

Item 2: Wildfire Programme Update

SESSION TYPE: Briefing

PURPOSE/DESIRED OUTCOME:

The purpose of this briefing is to update Councillors on the current status of the Wildfire Programme and the proposed direction for the 2027-2037 Long Term Plan (LTP).

DATE/START TIME:

Thursday, 10 September 2026 at 2.00pm

TIME BREAKDOWN:

Presentation: 15 minutes
Questions: 30 minutes

PRESENTERS:

Briana Pringle (Parks & Open Spaces Planning Manager)
Dave Winterburn (Parks Manager)

Prepared by:



Name: Briana Pringle
Title: Parks & Open Spaces Planning Manager

31 August 2026

Reviewed and Authorised by:



Name: Ken Bailey
Title: General Manager, Community Services
1 September 2026

ATTACHMENTS:

A	Wildfire Programme Update September 2026 Presentation
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QLDC WILDFIRE PROGRAM - UPDATE

SEPTEMBER 2026 PRESENTATION

Background

- > Wildfire program approved through the 2024-2034 LTP
- > \$24 million over 10 years
- > First year of capital funding commencing in 2026/27.
- > Collaboration with FENZ supporting reserve closures, risk assessment, and wildfire decision-making.



Mount Iron Reserve

- > Long-term vegetation management to reduce wildfire risk
- > Targeted infill planting guided by ecological assessments
- > Transition high-flammability vegetation to lower-flammability species over time
- > Revegetation to commence in 2027/28 at approximately 0.5 hectares per year, with around 20 hectares identified as suitable for planting.



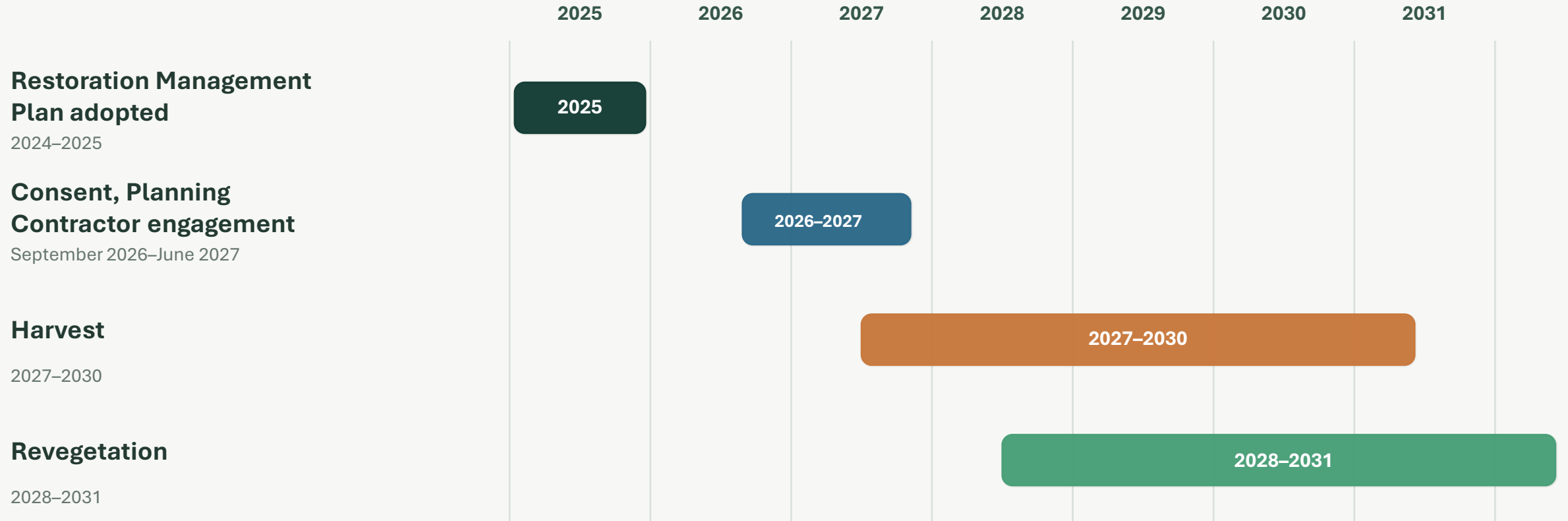
Te Tapunui Queenstown Hill

- > Council adopted Te Tapunui Queenstown Hill Restoration Management Plan in September 2025
- > The Wakatipu Wilding Conifer Control Group (WCG) has confirmed its commitment to partner with QLDC on wilding conifer removal.
- > Partnership opportunities with neighbouring developments are being explored to support restoration, resilience, and wildfire mitigation outcomes.
- > Collaborative revegetation and ecological restoration opportunities are being investigated following wilding removal.



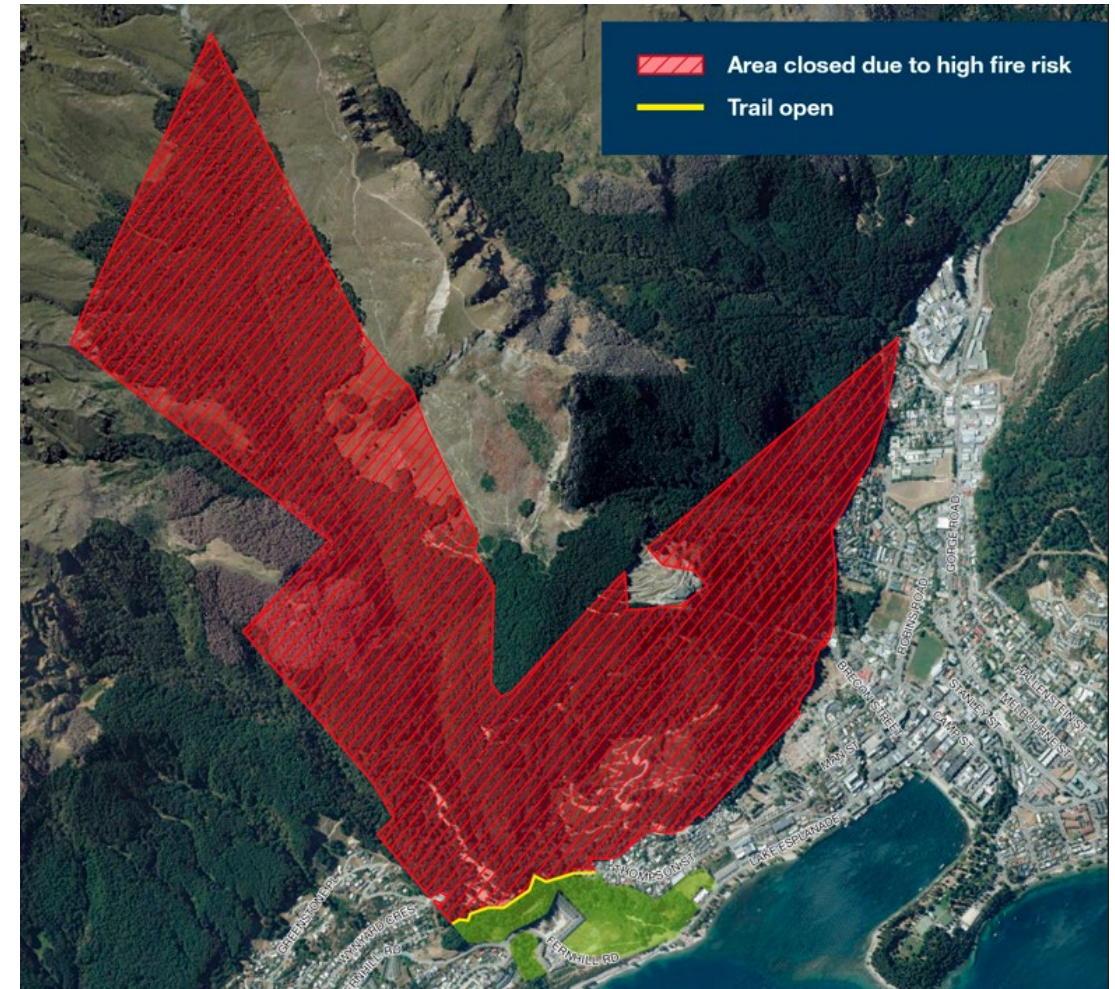
Te Tapunui Queenstown Hill

Programme timeline



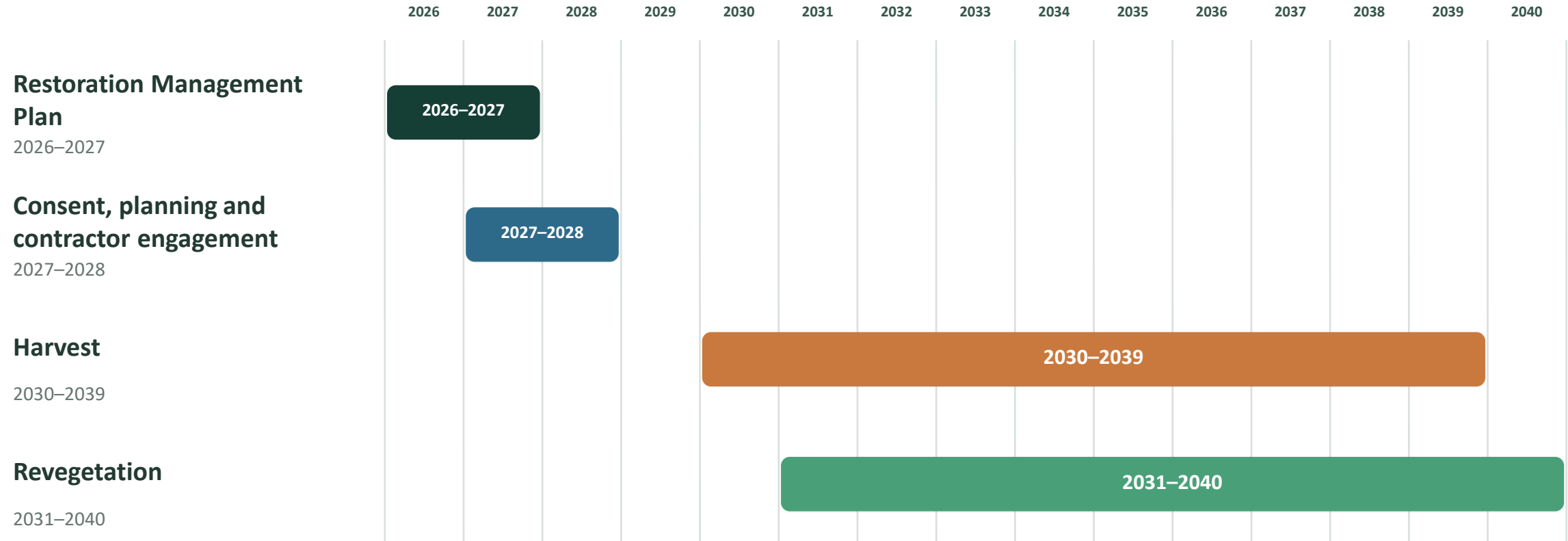
Te-Taumata-o-Hakitekura Ben Lomond Reserve

- > The proposed approach focuses on targeted interventions in the areas of highest risk, where the greatest reduction in wildfire hazard can be achieved while also delivering long-term environmental benefits.
- > Large-scale firebreak construction was assessed but is not considered a cost-effective solution due to site constraints, delivery challenges, and the availability of alternative mitigation measures that can achieve similar or better outcomes.
- > Harvest and Restoration Plan for Ben Lomond to guide future vegetation outcomes and wilding removal sequencing.
- > LTP approach prioritises consequence reduction through fuel management and revegetation.
- > Progressive restoration proposed from the upper slopes of the reserve, working downhill.



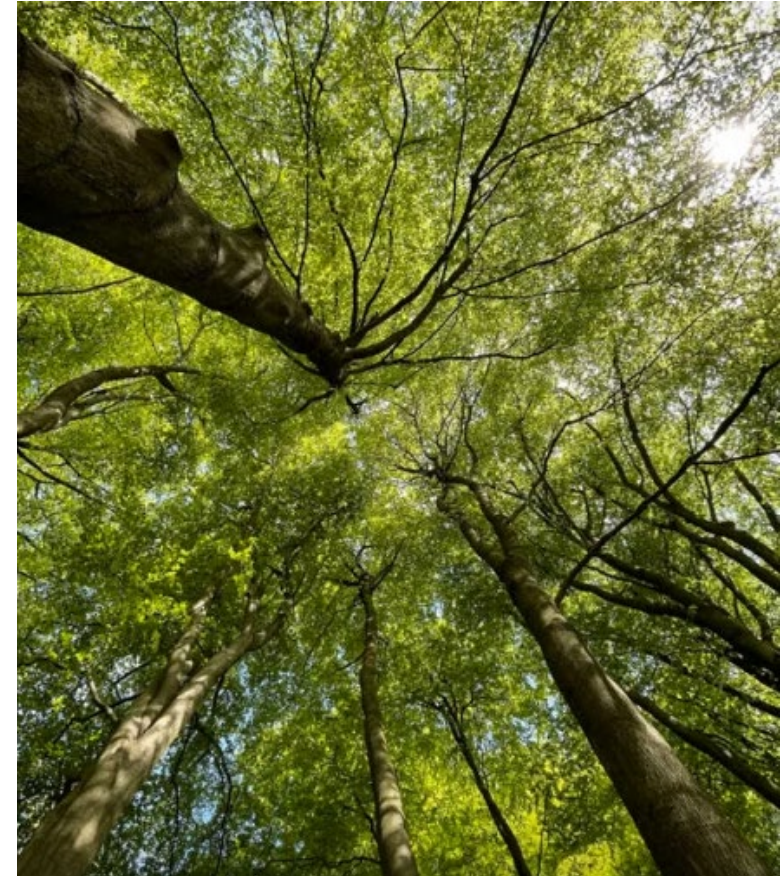
Te-Taumata-o-Hakitekura Ben Lomond Reserve

Programme timeline



2023-2027 Wildfire Business Case

- > Updated business case submitted for consideration in the 2027-2037 LTP –
- > LTP budget - \$19 million over 10 years.
- > Focus on targeted interventions where they deliver the greatest risk reduction.
- > Natural Infrastructure
 - Wildfire mitigation and fuel management.
 - Resilience and hazard reduction.
 - Ecological restoration and revegetation.
 - Biodiversity enhancement.
 - Pest-proofing and protection of conservation values.
- > Long-Term Outcomes
 - Reduced fuel continuity across the landscape.
 - More resilient and fire-adapted ecosystems.
 - Enhanced environmental, biodiversity, and community outcomes.



Working with Te Taiao to protect
people, places, and ecosystems

NATURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

2026/27 Wildfire Season

- > NIWA forecasts peak El Niño conditions during summer 2026/27, with an increased likelihood of strong westerly winds and elevated wildfire risk.
- > Wildfire Closure Plan in place for high-risk periods.
- > Improved signage, gates, and public education to support compliance and awareness.
- > Partnership with FENZ to support wildfire risk management and reserve closure decisions.



Questions?

