

Minutes of a Panel Hearing of Submissions on the Kawarau Riverside Reserve Management Plan held on Wednesday 22 April 2026 in the Council Chambers, 10 Gorge Road, Queenstown, beginning at 10.00am.

Present:

Councillor Gavin Bartlett (Chair), Councillor Stephen Brent, and Councillor Matt Wong

In attendance:

Dominic Harrison (Parks and Reserves Planner), Jeannie Galavazi (Principal Parks Planner), Alex Jamieson (Parks and Reserves Planner), Kat Banyard (Senior Parks Advisor), Briana Pringle (Parks & Open Spaces Planning Manager), Ruby Mills (Democracy Services Advisor)

Commencement of Hearing

The Democracy Services Advisor called the meeting to order inviting the elected members to elect a chair.

On the motion of Councillor Wong and Councillor Brent it was resolved that Councillor Bartlett be elected to chair the hearing.

Motion carried.

Councillor Bartlett assumed the chair.

Apologies

There were no apologies.

Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest.

Confirmation of Agenda

On the motion of Councillor Bartlett and Councillor Wong it was resolved that the agenda be confirmed without addition or alteration.

Motion carried.

Officer Report

Dom Harrison (Parks and Reserves Planner) introduced the officers from the Parks Planning team and acknowledged the submitters who took the time to provide submissions on the plan.

Hearing of Submissions

1. Penelope Young

Ms Young spoke to her written submission, expanding on the specific changes sought and outlining the aspects of the proposal that Penelope and Rachel Young generally support or oppose. Some of the key points Ms Young raised in her verbal submission were:

- Ms Young referred to a prior Planning Tribunal decision noting that the land was predominantly intended to as tree planting reserve. She advised that, despite this, no tree planting has occurred within the relevant area. Ms Young emphasised the importance of honouring the Tribunal decision, including the expectation that the area be planted in trees.
- Ms Young requested that any permitted uses of the reserve be low-impact in nature in order to preserve the existing landscape character and natural environment.
- Ms Young opposed the introduction of any new trails that would adjoin or impact the Young family property.
- A request was made for areas within the reserve (specifically the Ivan Young Zoological Reserve) that exclude dogs or cyclists, to enhance safety and enjoyment for pedestrians.
- General support was expressed for the provision of additional public seating and public toilets; however, Ms Young requested further detail regarding the scale, design, and location of these structures.
- Ms Young raised concern about the potential for freedom camping in the area should car parking be located near public toilets.
- Opposition was stated to the proposed location for a new pump station within the hatched pink area on the plan (as referenced in the submission), based on its proximity to the family residence.
- Ms Young requested that the “Unnamed Reserve” be renamed “Young’s Reserve”, in recognition of the family’s longstanding associations with the area and their ongoing conservation efforts.

Ms Young acknowledged the contributions of her father, Ivan Young, noting his long-term commitment to conservation and tree planting within the reserve.

2. Brian Fitzpatrick (Remarkables Park Limited)

Mr Fitzpatrick spoke to the Remarkables Park Limited written submission, expanding on the specific changes sought and outlining the aspects of the proposal that Remarkables Park Limited were in support or opposition to. Key points raised in his verbal submission included:

- Mr Fitzpatrick expressed support for the urgency of tree planting within the reserve, aligning with the matters raised in Ms Young's submission.
- He advised that the area hatched for a proposed pump station had historical context, advising that the pump had previously been requested to be relocated away from an access road from an earlier proposed location.
- Mr Fitzpatrick acknowledged the efforts and constructive approach taken by Council staff to date.
- He requested that the Water Conservation (Kawarau) order be explicitly included in the plan as a related document.
- Suggestions were provided for additional content to be included in the history section of the document.
- Mr Fitzpatrick supported the inclusion of a tree planting plan. He advised that Remarkables Park Ltd has offered to assist with funding and suggested that there may also be opportunities for businesses and community members to donate trees.
- Mr Fitzpatrick discussed in-ground stormwater infrastructure. He circulated a supporting attachment and explained the intention for the existing stormwater infrastructure.
- With respect to cycling provision, Mr Fitzpatrick suggested that an additional bike trail be developed, utilising the existing road corridor and Ivan Young Zoological Reserve. He recommended retaining the current trail while providing an alternative option, noting Queenstown Gardens as an example of mixed-use trail provision.

Councillors sought clarification on the proposed location of the wastewater pump station, including whether it could be located further downhill. It was explained that the proposed location was subject to contour constraints and flood-risk considerations.

Deliberations

Councillors discussed the officer-recommended changes to the plan arising from submissions:

- Consideration was given to whether freedom camping should be explicitly prohibited within the Reserves, noting that while this is prohibited by default under the Reserves Act, some Reserve Management Plans include explicit provisions for clarity. It was agreed that, if included, any policy should appropriately reference the relevant freedom camping legislation.
- Councillors discussed strengthening wording relating to public connection to the river and agreed on language that supports initiatives enabling public access, without implying direct provision.
- Proposed additions to the History section were noted as requiring further factual verification prior to inclusion.
- References to surrounding development were discussed, with agreement that specifically naming entities should be avoided in favour of more general wording.
- Pest management was considered, with agreement to expand the list of pest species and ensure consistency across related clauses. Minor structural amendments to improve clarity within several clauses were supported, including adjustments to wording that distinguish enabling provisions from protective ones.
- The interpretation of “low impact” uses was discussed, with concern noted that the term may be open to interpretation. Councillors identified an option to clarify this by linking such uses explicitly to the vision and policies of the Reserve Management Plan.

Submissions seeking changes not recommended by officers were noted and discussed:

- Councillors considered matters raised in submissions relating to dog-free areas, noting that these issues are primarily addressed through other regulatory frameworks, such as the Dog Control Bylaw. Discussion was held on managing user conflict, including slow zones and pedestrian priority, noting that these matters are generally addressed through future design and development processes rather than the Reserve Management Plan itself. It was acknowledged that the reserve is intended as a pedestrian-focused destination rather than a commuter route.
- Reserve-specific policies were discussed, including whether additional provisions could better recognise pedestrian use as part of the reserve experience. Councillors also discussed whether future provision for dog-free areas could be signalled in the plan, concluding this should be considered through future bylaw processes rather than included in the RMP, while acknowledging the submitter’s request.

- The matter of naming the reserve was noted. The Reserve Management Plan supports the renaming of the reserve but the specific naming process is separate and is outside the scope of the Reserve Management Plan.
- Amendments proposed by Aukaha were discussed, with acknowledgement of officer recommendations to accept those changes.

On the motion of Councillor Bartlett and Councillor Brent it was resolved that the Hearing Panel:

1. **Note** the contents of this report;
2. **Receive** all submissions on the draft Kawarau Riverside Reserve Management Plan, hear any submitters who wish to be heard; and
3. **Recommend** to the Community & Environment Committee a final form of the Kawarau Riverside Reserve Management Plan with changes as an outcome of the consultation process.

Motion carried.

The hearing concluded at 12.32pm.