

12 December 2025

Sent via email to [REDACTED]

**Request for Official Information  
LG25-0342 - Ridgeburn and Gibbston Valley Fast Track Applications**

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your request for information held by the Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC). On 19 September 2025 you requested the following information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA):

I am writing on behalf of the [REDACTED] to formally request information regarding the proposed Ridgeburn (FTAA-2506-1078) and Gibbston Village (FTA345) developments, both of which are part of the fast-track approvals process.

The association is preparing expert submissions for the Fast Track panel. Given the speed of this process, we urgently request that the following information be provided as soon as possible, pursuant to the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA).

We request all relevant reports, assessments, and internal communications held by the Council concerning these two developments:

**1. Traffic and Transportation Information**

- All traffic and transport assessments, including detailed analysis of projected car movements.
- Reports and data relating to expected traffic congestion on the surrounding roading network, specifically State Highway 6 and main routes in and out of Arrowtown, and any information on anticipated flow-on effects beyond SH6.
- Information regarding the current and future capacity of the local and state roading network to accommodate the anticipated combined traffic increase from both developments.
- Any analysis on peak traffic travel times from Arrowtown to Frankton Roundabout if Ridgeburn town approved.
- Any analysis on peak traffic travel times from Arrowtown to Frankton Roundabout if Ridgeburn town and Gibbston Valley approved.
- Timeframes and Costs: Internal estimates for Council planning and construction timeframes, and the anticipated costs for necessary roading infrastructure upgrades required to service these new developments.

## **2. Urban Development Planning Information**

- Official forecasts for Queenstown's population and urban growth over 20 and 30-year timeframes. How many new dwellings will be required in 20 and 30 years.
- Details of how this planned growth has been incorporated into the current District Plan, including the amount of land zoned for future growth and the associated planned infrastructure.
- The Council's estimate for potential new dwelling numbers within the already zoned urban development area (urban growth boundary set in the District Plan).
- Council Views on Satellite Towns: Any reports, internal memos, or formal comments provided to elected members or planning staff concerning the Council's view on the development of satellite towns (such as Ridgeburn and Gibbston Village) as a future growth strategy.
- Analysis of the development's impact on the district's distinctive landscapes, given its role as a key strategic objective (PDP) and its importance to the Queenstown tourist/visitor industry. Specifically, any analysis on whether the infrastructure deficit or chaotic, unplanned growth adversely affect the tourist industry?
- Any information or analysis of the applicant's 'Spatial Plan Layout,' particularly concerning its identification of 'Existing Urban Areas' which includes unconstructed areas, potentially misleading the Fast Track Panel regarding the availability of planned growth areas.

## **3. Three Waters (Water, Wastewater, Stormwater) Infrastructure Information**

- Specific details of Council infrastructure planning and capacity to connect to the Ridgeburn development's Three Waters requirements.
- Specific details of Council infrastructure planning and capacity to connect to the Gibbston Village development's Three Waters requirements.
- Timeframe to update the Council's 30-year Infrastructure Strategy to incorporate the Ridgeburn town and Gibbston Village.
- Timeframes and Costs: Internal estimates regarding the expected planning and construction timeframes, and costs, to upgrade and provide new Council infrastructure that would be required for connection to the existing network.
- Consideration of infrastructure natural disaster resilience for the district.

## **4. Economic Development**

- Information or analysis considering the long-term national and regional economic benefits of the development.
- Analysis of whether the infrastructure deficit (including transportation, three waters, and congestion) and impact on landscape character will have a negative impact on future economic growth for the region.

If you find this request to be too broad, I would appreciate your assistance in reformulating it to ensure we receive the core information we are seeking.

## **QLDC RESPONSE**

In response to your request, we consulted with the QLDC Planning and Development Department.

## Decision to withhold information

We have good reason under 7(2)(c)(ii) of the LGOIMA for withholding part of the information requested. We consider it is necessary to withhold this information on the basis of the following grounds:

- Section 7(2)(c) - the withholding of the information is necessary to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence or which any person has been or could be compelled to provide under the authority of any enactment, where the making available of the information—
  - (ii) would be likely otherwise to damage the public interest.

Section 7(2)(c)(ii) of the LGOIMA allows the Council to withhold information if releasing it would likely harm the public interest. In this case, providing the information could undermine the Council's ability to continue receiving similar information in confidence from other organisations in the future.

For matters relating to the Fast-Track Approvals Act 2024 (FTAA), the process is jointly administered by the Ministry for the Environment (MfE) and the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), not QLDC. Information on projects approved for referral is published on the [Fast-Track website](#), and material relating to the referral stage is now likely publicly available there.

However, proposals being applied for under the fast-track process—such as the applications you have enquired about—are not available for public viewing or comment. EPA has advised councils not to disclose any details of these proposals externally, as releasing such information could compromise the integrity of the fast-track process and discourage agencies from providing information under statutory obligations.

While QLDC is committed to openness and public participation, in this case the public interest is better served by maintaining the confidentiality of information supplied in confidence. Accordingly, any substantive application information held by Council that is not already published on the Fast-Track website is withheld under section 7(2)(c)(ii) of the LGOIMA. For further details, MfE or the EPA (via [contact@fasttrack.govt.nz](mailto:contact@fasttrack.govt.nz)) remain the appropriate points of contact.

## Decision to refuse information

We have good reason under sections 17(d) and 17(e) of the LGOIMA for refusing part of the information requested. We consider it is necessary to refuse the requested information on the basis of the following grounds:

- Section 17(d) – that the information requested is or will soon be publicly available.
- Section 17(e) – that the document alleged to contain the information requested does not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate it, cannot be found.

Section 17(d) provides that a local authority may refuse a request where the information sought is, or will soon be, publicly available. This ensures that official information is accessed through the appropriate public channels, avoids unnecessary duplication, and supports consistent and transparent disclosure.

In this case, Council has confirmed that the material you are seeking is already publicly accessible or will be published shortly through established public sources such as the [QLDC website](#) and central government platforms like Stats NZ. As this information is (or will be) available via those channels, Council is not required to provide it directly in response to your request, and this part of your Urban Development and Planning Information request is therefore refused under section 17(d) of the LGOIMA.

Section 17(e) of the LGOIMA provides that a local authority is not required to release information that does not exist or cannot be located despite reasonable efforts. This provision ensures that a refusal reflects the genuine absence of information, rather than any failure to locate or maintain it.

In this case, Council has made reasonable enquiries to locate the material you have requested, but the specific reports do not exist because the work required to produce them has not been undertaken. It is understood the applicant has been requested to provide this information as part of their application and this has not been made available to QLDC. As Council holds no such information, this part of your Traffic and Transportation Information, Urban Development and Planning Information, Three Waters (Water, Wastewater, Stormwater) Infrastructure Information, and Economic Development Information requests is refused under section 17(e) of the LGOIMA.

### **Public interest considerations**

In assessing whether to withhold information, QLDC carefully evaluates the public interest—particularly whether disclosure would enhance transparency, accountability, or informed public engagement. This assessment includes weighing those benefits against the potential harm that could result from releasing the information.

QLDC acknowledges the public interest in ensuring transparency and accountability among local authority members and officials and supports the principles of good governance. We remain committed to releasing information wherever appropriate if QLDC holds that information. However, in this instance, the information in question that QLDC does hold was provided in confidence. Releasing it could undermine public trust and discourage future cooperation, especially where individuals or organisations are compelled to provide sensitive material under statutory authority.

Therefore, QLDC has determined that section 7(2)(c)(ii) of the LGOIMA applies. The release of the requested information would likely otherwise to damage the public interest, and no overriding public interest has been identified that would justify its disclosure.

### **Right to review the above decision**

Note that you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about this process is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please contact [Naell.Crosby-Roe@qldc.govt.nz](mailto:Naell.Crosby-Roe@qldc.govt.nz) (Director Democracy Services).

We trust that the above information satisfactorily answers your request.

Kind regards,



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