

Full Council

8 October 2026

Report for Agenda Item | Rīpoata moto e Rāraki take [4]

Department: Property & Infrastructure

Title | Taitara: Southern Infrastructure (Cable Car) Limited request to use Council Reserve Land for a Cable Car

Purpose of the Report | Te Take mō te Pūroko

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's decision on a request from Southern Infrastructure (Cable Car) Limited (SICCL) for written agreement, under the Schedule 6 of the Fast-Track Approvals Act 2024, to undertake the Queenstown Cable Car activity on Council reserve lands.

Executive Summary | Whakarāpopototaka Matua

Southern Infrastructure (Cable Car) Limited (SICCL) has requested Council's "written agreement in principle" to the use of Council reserve land before it can lodge its substantive application for the Queenstown Cable Car under the Fast-Track Approvals Act 2024 (FTAA).

Whilst SICCL describe their request as an in-principle request, in terms of the clause 3(1)(m) of Schedule 6 of the FTAA, they are in effect asking for a substantive Council decision for the reasons outlined in this report. For clarity, this report refers to the SICCL request simply as seeking **written agreement**. Where this report uses the term **in principle (such as the Recommendation 3)**, it refers only to the narrower step that officers recommend.

SICCL has asked Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) for written agreement to the Cable Car activity on approximately 4.4 hectares of reserve land across eight titles, and to delegate to the Chief Executive authority to settle the final terms and issue that agreement. It seeks an initial term of 49 years for station leases, easements for pylons and the airspace corridor in perpetuity, and proposes no rental payment to Council. Council remains the owner of the reserve land throughout.

Two matters require elected members' attention

Firstly, the request is made under clause 3(1)(m) of Schedule 6 of the FTAA and is a substantive decision point for Council rather than a procedural step.

SICCL frames the request as one Council must grant before they can lodge a substantive application with the panel. Officers have obtained legal advice on the extent to which that clause binds Council. Under clause 7(4) of Schedule 6 of the FTAA, Council must not unreasonably withhold its agreement, and in deciding whether to give it must take into account the purpose of the FTAA and any relevant matters under the Reserves Act 1977. Under clause 7(5), a Reserves Act provision that would ordinarily require refusal of the use of reserve land must be taken into account but must not be treated as requiring refusal. This means the Reserves Act is a relevant consideration for Council's

decision, but it does not determine the outcome: Council must weigh it alongside the facilitative purpose of the FTAA.

Council should determine whether there is sufficient information provided by SICCL before determining whether written agreement should be given.

Secondly, while SICCL's request is for a single decision, that is, written agreement in principle for the Cable Car, the route and alignment options remain unresolved and directly affect which reserve parcels are required. SICCL has presented multiple possible alignments and is asking Council to agree to all of them, rather than for a single defined footprint. Elected members should be aware that agreeing on this basis would cover a range of possible alignments, some of which affect strategically important land (including the Queenstown Events Centre), and that the final alignment will not be determined until detailed design is submitted as part of the substantive application to the EPA.

This paper seeks members' decision on the approvals requested. It does not seek members' view on the Cable Car route options shown on the attached maps, which are not assessed in this paper. Further work will be required from SICCL on those options regardless of the nature of any approval Council decides to give. The decision sought is limited to the matters addressed in this report. No decision is being sought on SICCL's wider cable car proposal, or on any potential funding, ownership, operational, or support arrangements involving Council.

Council has received a written request dated 17 September 2026, which is the basis on which this paper has been prepared.

This paper addresses the approvals sought in the request, not the route options it presents. Officers consider the information SICCL has provided is adequate to respond to the request for written agreement in principle under the FTAA. However, officers have determined that there is insufficient information for Council to provide written agreement in full at this stage, noting terms of occupation have not been resolved and cannot be a separate, later decision and written agreement cannot be conditional.

That distinction is critical: the final alignment is still to be confirmed, and elected members will need to understand what the final proposal is before Council is in a position to give a written agreement.

While the reserves could feasibly accommodate the Cable Car activity, there are effects that need to be assessed and considered. The greatest effects are on the Frankton Golf Course and the Queenstown Events Centre reserve parcel(s).

Recommendation | Kā Tūtohuka

That the Council

1. **Note** the contents of this report;
2. **Note** that Council has received a request from Southern Infrastructure (Cable Car) Limited (SICCL) for written agreement under Schedule 6 of the Fast-Track Approvals Act 2024, to undertake their proposed Queenstown Cable Car activity on Council reserve lands.
3. **Agree** in principle to the SICCL request to the use of Council's reserve land identified in their proposal noting that further information is required before Council could consider a full written agreement under Schedule 6 of the Fast Track Approvals Act 2024, in particular around a range of unresolved matters:
 - a. Route Alignment
 - b. Alignment footprint
 - c. Reserve Management Alignment
 - d. Effects Assessment, Management and mitigation measures
 - e. Lease and easements
 - f. Mana Whenua considerations
4. **Note** that no decision is being sought at this time on:
 - a. Use of any Council freehold land; or
 - b. SICCL's wider cable car proposal, and any potential funding, ownership, operational, or support arrangements involving Council.

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Context | Horopaki

1. Southern Infrastructure (Cable Car) Limited (SICCL) is proposing an electrically powered aerial ropeway public transport system connecting Queenstown Airport and Frankton with the Queenstown town centre, together with a further connection from Frankton to the Ladies Mile growth area. The proposal is intended to operate as a high-capacity public transport spine, supported by feeder bus, active transport, taxi and rideshare services. SICCL's stated objective is to provide an alternative response to congestion, improve network resilience and accessibility, and support planned housing and urban growth.
2. This report is before Council at the request of SICCL rather than as a Council-initiated matter. SICCL is seeking Council's full written agreement for the use of Council owned or administered reserve land as is required to lodge a substantive application under the Fast-Track Approvals Act 2024 and has asked Council to make that decision within its own programme timeframe. The timing of this report, the scope of the decision sought and the information available to officers are therefore shaped by SICCL's request. Officers record that the assessment in this report is not comprehensive: it reflects the information SICCL has provided to date and the timeframe in which its request has been made.
3. A number of matters material to the decision remain outstanding and are identified in this report so that elected members can weigh them.
4. The immediate matter before Council is narrower than approval of the overall project. SICCL seeks Council's written agreement, in its capacity as landowner or administering body, for the proposed activity to occur on specified Council-administered reserve lands. SICCL is unable to lodge a substantive application under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (FTAA) without providing this information.
5. SICCL also seeks delegation to the Chief Executive to negotiate the terms of reserve occupation and issue the final written agreement. The proposed decision is described by SICCL as an enabling step only, as it would not itself authorise construction, determine the final route or design, grant rights over non-reserve Council land, settle commercial or funding arrangements, or predetermine Council's position in later statutory processes.
6. The project requires a combination of station ground leases, pylon easements, airspace easements and temporary construction access. SICCL seeks station leases for an initial 49-year term and long-term or perpetual easements for pylons and the cable corridor. Several possible route alignments remain under consideration, particularly through Frankton and toward Ladies Mile. Options affect strategically important and highly utilised recreation land, including the Queenstown Events Centre (QEC) and Frankton Golf Course. The final alignment, occupation areas and detailed design remain indicative and commercially sensitive.

7. Under the FTAA written agreement cannot be conditional. As such, what SICCL is seeking is a substantive point, not an enabling step, and therefore important considerations for Council include whether granting agreement in principle appropriately balances the facilitative purpose of the fast-track legislation with Council's responsibilities as public reserve administrator or owner. Relevant matters include consistency with reserve purposes and management plans, impacts on sport and recreation, community facilities, sports fields, local, regional, national and international events, amenity, landscape, access and future reserve supply, use and development, alternative alignments, natural hazards and construction effects, and the adequacy of conditions, compensation, reinstatement and security arrangements. It is important to also distinguish claimed regional transport and economic benefits from direct benefits to Council, noting that land tenure, rent, liability allocation, funding mechanisms and long-term operational obligations remain unresolved and would require further assessment and separate decisions.

Statutory Framework

8. Written agreement is sought by SICCL under clause 3(1)(m) of Schedule 6 of the FTAA. Council has taken legal advice that this is a substantive decision point for Council, not a mere procedural gateway or enabling step. If Council withholds agreement, the panel must decline the concession under clause 7(3) of Schedule 6.
9. Clause 7(4) requires that Council must not unreasonably withhold its agreement, and that in deciding whether to give it, Council must take into account the purpose of the FTAA and any relevant matters under the Reserves Act 1977. Clause 7(5) provides that if a Reserves Act provision would ordinarily require Council to withhold agreement, it must take that provision into account but must not treat it as requiring refusal. The effect is that the Reserves Act is a relevant consideration, not a determinative one: Council must weigh it alongside the facilitative purpose of the FTAA.
10. As the proposal seeks to use reserve parcels that are either owned or administered by the Council, officers have considered whether any additional statutory requirements (Special Consultative Procedure (SCP) under the Local Government Act, 2002) may be involved before any approvals can be given by the Council. In particular, officers have considered the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy 2024, which identifies "Reserve Land" as a strategic asset, as described in Appendix 2 of that policy ([link here](#)).
11. The Council takes a group approach to certain listed strategic assets, including reserve land, which means that it is the group that is a strategic asset, as opposed to individual aspects or assets within that group. For completeness, Appendix 2 does not list any individual reserve as a separate strategic asset for the purposes of the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.
12. Officers will continue to review the status of the land involved for the proposal, noting that if any parcel is specifically listed as a strategic asset, the Council will need to consider whether the grant of a lease or easement for that parcel could amount to a decision to transfer ownership or control of that strategic asset. If it would, then the Council may need to undertake a special consultative procedure under the Local Government Act (2002) before being in a position to make such a decision.

13. “Relevant matters under the Reserves Act” will include, for each affected parcel, the reserve’s classification and purpose, how the proposed activity sits against current, planned and future uses, and the requirements of any applicable Reserve Management Plan. This is addressed in **Attachment C**, noting that SICCL proposes no rental payment. Rental for Council-administered reserve occupation should also be addressed and negotiated as part of the process of obtaining written agreement, taking into account any existing Council rental policy, Reserve Management Plan requirements, and Council’s obligations of financial prudence and sound business practice under the Local Government Act 2002.
14. The terms of occupation are not a separate, later question as suggested by SICCL. They are part of the same decision.
15. Conditions on a concession are for the Panel to set, not Council, and nothing in clauses 7 or 8 of Schedule 6 gives Council an ability to impose binding conditions that the Panel would be required to verify or enforce. For this reason, if Council wants assurance on commercial terms, that assurance must come from a concluded negotiation with SICCL before written agreement is given, rather than from conditions attached to this agreement itself. Agreed terms presented to the Panel as part of SICCL’s application are likely to carry more weight than unilateral conditions and genuinely agreed commercial terms would be contractually enforceable against SICCL.
16. If a FastTrack Panel grants consent on the substantive application, Council must issue Reserves Act concessions within 30 working days. Council is not the decision-maker on the substantive application and there is no guarantee that the Panel will impose conditions requiring particular terms in the concession documents. It is at the point prior to providing written agreement that Council has the greatest ability to influence the terms of reserve use.

Analysis and Advice | Tatāritaka me kā Tohutohu

17. The proposed routes (noting there are a number of options under consideration), as shown in Figure 1 and **Attachment A**, cross a variety of QLDC administered reserve land parcels, that are subject to the Reserves Act. The proposal also includes several QLDC owned freehold parcels. Any request to occupy QLDC land, irrespective of reserve status, must be carefully considered to ensure any benefits and impacts on the community and the environment are adequately understood, addressed, and provided for.

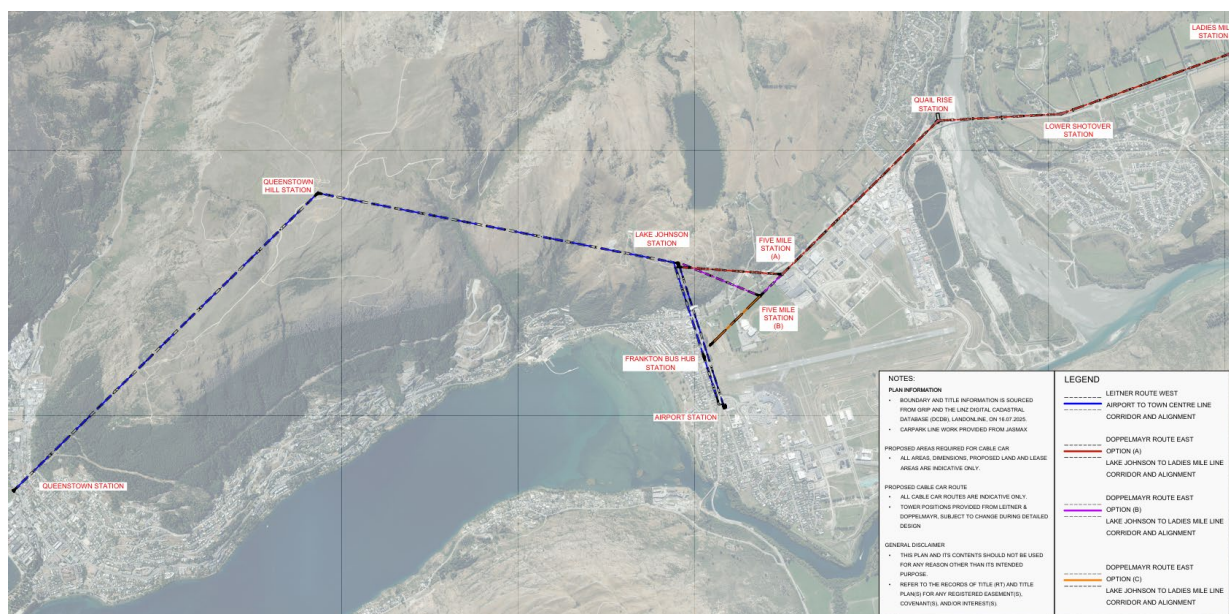


Figure 1: Plan showing the proposed routes from Ladies Mile – Frankton (orange and purple) and from the Airport to Queenstown Town Centre (blue). Source: SIL request.

18. SICCL is requesting written agreement in principle, with final written agreement to be delegated to the Chief Executive, to occupy reserve land for overhead cables, pylons, stations and associated station infrastructure such as parking and storage areas. This will require a combination of Reserves Act concessions being, easements (for pylons and overhead cables), and leases (stations and associated infrastructure).
19. Should Council choose to give written agreement under the FTAA, then the usual processes under the Reserves Act will be overridden. This includes the requirement for public notification.
20. Two primary areas of QLDC freehold land would also be required for the current proposed routes, being the QEC, and the Boundary Street Carpark site. However, as these parcels are freehold, no agreement is being sought from Council at this time as this is not mandated to form part of a substantive Fast Track application. Any formal approval for the use of QLDC freehold land will be addressed at a later stage.
21. These parcels are highlighted at this stage as they are critical locations for the current proposed routes and any written agreement that Council considers should be in context of the entire route and associated implications on all Council owned land parcels.
22. The use of the QEC was raised as a significant issue in Council's comments on SICCL's referral application. It was advised that the use of QEC should be avoided to protect the current and potential realised and unrealised future uses. QEC is a regionally significant facility with no alternative provision or location. Adverse effects on the facility would impact the entire Queenstown Lakes District community.
23. The applicant has not proposed a route that would avoid the QEC, rather an alternative route has been put forward that would locate a station on the QEC sports fields. The impact on the QEC freehold land and QEC reserve land is discussed further below.

24. The proposal includes two main routes:

- Airport to Queenstown Town Centre; and
- Frankton to Ladies Mile.

25. SICCL has proposed two alternate alignments for each route, that they seek written approval for. This is to provide flexibility as SICCL progress their design for their substantive FTAA application.

Airport – Queenstown Town Centre route

26. An alignment on either side of the State Highway (SH) is provided at this stage. These options are shown blue in Figure 2 and in greater detail in **Attachment A**.

- The alignment on the western (lake) side of the SH begins at the Airport Station within the QLDC reserve opposite the end of the airport carpark site, and traverses a combination of linear local purpose reserves that run parallel to the SH. This option includes a station at the Frankton Bus Hub before continuing to the Lake Johnson station.
- The alignment on the eastern side of the SH begins from the Airport Station (within the airport carpark) and would then remain predominantly within the SH corridor. Some encroachment into the Frankton Golf Course site may be required for the easement corridor. This alignment does not include a station in the vicinity of the Frankton Bus Hub. It is a direct route from the Airport Station to the Lake Johnson Station.

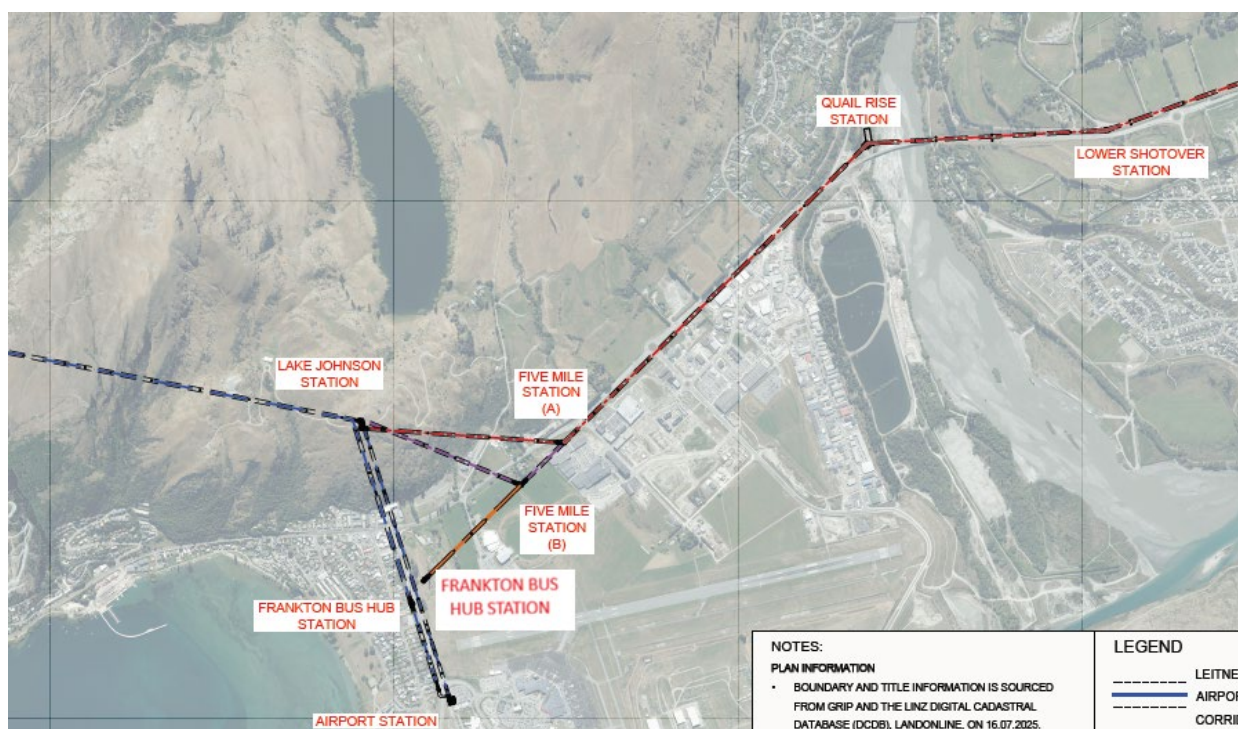


Figure 2: Plan showing the two alignment options for both proposed routes, being the Ladies Mile to Frankton route (orange and purple), and the Airport to Queenstown Central route (blue). Source: SIL request, edited by QLDC.

Ladies Mile – Frankton route

27. Three possible alignments have been shown on the proposed plans for consideration for this route. The applicants preferred option (referred to as Option 1 in the request, **Attachment B**) is shown in orange in Figure 2. This route goes from: *Ladies Mile Station – Lower Shotover Station – Quail Rise Station (QLDC reserve) – Five Mile Station (A) – Frankton Golf Course Station (QLDC reserve)*. This option also traverses the QEC freehold land that includes the events centre buildings and sports fields, and the QEC reserve land parcel that accommodates the hockey turf and Field 4, and the Frankton Golf Course.
28. An alternative alignment has been identified (referred to as Option 2 in the request and shown in purple in Figure 2). Option 2 follows the same alignment as Option 1 from Ladies Mile to Quail Rise, before diverging to locate a station on QEC (freehold) land and then continuing directly to the Lake Johnson Station. This alignment avoids bisecting the QEC (freehold) land and QEC (reserve) land. However, it does locate a station on QEC (freehold) land between the sports fields (refer Figure 3).
29. A third option is shown in red, that avoids the station being located on QEC (freehold) land. This alignment would utilise the potential Frankton Station (A) option adjacent to the Five-Mile Shopping Centre and go directly to Lake Johnson Station. The applicant has confirmed they are not pursuing this option due to it crossing the Aurora sub-station site.

Effects on Reserve Network

30. A high-level assessment of the impact of the proposal on the individual reserve parcels was completed by QLDC Parks for the referral application and is included as **Attachment C**. Updated plans have since been provided by the applicant (**Attachment A**) which show updated routes and alignments.
31. Prior to granting final written agreement for the use of reserve land, Council should consider how the proposal integrates with the reserves and it also needs to consider any adverse effects on reserve values, recreation opportunities (both current and future), public access, amenity and landscape character and how these can be effectively mitigated.
32. At this stage, insufficient information has been provided to enable Council to fully assess the nature and effectiveness of any mitigation measures associated with the use and occupation of the reserves. SICCL has commissioned an independent recreational effects assessment from Hutch Consulting. That assessment has not yet been provided and must address the effects on the reserves and its users. This may propose mitigation for the use of reserve land, but Council does not know what that mitigation is at this stage. Council would need to fully review the report to ascertain if the assessment and proposed mitigation is appropriate.
33. For Local Purpose Reserves, mitigation should provide for the retention and enhancement of pedestrian and cycle connections. For Recreation Reserves, mitigation should, at a minimum, provide for the retention and enhancement of public access, connections and recreational opportunities. For Queenstown Hill Recreation Reserve mitigation should include measures that contribute to and integrate with the Queenstown Hill Revegetation Plan where relevant.

The Blue Green Network should be considered because it provides ecological, landscape, and amenity improvements that result in a net positive outcome for the reserves and reserve users.

34. An overview of the anticipated effects on the QLDC reserve land is below. This assessment has been based on the limited information provided by the applicant and may change once Officers receive more information.

Local Purpose Reserves for Beautification or Transport Purposes:

35. Compared to Recreation Reserves, these reserves are considered to have a greater capacity to accommodate the proposal, subject to appropriate mitigation being implemented to address the potential and actual adverse effects on the reserve network.
36. These reserves provide a buffer from the road network and contain well used trails and footpaths. Demand for these connections is expected to increase with the development of the Frankton Bus Hub and the construction of the Pūāhuru Bridge (pedestrian and cycle bridge linking Jims Way with Frankton North) and new active travel pathway, as well as high density development along the eastern corridor.
37. The applicant proposes to use these reserves for the Option A route from the *Airport to Queenstown Town Centre Route* for nine pylons, each with a footprint of approximately 1m² (with a tenth in the immediately adjacent road reserve). The easement corridor will have a width of at least 16.8m for the overhead cable. These reserves will also accommodate the Airport Station and Frankton Bus Hub Station, if the western side of the SH alignment option is pursued. This would encompass large areas of these reserves.
38. The Ladies Mile route will traverse a Local Purpose Reserve where the new active travel route is being constructed to connect with the new Pūāhuru Bridge. This would accommodate one pylon and the easement corridor. It has not been assessed how the proposal would integrate with or impact the Frankton Bus Hub infrastructure.
39. Due to the proposed area of occupation, the proposal is anticipated to have adverse effects on the functionality and amenity of these reserves by reducing the area available for pedestrian and cycle routes and requiring tree removal. However, where appropriate mitigation is applied, these reserves could accommodate the proposal.

Queenstown Hill

40. Queenstown Hill is a large informal recreation reserve that is heavily used for walking, biking, and other outdoor recreation activities, and provides one of the iconic landscape backdrops to Queenstown.
41. The applicant proposes to use these reserves for four pylons each with a footprint of approximately 1m². This would require an easement corridor with a width of 16.8m, resulting in an easement of approximately 1.3 hectares of land for the overhead cable. The Queenstown Hill Station and associated commercial development including a restaurant and hot pools would be located on the adjoining private land.

42. Any overhead infrastructure is likely to require vegetation clearance for a firebreak and maintenance access. The extent and effects of these requirements have not been assessed or clearly outlined at this stage of the application. Additionally, an assessment cannot be made as to how the proposal would align with the recently adopted Queenstown Hill Revegetation Plan.
43. The request does not propose any enhancement to reserve access or other identifiable benefit to the reserve. It does not demonstrate how the proposed infrastructure would integrate with the existing reserve and trail network as the proposal will increase demand for walking and biking trails within the reserve.
44. SICCL's request includes an analysis on the Te Taumata O Hakitekura Ben Lomond and Te Tapunui Queenstown Hill Reserve Management Plan. It identifies policies, including Policy 14.16.3. This acknowledges the reserve as forming part of a potential transport corridor. Policy 14.3.10 seeks to limit commercial activities, while recognising that activities providing a genuine wider public benefit, such as sustainable public transport infrastructure, may be appropriate. It remains unclear whether the proposal should be regarded primarily as a public transport activity or a commercial activity. The determination of whether the project is classified as a genuine Public Transport offering is made by ORC and NZTA. QLDC are still waiting on the outcome of this decision. This distinction is relevant to the assessment of reserve use, as Council will need to satisfy itself of this determination when assessing whether the proposal is in accordance with the Reserve Management Plan.
45. Prior to granting final written approval for the use of these reserves, Council should be satisfied that the proposal is consistent with the Reserve Management Plan and that adverse effects on reserve values, recreation opportunities, public access, amenity, and landscape character can be appropriately mitigated.

Shotover Delta

46. This Recreation Reserve contains important recreation trails and an associated car park that provide connectivity to the wider trail network. It experiences high levels of use for both recreational activities and active transport/commuting. The reserve also contains a significant area of mature vegetation, including trees protected under the District Plan, and provides access to the Shotover River and Historic Bridge.
47. The proposal would occupy nearly one hectare of this 6.5ha recreation reserve (approximately one third of the reserve) for the Quail Rise Station, a pylon and overhead cable, and servicing/storage buildings for ongoing maintenance of the infrastructure. Following feedback from QLDC Parks on the referral application, SICCL have significantly reduced the occupation area of this reserve to ensure that the recreation value of the reserve can be maintained while accommodating the proposed station.
48. The future potential of the reserve, as identified through the QLDC Blue-Green Network, for ecological and riparian restoration, has not been adequately assessed or provided for. The proposal would further fragment the reserve network and may adversely affect recreation, biodiversity, and ecological values, both existing and future. As part of the terms of any written

agreement, it is important sufficient mitigation is implemented by SICCL. Mitigation should retain parking areas, trail connections and access to the river for reserve users and contribute to the ecological enhancement of the balance of reserve land to ensure the proposal achieves an acceptable degree of integration with the reserve.

Frankton Golf Course and QEC Reserve Land (Hockey Turf and Field 4)

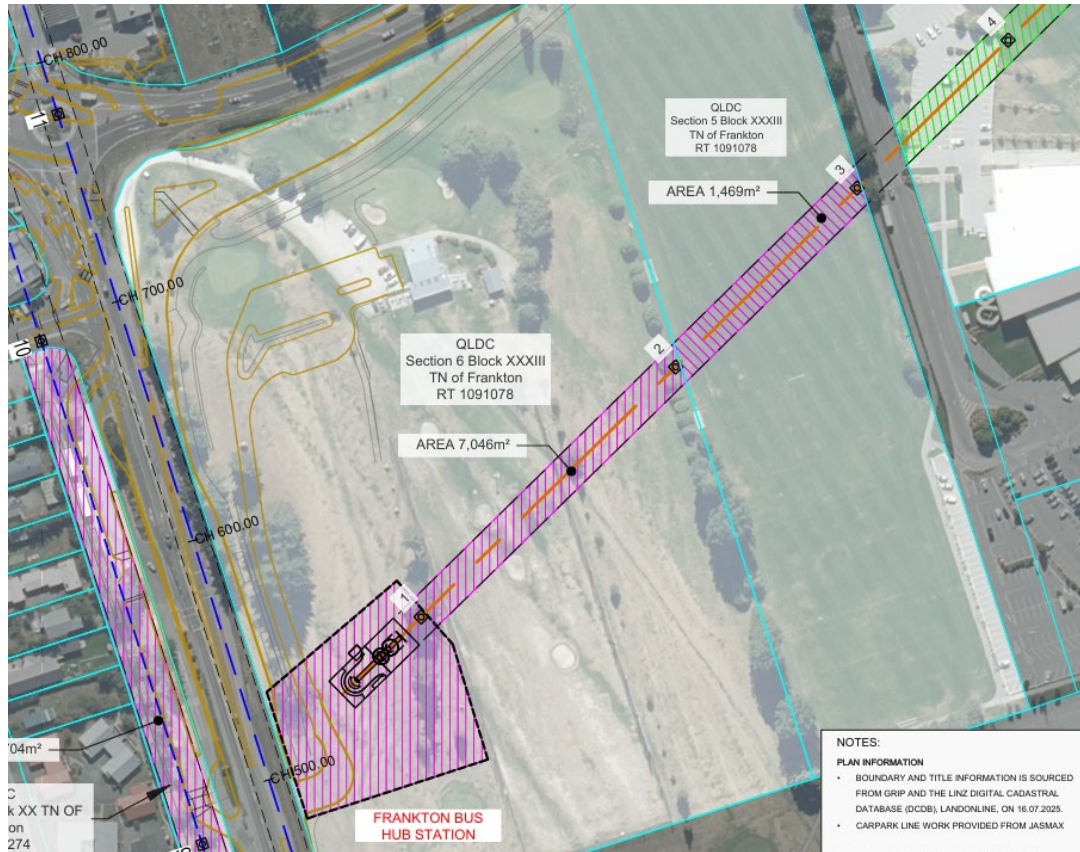


Figure 3: Plan showing the applicants preferred alignment (orange) for the Ladies Mile – Frankton Route. The pink hashed area indicates the easement corridor and lease area for the Frankton Bus Hub Station on the Frankton Golf Course parcel. Source: SIL request.

49. SICCL records the land status of Sections 5 and 6 Block XXXIII Town of Frankton (the Frankton Golf Course and hockey turf parcels) and [parcel 2] as unresolved. QLDC records indicate both are vested Recreation Reserve, and Council will treat them as reserve land unless sufficient evidence to the contrary is provided.
50. These reserves contain the QLDC owned 9-hole Frankton Golf Course and the artificial turfs used for hockey and other organised sports.
51. These parcels adjoin the QLDC freehold land that includes the events centre sports fields and the Sir John Davies Oval (discussed below). Collectively they function as a large contiguous sport, recreation and cultural centre that is one of its kind in the district.

52. If the applicants preferred, Option 1, alignment for the *Ladies Mile – Frankton* route is used, the proposal would bisect the Frankton Golf Course and hockey turf parcels for an approximate area of 0.85ha. This would include three pylons and the easement corridor for the cable, as well as the Frankton Bus Hub Station. The proposed area of occupation is shown hatched pink in Figure 3.
53. It is acknowledged some activities may be able to occur around the infrastructure, but it would impact golf activities and lead to significant future design constraints and considerations, many of which are unrealised at this time.
54. This land is critical to support the sport and recreation requirements of the rapidly growing population of the district. This alignment would result in adverse impacts on the existing and future uses of the land and its function for sport and recreation. When considering the SICCL request, Council must consider the extent to which any impact on the reserve land is acceptable.

QEC Freehold (Events Centre, John Davies Oval, Fields 1, 2 and 3)



Figure 4: Plan showing the applicants preferred alignment (orange) for the *Ladies Mile – Frankton* Route. The purple alignment shows the alternate alignment including station location. The green hashed area indicates the easement corridor. Source: SIL request.

55. As this is freehold land, the applicant is not seeking Council's written agreement to the use of QEC land as part of this current request. However, because the applicant's proposed routes rely on traversing that land, the potential impact is a material matter that council should be aware of for context when considering the request for the use of its reserve land.

56. Council's decision on the reserve land under clause 7 of Schedule 6 must be made by reference to the statutory criteria — the purpose of the FTAA and relevant matters under the Reserves Act — and should not be made conditional on the resolution of freehold land matters, which are not part of that assessment. Any written agreement should stipulate that Council reserves its rights as landowner over the freehold parcels.
57. When considering any future SICCL requests for the use of the QEC freehold land, Council will need to consider the extent to which any impact on the QEC land is acceptable compared to any public benefits of having an accessible cable car option for residents and tourists.
58. For the applicants preferred Option 1, which traverses the adjacent golf course and hockey turf reserve land, an area of approximately 0.5ha of QEC land is proposed, to accommodate two pylons and an easement corridor for the cable of a width of approximately 16.8m, as shown by the orange line in Figure 4. The cable car in most places would pass at approximately 8.5m to 12m above ground level. SICCL have indicated the height could be changed with relative ease based on feedback, dependant on Queenstown Airport requirements.
59. The applicant's Option 2 alignment (purple in Figure 3) proposes the occupation of approximately 0.37ha to accommodate three pylons, an easement corridor for the cable and the Five Mile Station (B).
60. QEC is a regionally significant sport and recreation facility. Both options would introduce significant constraints onto the QEC land that would fetter future development, reducing council's capacity to provide a regional sport, recreation and event facility that caters for the Queenstown Lakes District and Central Otago areas. The proposed options are also likely to impact the ability of QEC to be able to host national and international sporting and cultural events.

Designations

61. Most of the reserve parcels, and the QEC freehold land, are also designated in the District Plan, mostly for Recreation Purposes, with QEC being designated for a 'Multi-Purpose indoor and outdoor recreation, cultural and conference complex.' Designations provide an important statutory function to ensure other activities do not interfere with the purpose of the designation on that land.
62. Section 176(1)(b) of the RMA provides that no person may, without prior written consent of the requiring authority (QLDC) do anything in relation to the land that is subject to the designation, that would prevent or hinder the public work or project to which the designation relates.
63. Based on the above, approval for works/occupation within a designation from the requiring authority (QLDC) will be required under s176 of the RMA. The FTAA does not address s176 (designations) of the RMA and as such, separate approval from the Requiring Authority under s176 of the RMA would be required.
64. Most affected reserve parcels could accommodate the proposed infrastructure without the purpose of the designation being hindered or prevented.

65. However, based on the information provided by the applicant, Officers reasonably consider that the alignments bisecting QEC (freehold and reserve areas) will prevent or hinder the purpose of that designation. As designations are enduring, all provision for sport, recreation and cultural activities into the future must be considered.

FTAA and Reserves Act Process

66. Under the Reserves Act, easements and leases, such as proposed, would require public notification as a statutory requirement. The FTAA overrides the Reserves Act and can issue concessions (easements and leases) on reserve land without this requirement. If Council wanted to undertake consultation with the community for the proposed use of reserve land, this would need to occur prior to any written agreement being given to ensure a meaningful engagement process is achieved.

67. Given the FTAA's ability to override the Reserves Act processes, including the requirement for public notification, it is critical that Council negotiate and settle the terms of any easements and leases before a written agreement is given. As set out in the Statutory Framework section above, Council cannot attach binding conditions to its written agreement that the Panel would be required to enforce. Council's protection therefore lies in concluding terms with SICCL before agreement is provided, not in conditions attached to the agreement itself.

68. SICCL takes the position that no direct rental payment for reserve use is appropriate, on the basis that the Cable Car is public transport infrastructure and any rental charge would ultimately fall on fare payers or ratepayers. However, SICCL has stated it is open to a counterproposal from Council as part of negotiating the wider bundle of land rights. Council has not yet been provided with a starting rental proposal, a valuation methodology, or confirmation of how any negotiated terms would be tested against Council's financial prudence obligations under the Local Government Act 2002. Rental or other consideration should be addressed and settled as part of the process of reaching agreement, not deferred to a later stage.

69. If a Fast-track panel grants consent on the substantive application, Council must issue Reserves Act concessions within 30 working days. As noted in the Statutory Framework section, Council is not the decision-maker on the substantive application, and it is at the point of providing written agreement that Council has the greatest ability to influence the terms of reserve use.

Options

70. This report identifies and assesses the reasonably practicable options (four options are provided) for achieving the objective of this decision, as required by section 77 of the Local Government Act 2002.

71. Each option should, however, be considered in light of the following ***unresolved matters***:

Unresolved Matters:

- **Alignment:** SICCL has still not resolved the primary alignment issue by providing an alternative, which is the use of QEC freehold and reserve land.
- **Alignment footprint:** The alignment footprint is uncertain. The request includes two Ladies Mile options and alignments on both sides of State Highway 6, including QEC land and the Frankton Golf Course parcels.
- **Reserve Management Plan (RMP) alignment:** To ensure alignment with the RMP, Council will need to determine whether the proposal is a commercial activity on the reserve or primarily a public transport offering.
- **Effects Assessment:** The independent recreational effects assessment, commissioned by SICCL from Hutch Consulting, has not yet been provided. Effects on amenity, sports fields, current use and future activities, turf wear, public access, pedestrian desire lines, shading, noise and emergency access are therefore not before Council. Council will not be able to conclude final terms for any affected parcel until this assessment has been received and considered.
- **Lease – Easement terms:** SICCL acknowledges that the final terms of reserve use, including lease and easement arrangements, must be agreed with Council before formal written agreement is provided. SICCL has not proposed specific lease and easement terms or provided any methodology for how these will be resolved. This leaves Council at financial and legal risk.
 - A 49-year initial term, together with easements in perpetuity across multiple reserves, is a significant commitment. Firstly, the proposed lease term (“initial” 49 years) may trigger clause 7(3)(c) over some reserve land parcels in which the panel must decline the concession in the absence of waivers the applicant has not produced. The agreement may therefore not achieve its intended purpose. Secondly, this request is challenging to delegate to the Chief Executive (as requested by SICCL). The scale and duration of the occupation rights underscore the importance of tightly scoping any delegation, with clear conditions the Chief Executive must satisfy before giving written agreement for each parcel.
 - Easements are sought in perpetuity. If the Cable Car ceases to operate or the lease expires or is terminated, perpetual easements would nonetheless remain on title, encumbering Council’s reserve land indefinitely for infrastructure that is no longer in use.
- **Mana Whenua engagement:** No mana whenua engagement is recorded. Council has obligations under sections 4 and 81 of the Local Government Act 2002 to facilitate Māori participation in local authority decision-making and to maintain processes for consulting with Māori. SICCL seeks an initial term of 49 years for station leases, with renewals unquantified, and easements in perpetuity for pylons and the cable car corridor – in practical terms, a commitment of Council reserve land for a generation or longer. No information about engagement with mana whenua has been provided in the request, despite Schedule 6 of the

FTAA requiring full details of consultation with relevant iwi. Council would be committing land of that duration before understanding whether cultural values or sites of significance are affected, and before mana whenua have had any opportunity to influence the alignment or design.

- The terms of occupation are integral to whether agreement should be given at all. But also delegating the terms delegates the substance of the clause 7(4)(b) assessment, not merely its implementation. This can be managed by scoping the delegation to require the Chief Executive to assess each parcel against the statutory criteria. Elected members should understand that if they delegate this, they are entrusting the substantive assessment of the terms, not just administrative execution.
- Elected members would be committing to use of reserve land before the term, the renewal structure, any rental and the final extent of occupation are known. The delegation can set parameters and conditions on those matters, but members would not have a further opportunity to consider the settled terms themselves before written agreement is given.

72. Option 1 Provide unqualified written agreement

- Council provides written agreement for the Cable Car activity on all reserve parcels identified in Appendix A.1 on the terms described in the applicant's request.

Advantages:

- Enables SICCL to progress with its lodgement of substantive application in Q4 2026.
- Supports delivery of a project consistent with Council's own Frankton Integrated Transport Programme Business Case, and responsive to a well-established congestion problem.
- Commences a Fast-track process under which the panel will itself undertake a detailed assessment of the reserve use against the Reserves Act.

Disadvantages:

- Providing unqualified written agreement would commit Council to an alignment through those reserve parcels, which Council has previously indicated it does not support.
- Council would be giving unqualified written agreement with no rental or other consideration agreed, no valuation methodology provided, and no ability to reinvest in other reserves for community benefit.
- Council would be committing public reserve land to a long-term occupation without understanding whether the proposal raises issues of significance to mana whenua or whether any concerns have been identified and addressed.

- Council has no ability to engage with the public about use of public reserve land, which is normally a requirement of the Reserves Act.
- The request covers a superset of alignments so Council would be agreeing to an undefined footprint

73. Option 2 Agree in principle, with a further report to Council for decision before final written agreement under Schedule 6 of the FTAA is given.

- Council agrees in principle to the use of the reserve land, subject to the matters identified in this report being resolved and directs that a further report be brought to Council for decision before any written agreement is given.

Advantages:

- Preserves Council's ability to undertake the clause 7(4)(b) assessment reserve by reserve, so that the eventual decision is properly informed and defensible.
- Does not withhold agreement because Council is sequencing its decision rather than refusing it and that it provides strong evidence against any claim under clause 7(4)(a).
- As noted in the Statutory Framework section, Council cannot attach binding conditions to its written agreement that the Panel would be required to enforce. Under this option, Council's protection comes from deferring the written agreement until a further report is brought back with settled terms, rather than from conditions on the agreement itself. This is the most direct way to ensure that the terms of reserve use are concluded to Council's satisfaction before Council commits.
- Keeps the term, the renewal structure, any rental, the extent of occupation and the degree of exclusivity negotiable.
- Allows the alignment question through the Frankton reserve parcels, including the hockey turf and gold course, to be resolved on its merits rather than under programme pressure.
- Gives SICCL a clear, actionable path and a defined decision point rather than an open-ended hold.
- Keeps the decision with elected members.
- Allows land status, rights of first refusal and mana whenua engagement to be completed before Council commits.

Disadvantages:

- Does not meet SICCL's stated 2026 lodgement timeframe.

- Requires further staff, legal and property resource, a second report and a further Council decision, with associated cost and time.
- "In principle" carries expectation. Elected members may be perceived as having pre-committed, which could narrow Council's practical ability to decline later.
- An in-principle agreement does not, of itself, resolve which reserve parcels and alignments are covered. If the resolution is not specific about the reserve parcels and alignments to which it applies, Council may be taken to have agreed in principle to all of them.
- Leaves a period of uncertainty for SICCL, its investors and the community.

74. Option 3 Agree in principle with delegation to the Chief Executive

- The option sought by SICCL is that Council agrees in principle, delegates to the Chief Executive authority in terms of use and authorises the Chief Executive to provide the written agreement once those terms are settled.
- A properly constituted and appropriately scoped delegation to the Chief Executive could, in principle, lawfully satisfy Council's obligations under clauses 7(4) and 7(5) of Schedule 6 of the FTAA, provided the in-principle resolution is not itself treated as effecting that delegation, the delegation's scope and source under the Local Government Act 2002 are clearly confirmed, and the Chief Executive's eventual decision records the matters taken into account.
- However, the Chief Executive does not currently hold a delegation to commit interests in reserve land, so a new delegation would need to be created as part of the Council resolution.
- If elected members choose this option, a separate resolution establishing that delegation must be put before Council for decision, setting out its scope, parameters and the conditions the Chief Executive must satisfy before giving written agreement.

Advantages:

- Provides administrative efficiency for what SICCL has requested.
- Elected members retain the in-principle decision and the ability to frame it with conditions. However, as noted in the Statutory Framework section, those conditions bind the Chief Executive and Council, not the Panel. Council's substantive protection under this option comes from the Chief Executive being required to conclude terms with SICCL before written agreement is given, not from conditions attached to the agreement itself.

Disadvantages:

- The Chief Executive does not hold the delegation required to commit interests in reserve land. Resolving in these terms would create a new delegation. That is a separate decision with its own considerations, not a procedural limb of an approval.

- Reduces transparency at the point at which the material terms are settled, with consequent exposure under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and to public criticism.

75. Option 4 Decline to provide written agreement

- Council declines to provide written agreement for the Cable Car activity on Council reserve land. While SICCL has asked Council to agree to reserve land use across multiple alignments, Council has considered the request and, on the information currently available, does not consider the proposal adequately addresses the matters Council is required to take into account under clause 7(4)(b).

Advantages:

- Reserve land is not committed. Reserve purposes and future use are fully preserved, and the district's capacity for future sport and recreation provision on reserve land is maintained. Council retains complete control over its reserve land.

Disadvantages:

- Forecloses Council's opportunity to shape alignment, design and occupation terms at the point when its influence is greatest.
- Significant reputational and political cost given community expectation of a congestion solution.
- Exposure to judicial review and to Ministerial pressure.

Recommendation

76. This report recommends **Option 2**, subject to the matters identified in this report being resolved.

Advice

77. SICCL has provided sufficient information to enable Council to make an informed decision on the narrower question of whether it supports the Cable Car project, in principle, using its reserve land. However, Council does not yet have enough information to finalise commercial terms or give unconditional written agreement for specific parcels, no independent effects assessment rental or other commercial terms have been resolved, and several tenure and classification uncertainties have not been settled.

78. Any resolution should be limited to a genuine agreement in principle and should specify that formal written agreement may not be given until these matters have been concluded. **Option 2** satisfies both limbs of clause 7(4). It does not withhold agreement, and it preserves Council's ability to take the required matters into account before committing its land.

Consultation Process | Hātepe Matapaki

Significance and Engagement | Te Whakamahi I kā Whakaaro Hiraka

79. This matter is of high significance, as determined by reference to the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy 2024 and the proposal requires a reasonable understanding of the following considerations:

- Scale and duration of the decision
- Importance of the location
- Impacts on community facilities
- Public interest and likely community views
- Strategic importance
- Use of Council land and strategic assets
- Financial exposure or opportunity cost
- Precedent and implications for future Council decisions
- Effects on Councils levels of service
- Mana Whenua and cultural considerations
- Relationship with other statutory processes

80. The decision is assessed as having a high degree of significance due to the scale and long-term nature of the proposed commercial infrastructure, the nature and location of the Council property interests affected, the potential strategic implications for transport, tourism, recreation and the future use of Council land, and the level of community and stakeholder interest reasonably anticipated. The proposal may also have enduring consequences for public access, Council's future use of its property and the approach taken to commercial occupation of public land. These factors, considered cumulatively, warrant treating the decision as having a high degree of significance under Council's Significance and Engagement Policy.

81. Given the assessed degree of significance, Council should consider whether the information presently available on community views and preferences is sufficient and, if not, what level and form of engagement is appropriate before making a decision (or is necessary to inform any ultimate substantive decision to provide written approval). Whilst it is accepted that the proposal seeks an approval in principle, and to defer consideration of some matters, a comprehensive decision to provide any written approval under the FTAA, should reasonably address all matters.

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

83. The Council has not consulted with the community regarding SICCL's request to occupy reserve land.

Māori Consultation | Iwi Rūnaka

84. The Council has not consulted with iwi, and the applicant has not provided any evidence of consultation with iwi.

Risk and Mitigations | Kā Raru Tūpono me kā Whakamaurutaka

85. This matter relates to the Regulatory/Legal/Compliance risk category. It is associated with RISK10022 Ineffective operations and maintenance of community services or facilities within the QLDC Risk Register. This risk has been assessed as having a high residual risk rating.

86. Approval of the recommended option will allow Council to transfer the risk. This will be achieved by the recommended option of only considering written agreement in principle, and deferring any reasonable consideration, until information necessary to properly identify and assess any material risks is received.

Financial Implications | Kā Riteka ā-Pūtea

87. Council's agreement in principle does not, at this stage, commit Council to fund the Cable Car or accept any particular commercial position.

88. As it stands, any financial implications associated with the potential use of reserves are unable to be reasonably quantified or understood due to insufficient information.

89. There will be financial implications, and these will be a significant consideration. All implications will need to be reasonably understood (and negotiated), if there is to be a position to provide formal written agreement under clause 3(1)(m) of the FTAA.

90. Financial implications will need to be reasonably considered under any report to Full Council to consider providing formal written agreement (i.e. as opposed to approval in principle). The recommended option seeks to allow that consideration to occur.

Council Effects and Views | Kā Whakaaweawe me kā Tirohaka a te Kaunihera

91. The following were considered:

- Significance and Engagement Policy 2024
- Te Taumata O Hakitekura Ben Lomond and Te Tapunui Queenstown Hill Reserve Management Plan 2025

- Queenstown Hill Revegetation Plan 2025
- QLDC Blue Green Network (2026)
- Parks and Open Spaces Strategy (2021)
- Grow Well | Whaiora – Spatial Plan

92. Based on the information currently available, and the time constraints applying to the preparation of this report, staff are unable to assess adequately whether other council effects and views should be considered.

93. Aside from the considerations of this report on the matters above, there has been no reasonable consideration on matters of material relevance to Council Effects and Views. The recommended option therefore seeks to agree in principle, but with a requirement that a further report is provided to Council to enable adequate consideration of any position to provide substantive written approval.

94. This matter is not included in the Long-Term Plan/Annual Plan.

Legal Considerations and Statutory Responsibilities | Ka Ture Whaiwhakaaro me kā Takohaka Waeture

95. Council has obtained external advice from Simpson Grierson on the statutory framework applicable to this decision, the extent of Council's obligations under clauses 7(4) and 7(5) of Schedule 6 of the FTAA, and the risks associated with each option. That advice is reflected throughout this report, and the recommended option is consistent with that advice. In particular the advice highlighted:

- Council must not unreasonably withhold its agreement under clause 7(4)(a). In deciding, Council must take into account the purpose of the FTAA and any relevant matters under the Reserves Act 1977 (clause 7(4)(b)). A Reserves Act provision that would ordinarily require refusal must be taken into account but must not be treated as requiring it (clause 7(5)). The Statutory Framework section sets out these obligations in detail.
- Council cannot attach binding conditions to its written agreement. Conditions on a concession are for the Panel to set, not Council. Council's protection lies in concluding terms with SICCL before written agreement is given, not in conditions attached to the agreement itself.
- If a Fast-track panel grants consent, Council must issue Reserves Act concessions within 30 working days. Council is not the decision-maker on the substantive application. It is at the point of providing written agreement that Council has the greatest ability to influence the terms of reserve use.

96. Council's decision must be confined to the clause 7 assessment and must not take into account irrelevant considerations. Matters that are outside the clause 7 framework, including Council's position on freehold land, designation purposes under the RMA, competing proposals, and

procurement considerations should not form part of the basis for giving or withholding agreement. The options analysis has been reviewed to ensure consistency with this principle.

- Council has obligations under sections 4 and 81 of the Local Government Act 2002 to facilitate Māori participation in decision-making and to maintain processes for consulting with Māori. No Mana Whenua engagement is recorded in respect of this proposal.

97. Section 10 of the Local Government Act 2002 requires that Council's decision-making promotes the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities in the present and for the future. The recommended option is consistent with this purpose as it provides SICCL with a written agreement in principle that enables design to progress, while preserving Council's ability to ensure the terms of reserve use are settled to its satisfaction before formal written agreement is given.

- The recommended option is consistent with legal advice received. It does not commit Council to unknown or unsettled terms, and it preserves Council's ability to discharge its obligations under clauses 7(4) and 7(5) on a properly informed basis before formal written agreement is provided for any parcel.

Local Government Act 2002 Purpose Provisions | Te Whakatureture 2002 o te Kāwanataka ā-Kiaka

98. Section 10 of the Local Government Act 2002 provides that the purpose of local government is to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities, and to promote their social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being, both now and in the future.

99. Accordingly, Council has a statutory responsibility to support democratic decision-making and to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of its communities, both now and in the future.

100. Based on the information currently available, and the time constraints applying to the preparation of this report, staff are unable to assess adequately whether the proposal supports these four well-beings. In particular, there is insufficient information to quantify the proposal's long-term costs and benefits for the community, and the proposal seeks to defer consideration of these matters.

101. The proposal concerns Council-administered reserve land and affects QEC, giving rise to a clear public interest and potentially engaging the QLDC Significance and Engagement Policy for the reasons outlined above. Without sufficiently robust information, Council cannot be reasonably satisfied that it can fulfil its duty under section 10(1)(a) to enable an informed and democratic community decision-making process. The recommended option therefore acknowledges that Council will need to consider further information to make any substantive decision on its reasonable ability to provide written approval.

Attachments | Kā Tāpirihaka

A	Southern Infrastructure (Cable Car) Limited (SICCL) Plans
B	Decision Paper: Southern Infrastructure request to use Council reserve land
C	Parks and Reserves Technical Memo for SICCL Referral Application