

16 January 2026

[REDACTED]  
C/- [REDACTED]  
Sent via email to [REDACTED]

## Request for Official Information

### LG26-0010 – Delegated Authority for Freedom Camping Enforcement on Conservation Land

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your request for information held by the Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC). On 12 January 2026 you requested the following information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA):

**In May 2023, you advised QLDC had formal delegated authority from the Department of Conservation (DOC) to issue infringement notices under the Freedom Camping Act 2011 on conservation land for breaches of DOC restrictions or prohibitions, and that QLDC intended to continue exercising this authority. Last week, we were informed the Council no longer exercises this delegated authority (although it remains in place). To help us update our members accurately (many of whom are QLDC residents and responsible campers) could you please provide:**

1. The date QLDC ceased exercising DOC's delegated authority.
2. Information supporting the decision, including any correspondence between DOC and QLDC officials.
3. A dated copy of the last infringement notice issued by QLDC on public conservation land (with personal details redacted if necessary).
4. The date QLDC last undertook monitoring or enforcement action on freedom camping on conservation land.
5. Any correspondence or related information between QLDC and DOC regarding the delegated authority, dated from 1 May 2023 onward.

## QLDC RESPONSE

In response to your request, we consulted with the QLDC Regulatory Team.

### Partial release of information

1. The date QLDC ceased exercising DOC's delegated authority.

QLDC stopped exercising the Department of Conservation's (DOC) delegated authority to enforce the Freedom Camping Act on conservation land on 3 December 2024.

**3. A dated copy of the last infringement notice issued by QLDC on public conservation land (with personal details redacted if necessary).**

Please find [attached](#) the last infringement notice issued by QLDC on public conservation land (Kawarau Bridge site), dated 2 May 2023. Minor redactions have been applied. The grounds for withholding certain information are outlined below.

Please note that the enclosed links will expire on 15 February 2026, 2:51 PM (UTC+12:00) Auckland, Wellington.

**4. The date QLDC last undertook monitoring or enforcement action on freedom camping on conservation land.**

QLDC continued to undertake monitoring and enforcement activities on conservation land until 3 December 2024, at which point it ceased exercising DOC's delegated authority. No monitoring or enforcement has occurred since that date.

**Consultation with requester**

**2. Information supporting the decision, including any correspondence between DOC and QLDC officials.**

**5. Any correspondence or related information between QLDC and DOC regarding the delegated authority, dated from 1 May 2023 onward.**

QLDC carried out a search of its email archives for relevant correspondence dated between 1 May 2023 and 12 January 2025. Two separate searches were undertaken:

1. Emails containing both terms 'freedom camp' and 'authority', sent to or received from email addresses with the domain 'doc.govt.nz'. The search initially identified 345 emails which, after removal of duplicates, will require review of the content to determine whether they fall within the scope of your request.
2. Emails containing the term 'delegated authority', sent to or received from email addresses with the domain 'doc.govt.nz'. The search initially identified 148 emails which, after removal of duplicates, will require review of the content to determine whether they fall within the scope of your request.

Your request as currently framed will be very difficult to meet without substantial collation or research. It involves a considerable amount of information, and responding in its present form would place a considerable strain on our operations. We have considered whether charging a fee or extending the response timeframe, as required under section 17(f) of the LGOIMA, would assist in meeting your request.

However, we have determined that neither charging nor extending the timeframe would help in this situation. Extending the timeframe would not alleviate the operational challenges we face, and charging would not address the underlying issue of resource constraints in processing such a large volume of information. Therefore, neither charging nor an extension would effectively resolve the issue.

Unless your request is amended, we will have to refuse it under section 17(f) of the LGOIMA, which applies where the information cannot be made available without substantial collation or research. Please inform us before **23 January 2026** by return email whether you are prepared to amend or clarify your request and, if so, how. You may consider:

- Date range: Further limiting the information to materials created or received between [insert specific start date] and [insert end date].
- Staff: Limiting correspondence to those involving [insert relevant staff names or roles, e.g., Customer Services Manager, Parking Coordinator, Parks Manager, etc.
- Focus areas: Further identifying areas of particular interest, key points, documentation or analysis essential to the needs of the information requested e.g., parking restrictions, signage, customer complaints, etc.

If the above considerations are acceptable to you, it may enable us to deliver a meaningful and accurate response within a reasonable timeframe.

Please note, if you do amend or clarify your request, this will be considered to be a new request for the purpose of calculating the maximum statutory timeframe for response—see section 13(7) of the LGOIMA.

### **Decision to withhold information**

#### **3. A dated copy of the last infringement notice issued by QLDC on public conservation land (with personal details redacted if necessary).**

We have good reason under section 7(2)(a) of the LGOIMA for withholding part of the information requested. We consider it is necessary to withhold personal information of the offending party on the basis of the following ground:

- Section 7(2)(a) - the withholding of the information is necessary to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons.

Section 7(2)(a) of the LGOIMA is intended to protect the privacy of individuals by allowing information to be withheld where its release would involve the unreasonable disclosure of personal information or could cause harm or distress. This provision seeks to balance the public's right to access official information with the need to respect individual privacy and prevent the misuse of personal information.

In this case, while the infringement requested has been supplied, personal information of the offending party are being withheld as it relates to identifiable natural persons. The Privacy Act 2020 upholds individuals' rights to be informed about the collection, use, and disclosure of their personal information. Releasing the requested information could constitute an unreasonable intrusion into the personal affairs of the individuals concerned.

In this case, the need to protect the privacy of natural person outweighs any public interest in the release of the information. Accordingly, the decision to withhold the information is justified and consistent with the provisions of both LGOIMA and the Privacy Act.

## **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. However, in this case, the interest in protecting personal privacy and preventing potential harm or distress to the individuals concerned outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

Therefore, QLDC has determined that section 7(2)(a) of the LGOIMA applies. This provision allows for the withholding of information to protect the privacy of natural persons. In this case, no overriding public interest has been identified that would justify its release.

## **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 [Rebecca.Pitts@qldc.govt.nz](mailto:Rebecca.Pitts@qldc.govt.nz) (Engagement and Communications Team Leader).

We trust that the above information satisfactorily answers your request.

Kind regards,

██████

Democracy Services Team  
Corporate Services | Queenstown Lakes District Council  
P: +64 3 441 0499  
E: [informationrequest@qldc.govt.nz](mailto:informationrequest@qldc.govt.nz)

## Infringement Offence Reminder Notice

Issued under Section 28(3), Freedom Camping Act 2011

Notice No: 3140532

Details of Defendant to whom Notice Issued	
	<p><b>DATE OF BIRTH:</b> [REDACTED]  <b>GENDER (IF KNOWN):</b></p>

You are alleged to have committed an infringement offence against the Freedom Camping Act 2011 as follows:

Details of Alleged Infringement Offence	
<p><b>Section of Freedom Camping Act contravened:</b>                      Queenstown Lakes District Council Freedom Camping Control Bylaw 2021</p> <p><b>Nature of Infringement:</b>                      Freedom camped in restricted area not in self-contained vehicle</p>	
<b>Location:</b>	<b>GIBBSTON HIGHWAY ARROW JUNCTION 9371</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>2-May-2023</b>
<b>Approximate time:</b>	<b>01:00:00</b>
<b>Registration Number:</b>	[REDACTED]
<b>The fee for this infringement is:</b>	<b>\$200.00</b>
<b>Issuing Officer:</b>	<b>OFFICER 355</b>
<b>Enforcement Authority:</b>	<b>Queenstown Lakes District Council</b>

Payment of Infringement Fee
<p>Payment is to be made to Queenstown Lakes District Council. You must pay this infringement fee within 28 days after the service of this notice.</p> <p><b>The last day for payment is: 06-July-2023</b></p> <p><b>This infringement is now overdue</b>                      Please ensure you pay within 28 days from this reminder date otherwise the matter will be sent to the courts for processing and you may incur an additional fee.</p> <p><b>Payment Options, Please quote your notice number above on any payment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online by credit card: <a href="https://www.qldc.govt.nz/do-it-online/make-a-payment">https://www.qldc.govt.nz/do-it-online/make-a-payment</a></li> <li>• Direct Credit: Account # 02-0948-0002000-00</li> <li>• In person at the Council offices at 10 Gorge Road, Queenstown or 47 Ardmore Street, Wanaka.</li> </ul>

Service Details	
<p><b>INFRINGEMENT NOTICE</b>                      Served by* A                      On 02-May-2023</p>	<p><b>REMINDER NOTICE</b>                      Served by* P                      On 8-Jun-2023</p>
<p>*Attached to vehicle                      Personal service                      Registered post or ordinary post</p>	
<p>**Full address at which the infringement notice was served. [REDACTED]</p>	

**IMPORTANT - PLEASE READ THE SUMMARY OF RIGHTS PRINTED OVERLEAF**

## Summary of Rights

**Note:** Please read this summary. If you do not understand it, you should consult a lawyer immediately.

1. You have not paid the infringement fee described on the front page, or asked for a hearing, within 28 days after you were served with the infringement notice. That is why you have been served with this reminder notice.
2. You will become liable to pay costs in addition to the infringement fee if
  - a) you do not pay the infringement fee within 28 days after you are served with this reminder notice; and
  - b) you do not deliver a letter requesting a hearing to the Enforcement Authority within 28 days after you are served with this reminder notice; and
  - c) the Enforcement Authority decides to bring court proceedings against you.
3. You have a defence against proceedings relating to the alleged offence if you prove the following:
  - a) that the act or omission giving rise to the alleged offence to which the infringement notice relates was due to an action or event beyond your control; and
  - b) you could not reasonably have foreseen or prevented the action or event; and
  - c) you adequately remedied or mitigated the effects of the act or omission after the alleged offence occurred.
4. This paragraph describes a defence additional to the one described in paragraph 3. You must prove the following to have the defence:
  - a) that the act or omission giving rise to the alleged offence to which the infringement notice relates was necessary to save or protect life or health, or to prevent injury, or to prevent serious damage to property, or to avoid actual or likely damage to the environment; and
  - b) your conduct was reasonable in the circumstances; and
  - c) you adequately remedied or mitigated the effects of the act or omission after the alleged offence occurred.
5. This paragraph describes a defence additional to the defences described in paragraphs 3 and 4. This defence is available only if you are charged with an infringement. This defence is available only if you are charged with an infringement offence against section 20(1)(b)(ii), (d), (h)(ii), or (k) of the Freedom Camping Act 2011. You must prove the following to have the defence:
  - a) that the act giving rise to the alleged offence to which the infringement notice relates was necessary in the circumstances; and
  - b) your conduct was reasonable in the circumstances; and
  - c) you adequately remedied or mitigated the effects of the act after the alleged offence occurred.
6. This paragraph describes 2 defences additional to the defences described in paragraphs 3 to 5. The defences are available if you are charged with an infringement offence in which a vehicle was used in the commission of the alleged offence and, at the time the alleged offence was committed, you were an owner of a vehicle, a registered person in relation to the vehicle, or lawfully entitled to its possession. You must do the following to have a defence:
  - a) you must prove that another person, by virtue of an order under the Summary Proceedings Act 1957, became liable to pay a fine or cost, or both, in respect of the alleged offence; or
  - b) you must
    - i. Prove that, at the time the alleged offence was committed, either you were not lawfully entitled to the possession of the vehicle or another person was unlawfully in charge of the vehicle; and
    - ii. advise the enforcement authority in writing of this immediately after becoming aware of the alleged offence; and
    - iii. do everything reasonably possible to comply with all requests of the Enforcement Authority to supply information to the Authority regarding the person who was lawfully entitled to possession, or who was in charge, of the vehicle at the time of the offence.
7. If you pay all of the infringement fees for all of the alleged offences described in the infringement notice in a lump sum, please provide a note of
  - a) The infringement notice number; and
  - b) The date of each infringement offence; and
  - c) The identifying number of each offence.
8. If you do not pay all of the infringement fees for all of the alleged offences described in the infringement notice in a lump sum, please provide a note of
  - a) The offences you are paying fees for; and
  - b) The offences you are not paying fees for; and
  - c) What you are doing about the offences you are not paying fees for; and
  - d) Your full address for replies.

Full details of your rights and obligations are set out in sections 22 to 28 of the Freedom Camping Act 2011 and section 21 of the Summary Proceedings Act 1957.