

## Queenstown Gardens Development Plan Submission Summary April 2018

The Queenstown Gardens (the Gardens) were established in 1887 by members of the town's first Borough Council. Due to the proximity to the busy commercial centre of Queenstown, the Gardens have become a focal point for locals and visitors who value the opportunity to relax in peaceful surroundings and enjoy the magnificent lake and mountain views. The increase in types of activities, visitor numbers and a history of adhoc planning and development has resulted in:

- Discontinuous pedestrian access and safety issues with pedestrians and vehicles
- Dominance of parking and non-public facilities in the south
- Separated areas
- Conflict with different users

Therefore the Queenstown Gardens Development Plan was drafted to provide a long term vision to:

- Improve connectivity between the gardens and the town centre, and circulation within the gardens
- Improve public safety and wayfinding
- Accommodate all users and reduce conflict
- Initiate succession planning for the gardens

A traffic safety assessment was commissioned to highlight safety issues and recommend improvements, to inform the final development plan.

Consultation with key stakeholder groups including the Ice Arena, Friends of the Gardens, Queenstown Tennis Club, Queenstown Bowls Clubs, Queenstown Disc Golf Club, Wakatipu United Youth Voice and internal Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) departments was used to inform the draft development plan, which was then put out for public feedback.

61 submissions were received online, a further 9 submissions were sent directly to the QLDC Parks and Reserves Planner. Verbal feedback was also given to the Parks and Reserves Planner.

## **Submissions/Feedback**

Individual submissions and a copy of the online submission summary reports are contained as **Attachment C** to the agenda report. Feedback was varied but was unanimous in the support for the Gardens. The two main themes were the Rose Gardens and Frisbee Golf (Disc Golf).

### **Rose Gardens.**

The draft development plan proposed reconfiguring the rose gardens to have a smaller footprint and to provide for a large lawn area. Over 20 respondents submitted in support of the rose gardens, highlighting their popularity with both local, national and international visitors, and the challenges of growing roses in the proposed reduced area under trees. There was support for the proposed memorial arbour.

### **Disc Golf**

Again, over 20 people submitted in favour of retaining the disc golf course in full. Submissions came from locals and visitors. It was quoted as being the best course in New Zealand. It is popular as a free healthy activity that attracts users of all ages. Concerns were raised about reduction in the number of holes and moving the holes into the forest. QLDC has committed to providing for Disc Golf in the gardens and will continue to work closely with the Disc Golf Club to minimise conflicts.

### **Commercial Events and Use**

A number of submissions were against the gardens hosting more commercial events. The Reserve Management Plan provides guidance on what events can be held.

### **Douglas Fir Removal/Shelter Belt**

Over 10 submissions were against removal of the perimeter shelter belt planted in Douglas Fir. QLDC acknowledges the benefit that these trees provide in terms of shelter. A succession plan has been recommended, both in this development plan and the Queenstown Bay Foreshore Reserves Management Plan (Reserve Management Plan) to recognise the importance of the shelter but also recognising the threat the Douglas Fir poses to the surrounding hillside as it is a particularly invasive wilding conifer species in this part of the District.

## **General submission points:**

### WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT THE QUEENSTOWN GARDENS?

- Support for Disc Golf – best course in NZ
- Views to the lake
- No commercialisation/protect for the community
- Protect respite nature
- Free activity
- History and heritage values

### WHAT CHANGES DO YOU SUPPORT?

- Increased maintenance
- Better signage and interpretation
- Iwi installation/interpretation
- Improved lighting
- Improved trails support
- More public toilets
- Better walking and cycle connections
- More public local artwork
- Improving pedestrian safety and Park Street access
- Proposed arbours
- Parking for park users

- Tree succession
- Trees should be better protected and maintained
- Provision of more facilities, especially rubbish bins in Queenstown

#### WHAT CHANGES DON'T YOU SUPPORT?

- Opinion split on removing Douglas Fir
- Changes to rose gardens
- Reduction in Disc Golf
- New rotunda
- Sound shell

#### **The key changes made to the Queenstown Gardens Development Plan as notified are as follows:**

- Strengthening of wording around cycle and walking connections.
- Rose garden footprint and configuration to remain.
- Removal of additional rotunda
- Removal of sound shell
- Disc Golf area shown as indicative, recognising ongoing improvements and adjustments to the course

## Submissions and Officer Comment grouped by Development Plan Design Principles

Design Principle	Big Move	Submissions	Officer Comment
<b>Improving connectivity between the gardens and the town centre, and circulation within the gardens</b>	Re -create a series of looped pathways	High level of support	No changes to plan
	Connect network of paths across peninsular	High level of support	No changes to plan
	Additional crossings of Horne Creek		No changes to plan
	Separate cycleway along Park St		No changes to plan
	Wide well formed aggregate paths	High level of support	No changes to plan
<b>Improving public safety and way finding (including lighting, access road, standard of paths)</b>	Comprehensive lighting plan implemented	High level of support	No changes to plan
	Re align access road	High level of support for improving pedestrian safety	No changes to plan
	System of directional signage	High level of support	No changes to plan
	Legible zones & theme gardens	Several submissions against changes to existing theme gardens	Development plan is a high level concept. Any significant changes to existing plantings would require further consultation and design
<b>Efficient use for all users - accommodate a variety of activities, facilities and events that cater for</b>	Destination playground	High level of support	No changes to plan
	Enhance native garden with Iwi Display	General support but some questioned Iwi display	No change - Iwi display and increased interpretation well supported by Iwi
	Engage with foreshore	High level of support but also high level of	No changes to plan. QLDC will continue to

<b>Design Principle</b>	<b>Big Move</b>	<b>Submissions</b>	<b>Officer Comment</b>
<b>and are compatible with the parks passive and recreation use together with its community focus as a premier park</b>		support for Frisbee Golf which is located in this area	work closely with Disc Golf Club to minimise conflict and retain Disc Golf.
	Add kiosk / toilet and info centre	Mixed	Support for kiosk but mixed support for a cafe. Potential provision for café in the identified area already exists in the Ice Arena Lease and in the Reserve Management Plan
	Create spaces for gatherings	Low level of support	Plan amended to retain existing rose gardens configuration, reducing the proposed central lawn gathering area
<b>Recognising the unique heritage and supporting existing features and uses – including education, access and leases</b>	Interpretive signage	High level of support	No changes to plan
	Educational facility		Conceptual idea
	Supporting existing leases		No changes to plan
	Protect heritage structures	High level of support	No changes to plan. Heritage structures are protected through policies in the Reserve Management Plan
<b>Enhancing the ecology, planning for vegetation and tree succession</b>	Create succession plan for trees	Mixed	A succession plan has been recommended, both in this development plan and the Queenstown Bay Foreshore Reserves Management Plan to recognise the importance of the shelter but also recognising the threat the Douglas Fir poses to the surrounding hillside as it is a particularly invasive wilding conifer species in this part of the District.
	Maintain woodland shelter belt	Mixed	See above
	Structure planting framework		
	Series of theme gardens & areas	Few submissions	Development plan is a high level concept. Any significant changes to existing plantings would require further

Design Principle	Big Move	Submissions	Officer Comment
			consultation and design
	Reduce high maintenance flower beds	Low level of support	Plan amended to retain Rose Gardens in existing general configuration
	Introduce productive gardens	Few submissions - Mixed	Development plan is a high level concept. Any significant changes to existing plantings would require further consultation and design