

Community & Services Committee
19 April 2018

Report for Agenda Item 1

Department: Community Services

Queenstown Gardens Development Plan

Purpose

- 1 The purpose of this report is to obtain Council endorsement of the Queenstown Gardens Development Plan.

Recommendation

That the Community & Services Committee:

1. **Note** the contents of this report and in particular;
2. **Adopt** the attached Queenstown Gardens Development Plan

Prepared by:

Reviewed and Authorised by:



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Senior Parks and Reserves Planner
3 April 2018



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Parks Planning Manager
3 April 2018

Background

- 2 The Queenstown Gardens (the Gardens) were established in 1887 by members of the town's first Borough Council. A mix of uses have evolved over time and subsequent development of infrastructure has occurred in a somewhat ad-hoc manner. Due to the proximity to the busy commercial centre of Queenstown, the Gardens are a focal point for locals and visitors who value the opportunity to relax in peaceful surroundings and enjoy the lake and mountain views.
- 3 An increase in types of activities being undertaken in the Gardens, and drastic increase in visitor numbers and a history of ad-hoc planning and development has resulted in discontinuous pedestrian access, safety issues with pedestrians and vehicles and conflict with different users.

Comment

- 4 The Queenstown Gardens Reserves Management Plan (**Reserves Management Plan**) was adopted in 2011. It sets out objectives and policies for the management of the gardens but does not provide a long term vision for development.
- 5 Historically there has never been a single plan directing the different projects in the Gardens.
- 6 This development plan is a high level strategy that seeks to guide development of the Gardens for the next 10-20 years. The key aspirations and themes are to:
 - improve the connection between the town centre and the gardens
 - improve pedestrian and cycling safety and wayfinding
 - provide a succession plan for heritage plantings and enhance ecology
 - accommodate a variety of activities for a wide range of users
 - provide views from the Gardens to the lake and town centre.
- 7 Stakeholder consultation included key business and community groups that operate within the Gardens, iwi and internal council departments. The results were used to inform a report which presented a site analysis, opportunities and constraints. A more ambitious plan was originally produced that included relocation of the tennis courts but was scaled back as a result of this stakeholder consultation.
- 8 The draft development plan and the background document that contains the site analysis was released for public feedback in October 2017.

Community Feedback

- 9 Overall the feedback was very positive and supportive of what the plan was seeking to achieve. In general, the submissions acknowledged the Gardens were a great asset as they are but some improvements can be made. A detailed summary of the feedback received from the community is included as Attachment B. The main themes and ideas that emerged were:
 - a. Support for the improved pathways and connections
 - b. Support for community events in the Gardens but not for large commercial events
 - c. Retention of the rose gardens in their current form
 - d. Support for and retention of the Frisbee Disc Golf Course
 - e. Acknowledgement of the importance of the protection the existing shelterbelt provides
 - f. Protection of the nature, respite and peacefulness of the gardens
- 10 The table in Attachment B provides an assessment the key moves proposed in the draft development plan, the general submissions in relation to these and the officers recommended changes. All of the above has informed the final plan.

11 The full submissions and a report summarising online submissions are included as Attachment C.

Options

12 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:

13 The first step is to identify all "reasonably practicable" options. If an option is not reasonably practicable, then it will not require consultation. One option that should always be considered is the option of doing nothing – the status quo.

14 Option 1 Do not adopt the Development Plan (Do Nothing)

Advantages:

15 Some people may not be supportive of the Development Plan

16 Funding will not be required

Disadvantages:

17 The opportunity to improve the iconic Gardens will not be realised.

18 Forecast resident population and visitor numbers will increase the user conflict and safety issues in the Gardens currently experienced.

19 Public expectation created by the Development Plan will not be met.

20 Option 2 Approve the Development Plan

Advantages:

21 A long term vision for the Queenstown Gardens will be agreed upon and all future projects implemented in a cohesive way.

22 The Gardens will be improved for all users, reducing conflicts and safety issues.

23 Community expectations will be met.

Disadvantages:

24 Some of the proposed changes will not be supported by all of the community.

25 This report recommends Option 2 for addressing the matter.

Significance and Engagement

26 This matter is of [medium] significance, as determined by reference to the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy when taking into account the potentially high level of community interest.

Risk

27 This matter relates to the strategic risk SR1 - Current and future development needs of the community (including environmental protection), as documented in the Council's risk register. The risk is classed as low. This matter relates to this risk because the development plan is a 20 year strategy that aims to improve the amenity, accessibility and public enjoyment of the Queenstown Gardens.

Financial Implications

28 Three priority project areas have been identified in the Development Plan. \$550,000 has been provisionally included in the recently notified draft 2018-2028 Long Term Plan to upgrade the existing pathways and complete the loop connection, \$1,092,000 has been provisionally provided for a new vehicle entrance and internal circulation and \$7.1M has been provided for a cycleway and streetscape upgrade along Park Street. The remaining stages will all require separate submissions to future Annual Plans and subsequent Long Term Plans.

Council Policies, Strategies and Bylaws

29 The following Council policies, strategies and bylaws were considered:

- Queenstown Gardens Management Plan 2011
- Queenstown Town Centre Master Plan
- Parks and Open Space Strategy 2017

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

31 This matter is included in the draft 201-2028 10-Year Plan.

Local Government Act 2002 Purpose Provisions

32 The recommended option:

- Will help meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses by creating a long term vision for the betterment of the Queenstown Gardens.
- Stage 1 can be implemented through proposed funding under the 10-Year Plan and Annual Plan;
- 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.

Consultation: Community Views and Preferences

33 The persons who are affected by or interested in this matter are the residents/ratepayers of the Queenstown Lakes district community and iwi.

34 Public consultation was undertaken over a one month period. Staff met with businesses and organisations.

35 71 written responses were received. All submissions and a report collating and summarising online submissions is included as Attachment C.

Legal Considerations and Statutory Responsibilities

36 It is not a statutory requirement to produce The Queenstown Gardens Development Plan therefore there was no hearing of public submissions.

Attachments

- A Queenstown Gardens Development Plan
- B Summary of Submissions
- C Online Summary Report and Full Submissions