

Community & Environment Committee

20 October 2026

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

Department: Community Services

Title | Taitara: Queenstown Lakes Central Otago Spaces and Places Strategy Report

Purpose of the Report | Te Take mō te Pūroko

The purpose of this report is to seek adoption of the Queenstown Lakes Central Otago Spaces and Places Strategy.

Recommendation | Kā Tūtohuka

That the Community & Environment Committee:

1. **Note** the contents of this report; and
2. **Recommend to Council** to adopt the Queenstown Lakes Central Otago Spaces and Places Strategy (2026).

Prepared by:



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22 September 2026

Reviewed by:



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28 September 2026

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30 September 2026

Context | Horopaki

1. The purpose of the Queenstown Lakes Central Otago Spaces and Places Strategy 2026 (the strategy) is to develop a collaborative approach to planning and development of sport and recreation facilities across the two districts. It will enable local and regional government, the education sector, funders, national, regional sports organisations and clubs to develop a shared purpose and deliver better value for the community.
2. The strategy provides an update to, and replaces, the Queenstown Lakes-Central Otago Sub-Regional Sport and Recreation Facility Strategy (revised July 2020).
3. The strategy is written to align with the [Coastal Spaces and Places Strategy \(2023\)](#) with the intention that both documents will be amalgamated, in the future, into an overall, inclusive regional strategy for Otago. The Coastal Otago sub-region is comprised of the Waitaki, Dunedin and Clutha territorial authority areas.
4. The strategy is intended to work alongside existing policies and strategies of each council i.e. Vision Beyond 2050: Our Strategic Framework | Queenstown Lakes District Council.
5. Spaces and Places which were in scope included active recreation, aquatic, indoor and outdoor recreation. Activities that fell outside of scope included pétanque, shooting, skateboarding, tri-sport and multi-sport, wrestling and tramping and passive recreation, i.e. gardening.
6. Central Otago District Council are scheduled to meet and discuss the adoption of the strategy on Wednesday 28 October 2026.

Analysis and Advice | Tatāritaka me kā Tohutohu

Engagement undertaken on the draft strategy

7. Direct engagement was undertaken on the strategy with a wide range of council staff.
8. Online discussions were conducted with the Otago Regional Spaces and Places Steering Group. This group is made up of Dunedin Council, Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) staff, Community Lakes Trust, Otago Community Trust, Sports Otago and Sport NZ.
9. An online community stakeholder survey was conducted from 21 January to 13 February 2026. 52 responses were received.
10. Four in person stakeholder workshops were held in Alexandra, Cromwell, Wānaka and Queenstown during March 2026 (attendance ranged from 6-19 people per workshop).

11. The Community & Environment Committee provided feedback at workshops on 21 July 2026 and 8 September 2026.
12. Feedback was sought from 177 stakeholders within the Queenstown Lakes District and 58 from Central Otago on the draft strategy. 26 online responses were received with 21 out of the 26 coming from the Queenstown Climbing Club.
13. The Queenstown Climbing Club are seeking investment in a new climbing facility stating that the existing Queenstown Events Centre climbing wall is ageing and at capacity. A recommendation has been made in the Strategy to work with the climbing community to explore options for how climbing is supported within the commercial and public indoor facility network across the sub-region.
14. The remainder of the feedback received included recognition of and retaining paragliding landing sites, support for the proposed QLDC aquatic network plan, long-term security for Aspiring Gymsports in the Paetara Aspiring Central centre and consideration for infrastructure in rural communities.

Key updates in the Queenstown Lakes Central Otago Spaces and Places Strategy 2026

15. Themes that have changed in the Strategy compared to the previous version include:
 - Community priorities are no longer centred solely on organised sport. There is greater emphasis on enabling movement and physical activity in all forms.
 - The community is seeking more low-barrier, flexible recreation opportunities rather than exclusively structured club sport.
 - The conversation has moved from simply providing facilities to ensuring facilities work well for a much wider range of users.
 - The community is more diverse, and facility planning now needs to respond to cultural as well as age-related change.
 - Community discussion has shifted toward ensuring recreation remains affordable and accessible for everyone.
 - The discussion has evolved from "what should we build?" to "how can we sustainably fund, operate and renew what we have?"
 - The community appears increasingly supportive of integrated, shared facilities rather than sport-specific assets.
 - Communities are asking not only for more facilities, but for better facilities.

- Sustainability has become part of mainstream decision-making rather than a secondary consideration.
- The community is placing higher value on everyday recreation infrastructure, not just competitive sport facilities.

16. This report identifies and assesses the following reasonably practicable options for assessing the matter as required by section 77 of the Local Government Act 2002.

17. Option 1 Recommend the adoption of the strategy with an overall review within 3 years to align with future Long-Term Plans

Advantages:

- Ensures there is an up-to-date decision-making framework to help guide future QLDC decisions around sport and recreation facilities.
- The strategy provides an indicative timeframe for investment into sport and recreation facilities.
- Provides strategic investment alignment between key funders, Councils, Sport NZ, Sport Otago and Regional/Club stakeholders

Disadvantages:

- Potential negative feedback from the recreation community on historical under investment in sport.
- Some of the direction in the strategy may not be supported by all recreation community stakeholders.

18. Option 2 Do not recommend the adoption of the strategy

Advantages:

- There will be no change, and investment will continue to be directed by the existing strategy.

Disadvantages:

- Council will not have a future framework for making investment decisions regarding sport and recreation facilities.
- Future funding streams from third parties might be reduced as an up to date strategic District wide view hasn't been agreed.

- QLDC continues to make investment decisions based on an outdated strategy.
- Council will not meet stakeholder and Central Otago District Council expectations of an updated strategy being adopted.

19. This report recommends **Option 1** for addressing the matter because it enables a clear strategic direction for future investment decisions into sport and recreation facilities across the District and wider Central Otago region.

Consultation Process | Hātepe Matapaki

Significance and Engagement | Te Whakamahi I kā Whakaaro Hiraka

20. This matter is of medium significance, as determined by reference to the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy 2024 because the decision may include material changes to how services are delivered or access to community facilities that significantly affect community wellbeing.
21. The persons who are affected by or interested in this matter are the residents and ratepayers of the district, users of the QLDC sport and recreation facilities and sports fields, Sport Otago and third-party funding agencies.
22. The Council has consulted with community stakeholders in reference to updating the new Queenstown Lakes Central Otago Spaces and Places Strategy 2026.

Māori Consultation | Iwi Rūnaka

23. The Council provided Mana Tāhuna with an opportunity to input into the review of the draft Queenstown Lakes Central Otago Spaces and Places Strategy. No response was received.

Risk and Mitigations | Kā Raru Tūpono me kā Whakamaurutaka

24. This matter relates to the Community & Wellbeing risk category. It is associated with RISK10022 Ineffective operations and maintenance of community services or facilities within the QLDC Risk Register. This risk has been assessed as having a high residual risk rating.
25. The approval of the recommended option will allow Council to implement additional controls for this risk. This will be achieved by providing a strategy and framework to guide Council's decision making and investment into sport and recreation facilities thus decreasing the risk of ineffective management of community assets.

Financial Implications | Kā Riteka ā-Pūtea

26. There are no direct financial implications to adopting the strategy. The strategy will inform future capital and operational expenditure in both annual and long term plans.

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

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

- Vision Beyond 2050: Our Strategic Framework | Queenstown Lakes District Council
- Queenstown Lakes-Central Otago Sub-Regional Sport & Recreation Facility Strategy June 2020
- Our Community Spaces December 2024
- Parks and Open Spaces Strategy November 2021
- Coastal Otago Spaces and Places Strategy 2023

28. The recommended option is consistent with the principles set out in the named policies.

29. This matter is included in the Long Term Plan/Annual Plan. Future sporting facilities are identified in the Long Term Plan.

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

30. 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; (b) to meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality, cost-effective, and local — (i) infrastructure; (ii) public services; (iii) performance of regulatory functions; and (c) to support local economic growth and development by fulfilling the purpose set out in paragraph (b).

31. The Strategy will help meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance or regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses by providing sport and recreation facilities that meet the communities current and future activity needs. As such, the recommendation in this report is appropriate and within the ambit of Section 10 of the Act.

32. 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; and
- 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	Queenstown Lakes Central Otago Spaces and Places Strategy September 2026 <i>(Circulated separately)</i>
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