | Rīpoata moto e Rāraki take [2]

Department: Strategy & Policy

Title | Taitara: Wānaka and Te Kirikiri Frankton Structure Plan Project

Purpose of the Report | Te Take mō te Pūroko

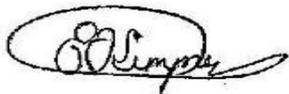
The purpose of this report is to update the Smart Growth Committee (the Committee) on the background and work programme for the Wānaka and Te Kirikiri/ Frankton Structure Plans.

Recommendation | Kā Tūtohuka

That the Smart Growth Committee:

1. **Note** the contents of this report.

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Context | Horopaki

The Queenstown Lakes Spatial Plan was adopted in 2021

1. The Queenstown Lakes Spatial Plan (QLSP) was prepared as part of an Urban Growth Partnership between Central Government, Kāi Tahu, Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) and Otago Regional Council (ORC) called the Grow Well Whaiora Partnership (GWW).
2. The partnership provides a forum to align decision-making and collaboration on the long-term direction for the Queenstown Lakes District. It acknowledges that the Queenstown Lakes District is facing growth-related challenges across housing, transport and the environment that may have flow-on effects nationally, particularly given the importance of the Queenstown Lakes area to Aotearoa New Zealand's tourism sector.
3. Adopted in July 2021, Queenstown Lakes first Spatial Plan (the Spatial Plan) sets out the partnership's long-term approach to address these challenges providing a vision and framework for how and where the communities of the wider Whakatipu and Upper Clutha can grow well and develop to ensure our social, cultural, environmental, and economic prosperity. In order to grow well, five outcomes have been identified and these include:
 - Consolidated growth and more housing choice
 - Public transport, walking and cycling is the preferred option for daily travel,
 - A sustainable tourism system
 - Well-designed neighbourhoods that provide for everyday needs
 - A diverse economy where everyone can thrive

The current Spatial Plan establishes six Priority Development Areas (PDAs)

4. To deliver on the outcomes, the Spatial Plan identifies Priority Development Areas (PDAs). These are strategically important locations to provide for future growth in a way that will contribute towards achieving the outcomes of the Spatial Plan. The delivery of the PDAs requires working in partnership with the Grow Well Whaiora Partners, developers and the community to unlock their potential. The PDAs (indicated in Figure 1 below) are:
 - Tāhuna to Te Kirikiri / Queenstown Town Centre to Frankton Corridor
 - Five Mile Urban Corridor
 - Te Pūtahi / Ladies Mile
 - Te Tapuae / Southern Corridor
 - Southern Wānaka
 - Wānaka Town Centre – Three Parks Corridor

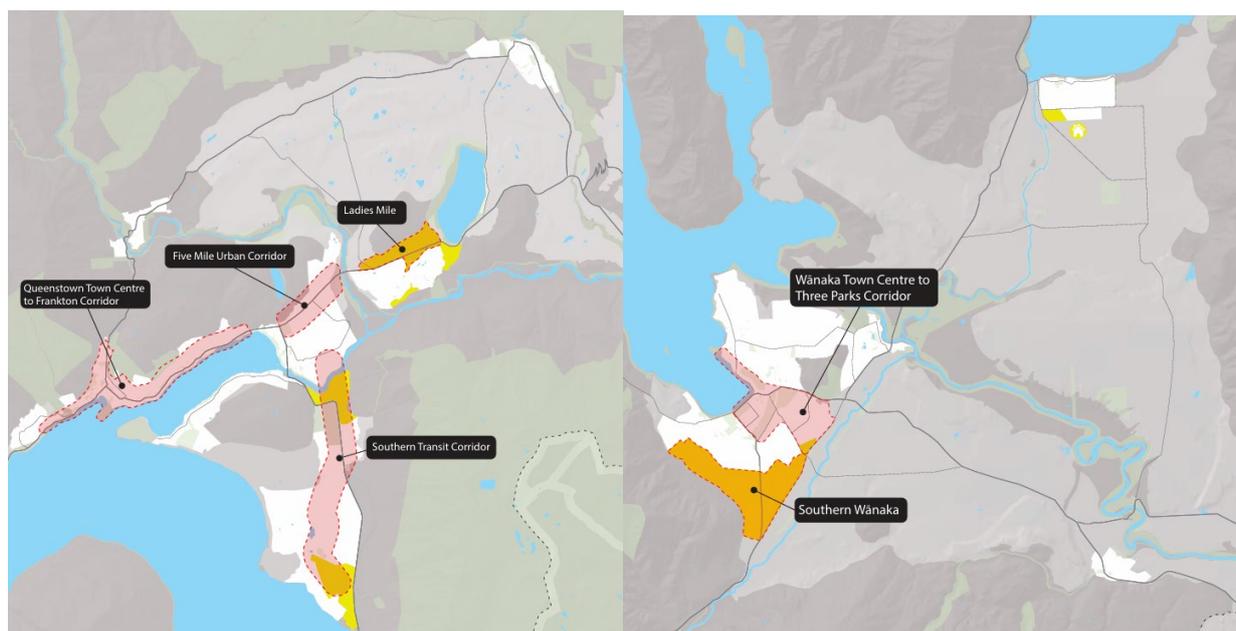


Figure 1: Priority Development Areas of the Spatial Plan

Priority Initiative 3 of the Spatial Plan requires structure plans for all PDAs

5. Priority Initiative 3 of the Spatial Plan requires structure plans to be undertaken for all six of the PDAs. The key purpose of the structure plans is to demonstrate how the district can grow well. Structure plans provide a concise overview of the timings, dependencies, and types of infrastructure investment (renewal, enhancement, and growth) required to complete the PDA and outline funding requirements, timings, risk/barriers and any land development constraints from natural hazards. The plans will also include the social infrastructure needs of each of the areas and ensure the prioritisation of the delivery of affordable housing through a mixture of lot sizes and housing choice. Structure plans focus on what is the best outcome for each of the PDAs, as opposed to what works best for individual developments.
6. The Structure Plans will provide a clear and coordinated framework for the area's future urban development. The plans adopt an evidence-based approach to address key community needs such as housing, recreation, transport, green spaces, and essential infrastructure. The goal is to ensure that growth is well-integrated, sustainable, and aligned with the Community's direction. The key objectives of structure planning processes are to guide future growth by:
 - responding to community needs and strategic outcomes;
 - enabling a range of housing choice and densities and housing choice that improve liveability, wellbeing, and community cohesion;
 - supporting public transport and active travel through integrated land-use planning and urban form;
 - improved access to employment opportunities, retail, community services, healthcare, education and greenspace;
 - assessment of potential land-use changes to improve integration between areas within the PDAs;

- providing a coordinated framework for infrastructure and transport investment and delivery, including the timing, sequencing, dependencies, and funding priorities for three waters, transport, and social infrastructure, and informing the Long Term Plan and 30 Year Infrastructure Strategy; and
 - guiding future District Plan processes, including zoning, provisions, and implementation pathways under the Resource Management Act (RMA) or its replacement, supported by a clear implementation and staging roadmap.
7. Once the structure planning is complete, separate plan changes or variations to the district plan, Long Term Plan and infrastructure strategy will be the tools used to implement the broader objectives outlined in the structure plan. Any plan change or variation requires an analysis as to the appropriateness of zoning and the structure planning process assists with this, especially over multiple ownerships.
8. Te Tapuae / Southern Corridor¹ and Te Pūtahi / Eastern Corridor² PDAs have both been structured planned. These plans have helped inform the District Plan, Long Term Plan and Infrastructure Strategy.

Structure Planning helps inform Councils long term strategic planning

9. As part of the Resource Management Act reforms, the new planning system places greater emphasis on long-term, integrated spatial planning. A key component of the reforms is the introduction of Regional Spatial Plans, which will provide a 30-year strategic framework for growth, land use, and infrastructure delivery.
10. Within this framework, Structure Plans play a critical role in giving effect to regional spatial direction at a local level. They translate strategic outcomes into place-based land-use patterns, infrastructure sequencing, and implementation pathways, and are intended to improve coordination between growth, infrastructure investment, and funding decisions across local, regional, and central government. Structure plans will also inform the next version of the Sub-Regional or Regional Spatial Plan.

Analysis and Advice | Tatāritaka me kā Tohutohu

11. The content of this report is for advice only, to provide Councillors with an update on the development of the Wānaka and Te Kirikiri Frankton Structure Plans.

Two structure plans are being worked on concurrently: Wānaka and Te Kirikiri Frankton Structure Plans.

¹ [QLDC - Te Tapuae Southern Corridor](#)

² [Te Pūtahi Ladies Mile Variation](#)

12. The next two areas to be structured planned are Wānaka and Te Kirikiri Frankton. These are both discussed in detail below:

The Wānaka Structure Plan combines two PDAs

13. There are two PDAs in Wānaka as shown in Figure 2 below: Southern Wānaka (Area A – blue) and Town Centre-Three Parks (Area B - Pink). Given their proximity, shared transport corridors, and infrastructure dependencies, it is recommended one structure plan be completed for both PDAs.

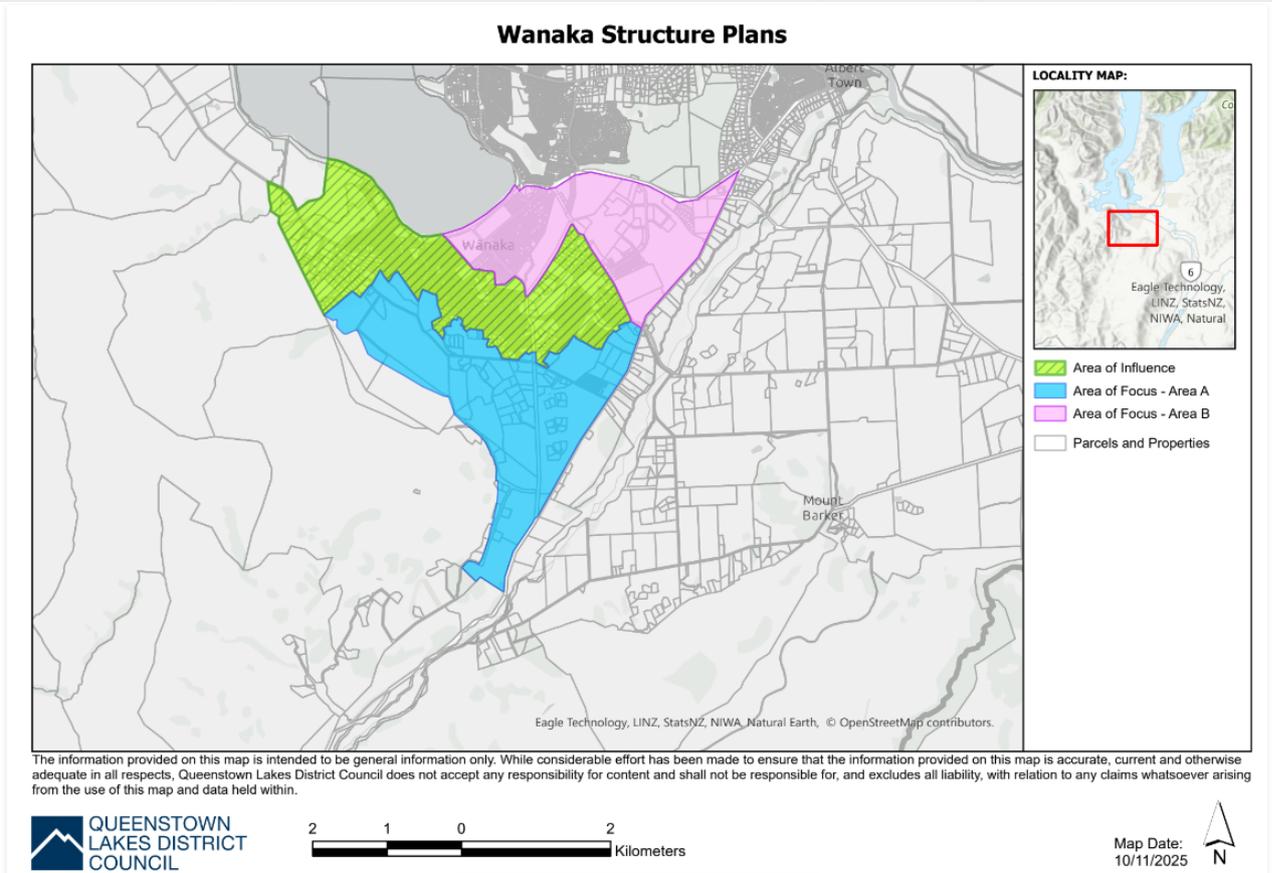


Figure 2 Spatial extent of Southern Wānaka (blue) to Three Parks Corridor (pink) and the Area of Influence (Green) being considered as part of the Wānaka Structure Plan

Southern Wānaka PDA is largely undeveloped

14. Southern Wānaka comprises largely undeveloped Lower Density Residential, Rural, and Rural Lifestyle zones. The Spatial Plan signals this area as a future urban location capable of supporting:

- A new local centre
- Higher-density housing and greater housing choice
- Improved access to jobs and community services
- Integrated public transport
- A potential industrial/commercial node to address long-term business and demands

15. The Spatial Plan anticipates capacity for approximately 5,000+ additional dwellings, subject to detailed structure planning.

Wānaka Town Centre to Three Parks Corridor Priority Development Area is an established urban area

16. This corridor comprises established and developing urban areas with a mix of high-density residential, medium-density housing, commercial and industrial activity, and community facilities. It forms the urban spine of the Upper Clutha, anchored by the Wānaka Town Centre and the Three Parks area, which includes commercial, community, residential, business, industrial, and large-format retail uses.
17. The corridor already functions as a major employment hub and will continue to support significant growth, with further intensification driven by the District Plan's Urban Intensification Variation (UIV). The 2025 Housing and Business Capacity Assessment indicates capacity for around 2,000 additional dwellings by 2050. The recent UIV decision, however, has increased development capacity beyond this level, and Council is currently updating its Housing and Business Capacity Model to understand the resulting plan-enabled capacities.
18. The area of Influence (shown in green in Figure 2) represents the broader geographic area likely to be directly impacted by the Structure Plan. This includes surrounding environment, whose characteristics, both constrain and provide opportunities that will inform the development of the structure plan. Land-use or zoning changes within this area may be considered to support an integrated approach to transportation, urban development, and housing objectives.

Preparation of the Wānaka Structure Plan is expected to take approximately two years

19. Attachment A outlines the general approach and indicative timeframes for delivery. The timeframe provides opportunities to explore alternative engagement approaches designed to increase community participation in decision-making.
20. The next steps are to investigate these opportunities further and report to the Committee and Wānaka-Upper Clutha Community Board in April, seeking Councillors' direction on engagement options.

Te Kirikiri Frankton Structure Plan has combined parts of the Five Mile Corridor and Southern Corridor PDA to form one cohesive structure plan

21. Te Kirikiri Frankton is the centre of the Whakatipu urban area and transport networks that offers a mix of low to high-density living options and is one of the main centres for commercial activities and services, industrial and community activities, including the Queenstown Events Centre Lakes District Hospital, Queenstown Airport and Frankton substation. Te Kirikiri Frankton already functions as a major employment hub and is expected to continue supporting significant growth over time.

22. It is of strategic importance to achieving the consolidated approach to growth within the Spatial Plan. This is due to its significant development potential and access from the frequent public transport network. The Spatial Plan noted that land uses in Te Kirikiri Frankton to be maximised, requiring careful management of the interface between airport operations and the communities.
23. The extent of the Te Kirikiri Frankton PDA is illustrated in purple in Figure 3 below. Given the shared transport corridors and infrastructure dependencies, and the existing zoned areas in Frankton, the area of focus for this structure plan includes all of Te Kirikiri Frankton.
24. The Area of Influence (extent shown in red on Figure 3), represents the broader geographic area likely to be directly impacted by the Structure Plan. This includes surrounding environment, whose characteristics, constraints, and opportunities inform the development of the structure plan. Land-use or zoning changes within this area may be considered to support an integrated approach to transportation, urban development, and housing objectives.



Figure 1 Spatial extents of Te Kirikiri Frankton Structure Plan (including the areas of focus and influence)

25. The Spatial Plan anticipates additional residential capacity for approximately 5,000 additional dwellings, subject to detailed structure planning. These additional dwellings support the Spatial Plan outcomes relating to walkability, integrated transport, housing choice, and consolidated urban growth.

The Te Kirikiri Frankton Structure Plan will build on existing work

26. Preparation of the Te Kirikiri Frankton Structure Plan is expected to take approximately fifteen months and will build on the existing engagement undertaken through the previous Frankton masterplan, various transport business cases and the District Plan processes. The previous engagement sessions have played a crucial role in informing the development of the Te Kirikiri Frankton Structure Plan. These sessions captured what was important to the community at that time, providing a valuable baseline for understanding local priorities and values. This structure plan will build on all this existing work.
27. The shorter timeframe also reflects the need to sequence the structure plan alongside the Regional Deal negotiations (noting that timeframes and its outputs are still under negotiation), the NZTA Strategic Network Plan and the Queenstown Cable Car Fast-Track Consent application. This consent proposes to establish and operate a rapid transit aerial cable car network servicing Queenstown and its surrounding areas, including the airport and Ladies Mile³. Te Kirikiri Frankton is a key component of this application, as it is one of the key destinations and connector points.
28. Attachment B outlines the general approach and indicative timeframes for delivery.

Consultation Process | Hātepe Matapaki

Significance and Engagement | Te Whakamahi I kā Whakaaro Hiraka

30. This matter is of medium significance, as determined by reference to the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy 2024 because whilst there are no decisions, the Structure Plans will have high community interest.
31. The persons who are affected by or interested in this matter are the residents/ratepayers of the Queenstown Lakes district community.
32. Council will undertake significant engagement and consultation throughout the lifecycle of the Structure Plans. The proposed level and approach to engagement will be set out in the Engagement Strategy, which will be reported back to Councillors for direction as part of the next report.

³ The project is currently progressing through the referral process, which is the initial stage where the project can apply to the Minister of Infrastructure for fast track approval. If the Minister approves the referral the project can proceed with a substantive application.

Māori Consultation | Iwi Rūnaka

33. Council has commenced early engagement with Kāi Tahu in recognition of its Te Tiriti o Waitangi partnership obligations. Kāi Tahu are preparing the Cultural Values Assessments and have inputted into any relevant procurements. As partners in the Spatial Plan, and given that Structure Plans are an implementation outcome of that Plan, Council will work in ongoing partnership with Kāi Tahu throughout the lifecycle of the projects.

Risk and Mitigations | Kā Raru Tūpono me kā Whakamaurutaka

34. This matter relates to the Strategic/Political/Reputation risk category. It is associated with RISK10056 Ineffective provision for the future planning and development needs of the district within the QLDC Risk Register. This risk has been assessed as having a moderate residual risk rating.

35. The approval of the recommended option will allow Council to retain the risk at its current level. This will be achieved by provision of feedback to support future mitigation of risks. The feedback will address the role and mechanisms for the Smart Growth Committee involvement in the Structure Plan development process, ensuring continuous engagement throughout all stages to inform future growth decisions.

Financial Implications | Kā Riteka ā-Pūtea

36. No financial implications, as this project has been budgeted for in the Long Term Plan.

Council Effects and Views | Kā Whakaaweawe me kā Tirohaka a te Kaunihera

37. The following Council policies, strategies and bylaws were considered:

- Alignment with and consideration of the principles of the Strategic Framework including the Vision Beyond 2050: Our Strategic Framework | Queenstown Lakes District Council
- Alignment with the QLDC 2021 Spatial Plan (which contains the Kai Tahu Values Framework and Outcomes)
- QLDC Climate and Biodiversity Plan 2025-2028
- QLDC Long- Term Plan 2024-2034
- QLDC Annual Plan 2025 – 2026
- Queenstown Lakes Joint Housing Action Plan 2023-2028
- Significance and Engagement Policy 2024
- QLDC Proposed & Operative District Plan
- Wānaka Catchment Management Plan 2024
- Alignment with the Draft QLDC Blue Green Network Plan 2025

38. This matter is included in the 2021-2031 Long Term Plan/Annual Plan.

Legal Considerations and Statutory Responsibilities | Ka Ture Whaiwhakaaro me kā Takohaka Waeture

39. The recommended option is consistent with Council’s statutory obligations under the RMA and the NPS-UD. The RMA requires Council to enable communities to provide for their wellbeing while managing environmental effects, and the NPS-UD specifically requires Council to provide sufficient, plan-enabled and infrastructure-ready development capacity for housing and business land. Progressing coordinated structure planning supports compliance with these requirements and reduces legal risk associated with unplanned or insufficient growth provision.

Local Government Act 2002 Purpose Provisions | Te Whakatureture 2002 o te Kāwanataka ā-Kiaka

40. 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. As such, the recommendation in this report is appropriate and within the ambit of Section 10 of the Act because it serves to provide for and manage growth;

41. The recommended option:

- Can be implemented through current funding under the Long Term Plan and Annual Plan;
- Is consistent with the Council's plans and policies;
- Would not significantly alter 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 | Kā Tāpirihaka

A	Wānaka - General approach and indicative timeframes for delivery
B	Te Kirikiri Frankton - General approach and indicative timeframes for delivery

Attachment A – Wānaka - General approach and indicative timeframes for delivery

Phase	Purpose	Key Activities	Indicative Timing
Context and Background	Understand planning constraints and opportunities.	Create Project Execution Plan - Review planning context, existing plans and technical reports (including natural hazards); confirm project scope.	Completed
Structure Plan Establishment Report	Define the strategic case for Council-led planning	Prepare Establishment Report outlining background, strategic importance, vision, scope, process, and alignment with national direction and current Spatial Plan.	In progress – to be completed by the end of March 2026
Early Technical Investigations	Identify constraints and inform developable area	The following technical reports have been commissioned: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hazards Assessment (currently on GETS) • Ecology Assessment (currently on GETS) • Cultural values Assessment (with Kai Tahu) 	In Progress - March 2026 – August 2026
Engagement and Communications	Support transparent and inclusive decision-making	Engagement strategy, communications plan, and change management planning.	April 2026 and ongoing
Community and Stakeholder Engagement	Inform and test options	Early and ongoing non-statutory engagement. Emerging Engagement Strategy to be tested with Councillors and Wānaka-Upper Clutha Community Board.	Apr 2026 onwards
Landowner and Agency Coordination	Enable coordinated delivery	Targeted landowner engagement, liaison with Grow Well Whaiora Partners ⁴ .	From March 2026 onwards
Detailed Technical Testing	Test land use and infrastructure options	Urban design, transport strategy, three waters, social infrastructure, landscape, Hazardous Activities and Industries List (HAIL), legal review, planning policy pathway.	From Jan 2027
Policy Planning Integration	Enable future plan implementation	Alignment with Proposed District Plan; development of emerging plan provisions; advice on statutory pathways.	Ongoing through the project. 2026–2028
Infrastructure Integration	Align land use and infrastructure investment	Integrated transport and infrastructure planning; alignment with LTP, business cases, and partner programmes.	Ongoing through the project. 2026–2028
Implementation Planning	Support delivery post-adoption	Preparation of an implementation and staging plan with cross-Council alignment.	To be adopted at the same time as the structure plan

⁴ Grow Well Whaiora Partnership is an Urban Growth Partnership between Queenstown Lakes District Council, Kāi Tahu, Otago Regional Council, and Central Government agencies (including NZ Transport Agency, Ministry Urban Development and Kianga Ora)

Attachment B - Te Kirikiri Frankton - General approach and indicative timeframes for delivery

