

Community & Environment Committee

12 March 2026

Report for Agenda Item | Rīpoata moto e Rāraki take [3]

Department: Community Services

Title | Taitara: Widgeon Park Development Plan

Purpose of the Report | Te Take mō te Pūroko

To consider the Widgeon Park Development Plan for adoption.

Recommendation | Kā Tūtohuka

That the Community and Environment Committee:

1. **Note** the contents of this report; and
2. **Adopt** the Widgeon Park Development Plan.

Prepared by:



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20 February 2026

Reviewed and Endorsed by:



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Context | Horopaki

1. The Widgeon Park Development Plan, **Attachment A** is a high-level landscape concept plan indicating the spatial layout of the reserve. It will be used to guide future development (including restricting development in areas) of the reserve. The plan captures the vision of the community to create a space that is well designed, multi-purpose, accessible, provides for multiple user groups, and enhances ecological, biodiversity, recreational and cultural values.
2. Widgeon Park is located in Lake Hayes Estate/Shotover Country bordering the Kawarau River. Widgeon Park is located on the lower river terrace and is prone to flooding. It comprises an area of approximately 29.4 hectares that includes 9.8 hectares that is currently leased for grazing purposes.

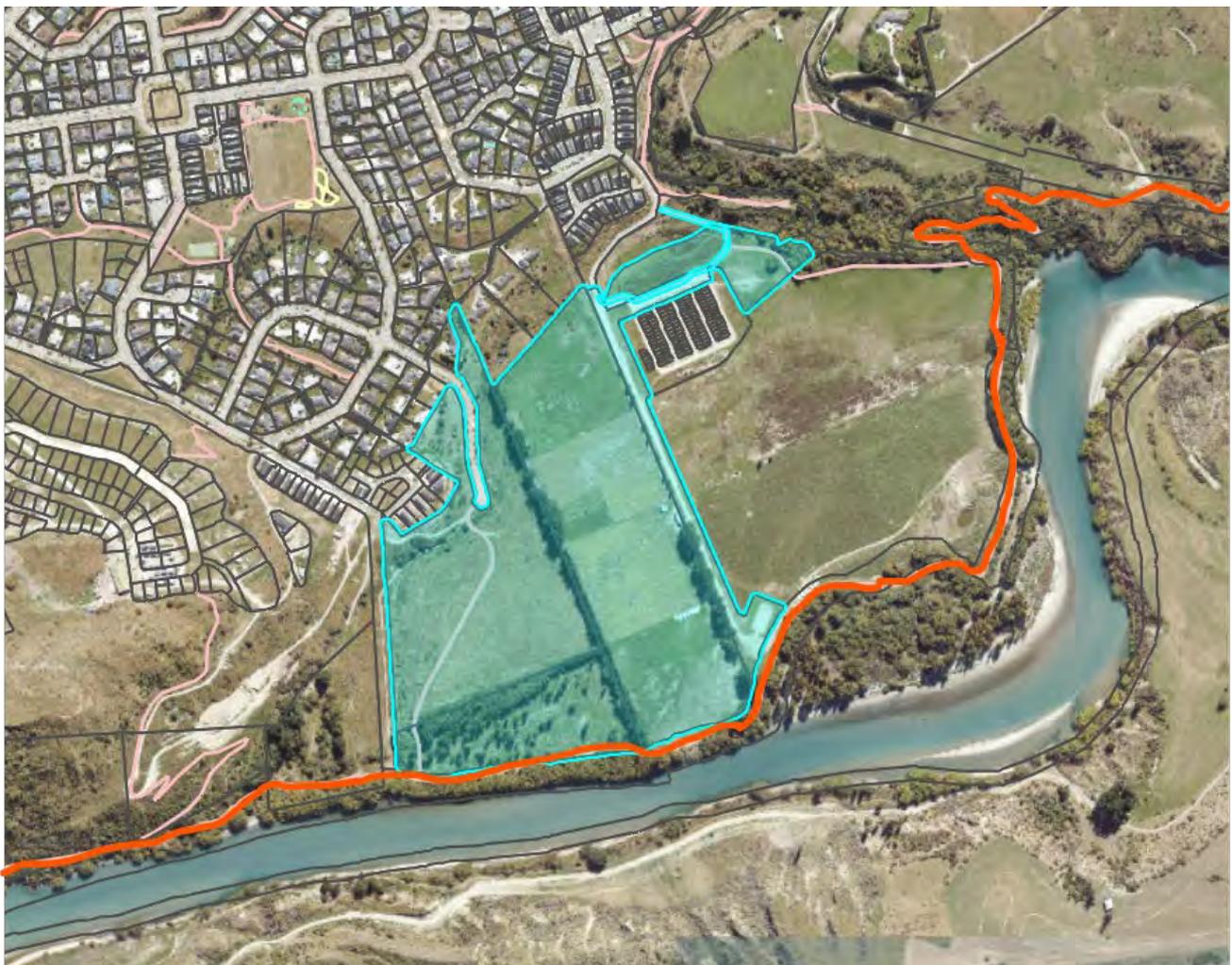


Figure 1: Aerial image of the land included in the Widgeon Park Development Plan. Twin Rivers Trail shown in orange. Source: QLDC GIS.

3. Widgeon Park is currently largely undeveloped, underutilised and in relatively poor condition i.e low biodiversity values, poor soil condition, and infrequent maintenance largely due to a high

number of pest species, both flora (crack willows, conifers and thistles) and fauna (rabbits). It accommodates a section of the Twin Rivers Trail that is located along the margins of the Kawarau River. Connections and parking for users accessing the trail and the river also currently exist. The reserve is currently used for accessing the trail network, dog walking and community planting in the reserve adjacent to the Bridesdale allotments.

4. The Twin Rivers Trail (shown orange in Figure 1) is a part of the NZ Great Ride network and is highly used by both commuters and recreationists (pedestrians, dog walkers, cyclists and horse riders).
5. Beca Group Limited were appointed to provide landscape and urban design services and prepare the Widgeon Park Development Plan on behalf of Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC).
6. Aukaha and Te Ao Marama were consulted and provided input on behalf of local Iwi.
7. Stakeholder consultation included meetings with the Lake Hayes Estate & Shotover Country Community Association (LHESCA) and other key community groups, such as the Bridesdale Bush Trust, Queenstown Trails Trust (QTT), and the Arrowtown – Kawarau Ward Councillors at the time (Cllr White, Cllr Ferg and Cllr Guy) in April and May 2025. This, combined with a site analysis and opportunities and constraints analysis, informed the draft plan.
8. The draft plan was circulated to the key stakeholders prior to public feedback. The draft plan was then shared for public feedback for four weeks closing on 14 September 2025. It was shared through an online survey on QLDC's Let's Talk project page, social media posts, a media release, posters and screens at QLDC venues, a Lakes Weekly Bulletin snippet, direct emails to stakeholders, radio, and on-site signage. In addition, a drop-in session was held at the Shotover Primary School as well as attendance with brief presentation at the LHESCA meeting. The public feedback was analysed and considered in the development of the final plan.

Analysis and Advice | Tatāritaka me kā Tohutohu

9. The purpose of this development plan is to establish a clear long-term vision (10–15 years) for Widgeon Park. It aims to ensure that future development is undertaken in a coordinated and strategic manner, rather than through ad-hoc decisions.
10. The plan identifies the constraints, and opportunities associated with the reserve and outlines appropriate management responses. By doing so, it seeks to meet growing community demand and enhance the park's value as an accessible, high-quality open space for current and future users.
11. The key aspirations of the development plan are to enhance:
 - Connections and access: Provide a link from Widgeon Park to the Bridesdale allotments as well as an off-road trail along Hayes Creek Road, and other shorter trails connecting the areas of reserve.

- Pest control: Improve rabbit fencing and control as well as manage crack willows.
- Parking: Provide reserve parking at Widgeon Park.
- Recreation: Improve and provide enhanced recreation activities such as nature play, bike jump and skills area, and potential dog park.
- Biodiversity: Improve biodiversity and ecological values through implementation of reserve planting including native riparian planting and a blend of appropriate exotics for amenity and shade.
- Soil quality: Restore and regenerate soils to enable open grassland and native planting.
- Reserve infrastructure: Provide reserve infrastructure such as toilet facilities, bbq and picnic areas.

12. A range of public feedback was received including 32 submissions on the Let's Talk page. 18 in support, 6 opposed, and 8 neutral. In addition, 10 written submissions were also received as part of the public feedback period. A summary of the public feedback received for the Widgeon Park Development Plan is included in **Attachment B** (Let's Talk Summary) and **Attachment C** (Email submissions).

13. The main themes and ideas that emerged from the public feedback were:

- Improving Recreation: Requests to support a variety of informal recreation activities including bike jumps/pump track.
- Reserve infrastructure/amenities: Requests for toilets and picnic areas. This included some concern around the location of infrastructure in a floodplain.
- Loss of natural character: Concerns were raised about over development in this reserve. A lot of value is given to natural rural character of the site and for this to be retained.
- Dog Park: Support for a fenced dog park.
- Restoration: General support for restoring the site where natural character is retained (not formal gardens) and managing pest species.
- Leased Area: General support for retention of leased area where the purpose is rural in nature.

14. The public feedback, including an internal design review from relevant Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) across the Parks and, Property and Infrastructure (P&I) teams was used to refine the final plan.

15. The final plan reflects the public feedback and community sentiment for how they would like to use the reserve in the future.
16. This included the provision of a possible dog park area, the relocation of the bike jump/skills area to higher ground, removal of more formal recreation activities such as volleyball and pétanque courts, retaining the central conifer wind break short-term but with successional planting of natives and appropriate exotics, removing the cricket oval and replacing with a community or informal sporting space, and the identification of the consented jetty location by KJet (which is located outside of the reserve).
17. This report identifies and assesses the following reasonably practicable options for assessing the matter as required by section 77 of the Local Government Act 2002.
18. Option 1 Adopt the Widgeon Park Development Plan.

Advantages:

- The Development Plan will set out an agreed vision for the development, enhancement, preservation and use of Widgeon Park that reflects the community's feedback. It will assist in guiding development, to provide a highly valued recreation space for the community to enjoy into the future.
 - The Development Plan will provide a clear direction for future decisions on development and upgrades to Widgeon Park. Taking it from its current degraded state to a user-friendly community recreation asset.
19. The Development Plan will allow for funding to be requested through the LTP process and by the community.
- The community's expectation that a finalised Development Plan for Widgeon Park will be met.

Disadvantages:

- Some of the proposed changes may not be supported by all members of the community.
- Some of the recreation amenities proposed in the plan may not be able to be funded in the short or medium term, which may disappoint or frustrate the community.

20. Option 2 Do not adopt the Widgeon Park Development Plan (do nothing).

Advantages:

- Some future development will be limited which will be supported by some people.

- Funding for implementation of the development plan will not be required.

Disadvantages:

- The lack of a cohesive plan for the site will mean reserve facilities and amenities, or community-led recreation initiatives for facilities and services, may progress in an ad hoc unplanned nature that does not optimise the values and use of the reserve.
- The biodiversity, soil quality and ecological values of the site will continue to decline, by the increase in pest species (seeding exotics and rabbits).
- The opportunity to improve and increase the useability of Widgeon Park will not be realised, while demand for quality open space and recreation opportunities will continue to increase with future growth and development in the district and increasing visitor numbers.

21. This report recommends **Option 1** for addressing the matter because the Widgeon Park Development Plan provides Council and the community with a clear and cohesive spatial plan that reflects the community's vision and values for the reserves. It will provide the best opportunity to use the recreation space optimally to meet the community's needs and will contribute to the overall quality of life and well-being of the reserve users.

Consultation Process | Hātepe Matapaki

Significance and Engagement | Te Whakamahi I kā Whakaaro Hiraka

22. This matter is of medium significance, as determined by reference to the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy 2024 because it involves a high level of demonstrated community interest of a public asset and impacts the potential level of service of the public asset.
23. The persons who are affected by or interested in this matter are the residents/ratepayers of the Queenstown Lakes District community, Iwi, LHESCA members, community and recreation groups, adjoining property owners, visitors to, and users of the Widgeon Park Reserve.
24. The Council has consulted with the public over a one-month period. 32 responses were received through the online survey on Let's Talk, as well as ten written submissions. This feedback assisted in informing the final Development Plan.

Māori Consultation | Iwi Rūnaka

25. The Council has undertaken consultation with Kāi Tahu representatives, Aukaha and Te Ao Marama, prior to drafting the Development Plan and received feedback on the draft plan that fed into the final plan.

Risk and Mitigations | Kā Raru Tūpono me kā Whakamaurutaka

26. This matter relates to the Community & Wellbeing risk category. It is associated with RISK10005 Ineffective planning for community services or facilities within the QLDC Risk Register. This risk has been assessed as having a high residual risk rating.
27. The approval of the recommended option will allow Council to avoid the risk. This will be achieved by adopting the Widgeon Park Development Plan which will allow for quality informed decision making when upgrading the reserve to better plan for and manage this community asset.

Financial Implications | Kā Riteka ā-Pūtea

28. There are no financial implications for approving the Widgeon Park Development Plan.
29. There is no funding currently allocated in the Long term or Annual plans. Some elements may be carried out by community groups such as planting or wilding removal.
30. Elements of the development plan could be funded in the future by community groups, associations or trusts, or through future QLDC Annual and Long Term Plans.

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

31. The following Council policies, strategies and bylaws were considered:
- Vision Beyond 2050;
 - The Reserves Act 1977;
 - Local Government Act 2002;
 - Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2021;
 - Arrowtown – Lake Hayes Reserve Management Plan (2013);
 - QLDC Future Parks and Reserves Provision Plan;
 - The QLDC Disability Policy 2018;
 - QLDC Tree Policy 2024;
32. The recommended option is consistent with the principles set out in the named policies.
33. This matter is not included in the Long Term Plan/Annual Plan and will not have any impact on it.

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

34. Section 10 of the Local Government Act 2002 states the purpose of local government is
- a. to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities; and
 - b. to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities in the present and for the future.

35. The Development Plan will create a long term vision to protect and enhance Widgeon Park to meet the current and future needs of the community for high quality recreation areas and amenity. As such, the recommendation in this report is appropriate and within the ambit of Section 10 of the Act.

36. The recommended option:

- Can be implemented through current funding under the Long Term Plan and Annual Plan;
- Is consistent with the Council's plans and policies; and
- Would not significantly alter the intended level of service provision for any significant activity undertaken by or on behalf of the Council or transfer the ownership or control of a strategic asset to or from the Council.

Attachments | Kā Tāpirihaka

A	Widgeon Park Reserve Development Plan 2026
B	Widgeon Park Reserve Development Plan Community Feedback (Let's Talk)
C	Widgeon Park Reserve Development Plan Community Feedback (Written Submissions)

WIDGEON PARK RESERVE

CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

10 FEBRUARY 2025



Revision History

Revision No.	Prepared By	Description	Date
A	Rory Kirkwood & Jesse Byrne	For QLDC Review	21.07.2025
B	Rory Kirkwood & Jesse Byrne	For Public Consultation	24.07.2025
C	Rory Kirkwood & Jesse Byrne	For QLDC Review	17.12.2025
D	Rory Kirkwood & Jesse Byrne	For QLDC Review	10.02.2026

Document Acceptance

Action	Name	Signed	Date
Prepared by	Rory Kirkwood & Jesse Byrne		17.07.2025
Reviewed by	Jesse Byrne		17.07.2025
Approved by	Tom Abbott		18.07.2025
on behalf of Beca Ltd.			

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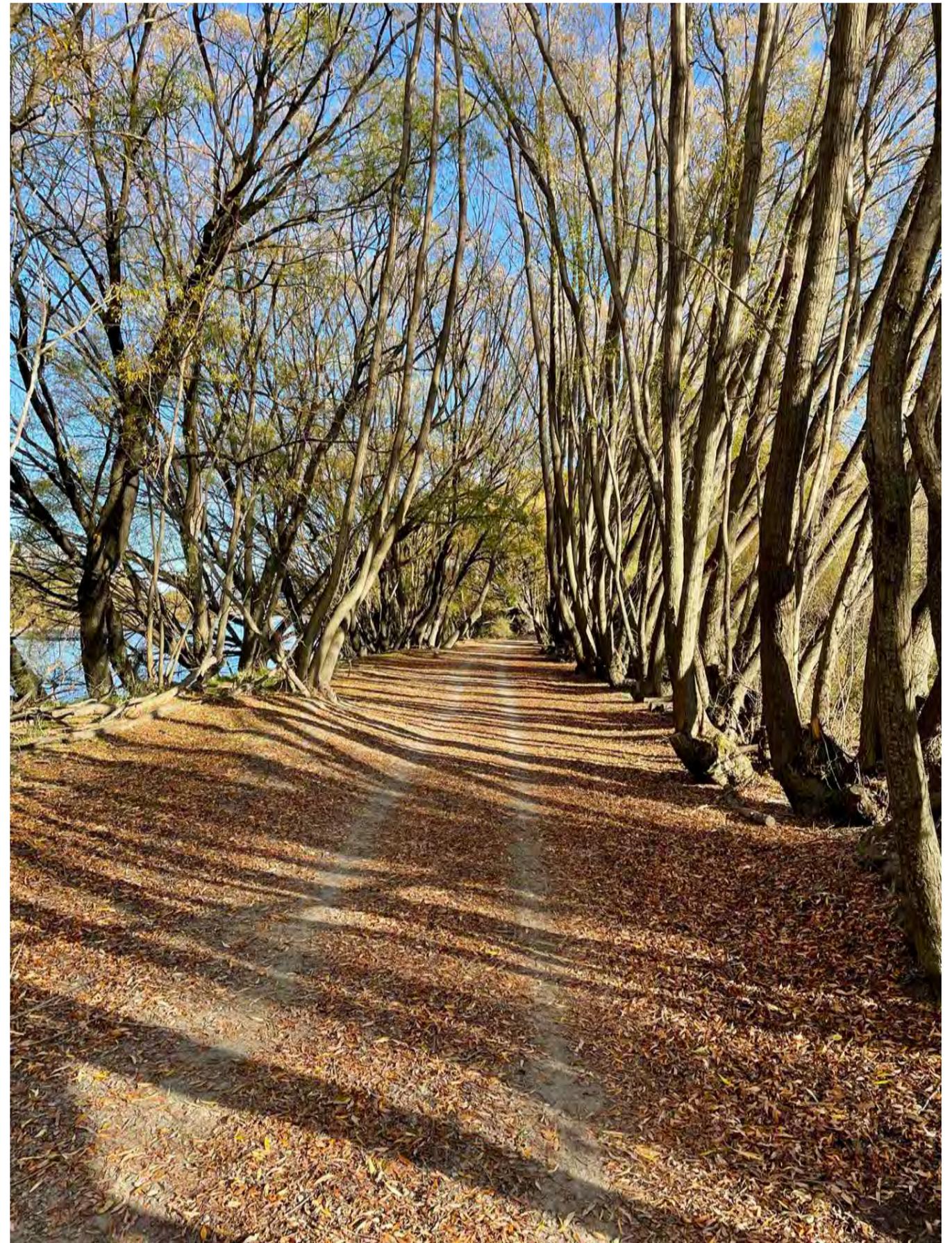
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Twin Rivers Trail at Southern End of Widgeon Park Reserve

1.1 LOCATION

Widgeon Park Reserve is located in the heart of the Queenstown Lakes District and sits on the banks of the Kawarau River, in the Whakatipu Basin.

The Whakatipu Basin is characterised by the surrounding peaks and pristine lakes which were formed by glacial and tectonic activity. Fluvial rivers and streams run throughout the basin floor, which historically deposited gold from the mountains to the lower reaches. More recently schist bedrock and engineering grade aggregate has been taken from the basin waterways to be used in construction. These materials characterise building vernacular today.

The waterways that feed the lake, including the Kawarau and Shotover Rivers, provide significant ecological habitat for fauna. Exotic species such as crack willows, which are considered invasive alongside watercourses, are common on riparian margins.

The basin has experienced significant land cover changes over time with less than 10% indigenous cover left over much of the area (Landcare Research - Threatened Environment Classification Map, 2016). The original vegetation of the site area would have included scrub, shrub land and tussock/grassland with native beech and broadleaf-podocarp forests. Species seen would include Coprosma, Olearia and Hebe species, with Kōwhai being dominant. Species such as these provide a good source of food and habitat for lizards, birds, bats and insects.

1.2 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this development plan is to provide Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) a spatial layout for the management, enhancement, and development of the Widgeon Park Reserve.

The plan outlines the constraints, qualities and opportunities for the park. It considers community needs, natural habitat restoration, wider connections, recreational opportunities, and cultural heritage to ensure a cohesive experience for users and that the character of the area is retained.

The scope of this development plan will include both Widgeon Park Reserve and the Bridesdale Bush Reserve (formerly referred to as the Bridesdale Farm Wetlands in the Lake Hayes Estate, Shotover Country and Bridesdale (LHESCB) Reserve Management Plan 2021).

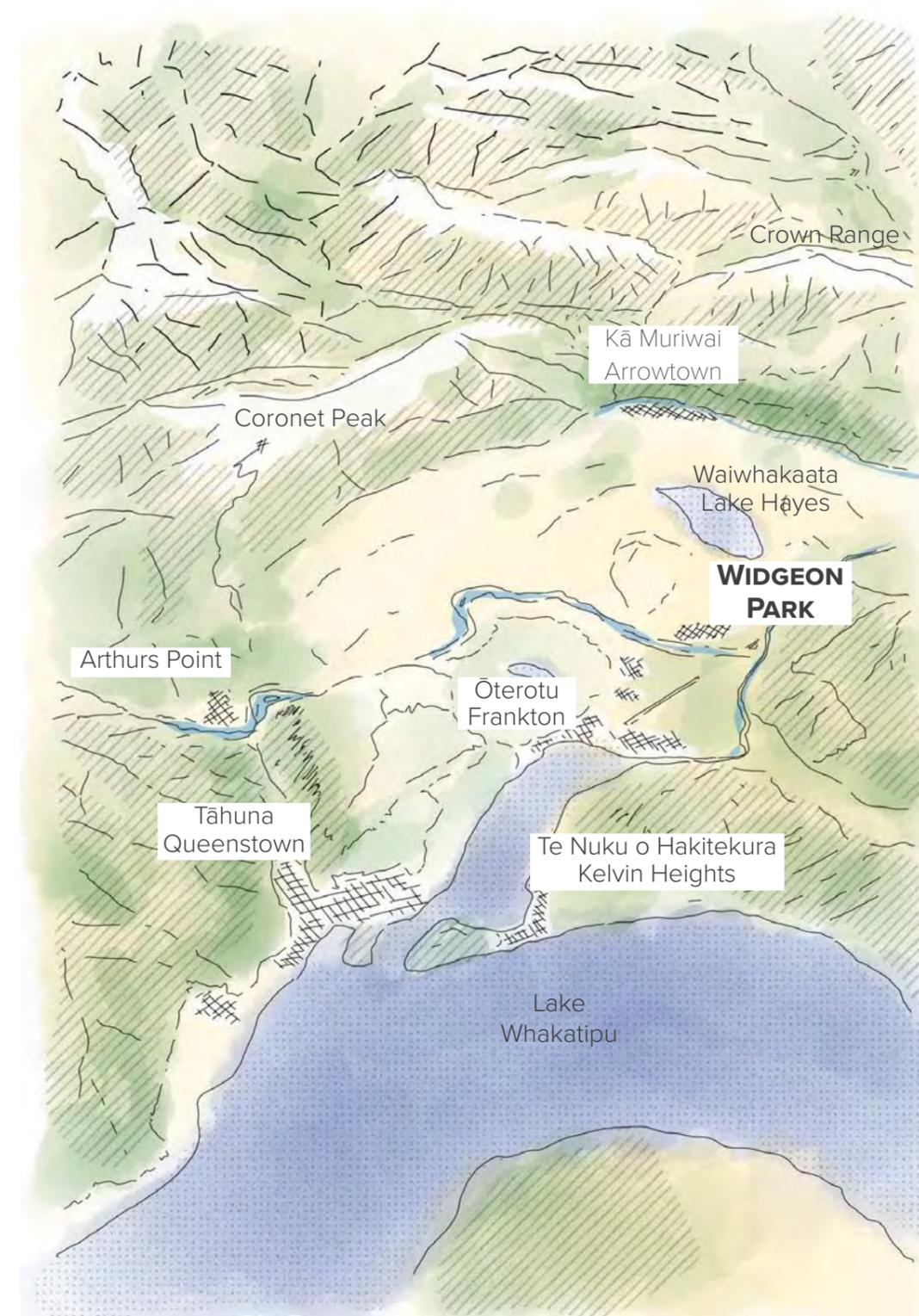


Illustration of Whakatipu Basin

1.3 SITE CONTEXT

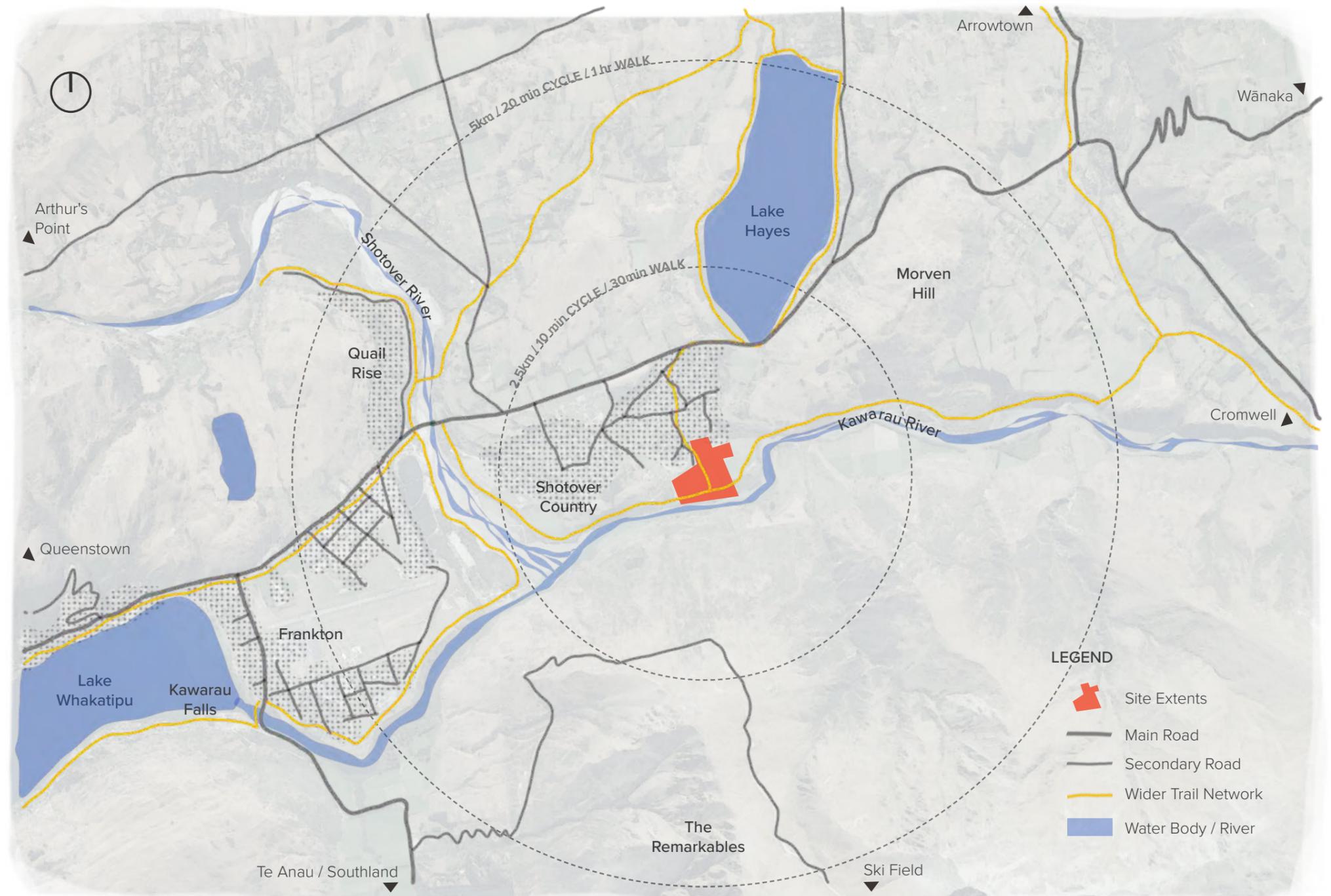
Widgeon Park is located on the lower river terrace of the Kawarau River and sits under the Remarkables mountain range, it is approximately 29.4ha in size, 9.8ha of which is currently leased for grazing.

The Lake Hayes Estate and Shotover Country residential developments which sit on the escarpment behind the park are within walking distance and contain community facilities which include parks and playgrounds, a primary school, hospitality and medical facilities.

The park is connected at the southern end to the popular walking and cycling path, the Twin Rivers Trail. The 18.5km trail which follows the Kawarau River starts in Frankton and finishes at the Arrow Junction. It provides connections to popular swimming spots; Colono and Gurnells Beaches, to nearby Bridesdale Bush walking trails as well as to the wider active travel network.

Vegetation cover within each of these areas varies, but includes mostly open grassland and pockets of low value exotic woodland. Widgeon Park is in particularly poor condition with obvious signs of pest infestation damaging the soil and vegetation cover. The southern end is flood prone and has a natural, riparian character. The Bridesdale Bush Reserve area has had intensive community restoration plantings undertaken in recent years which has added value to the space.

Informal walking and cycling tracks are evident but tend to pass through the park, rather than provide any internal connectivity or recreation use. Vehicle access is provided from two key points; Widgeon Place cul de sac with on street parking and Hayes Creek Road which has unformed open space used for parking to the north and a gravel car park next to the river. The Twin Rivers Trail, Alpine Ave and Mount Rosa Lane provide additional pedestrian access to the park.



1 : 50 000 Context Area Plan



1.4 SITE ANALYSIS

Issues / Constraints:

- Lack of Ngāi Tahu cultural narrative about the area
- Pests - Rabbits
- Limited rabbit proof fencing
- Poor soil condition (dry, hollow)
- Existing vegetation cover is of low ecological value (moderate character value)
- Informal scattered parking
- Lack of connectivity between reserve areas

Qualities:

- Extensive site 29.4 ha.
- Flat and open site
- Open and rural character
- Mature shelter belts and tree stands
- Views and connections to surrounding landscapes (Kawarau River and the Remarkables mountain range)
- Existing community planting projects

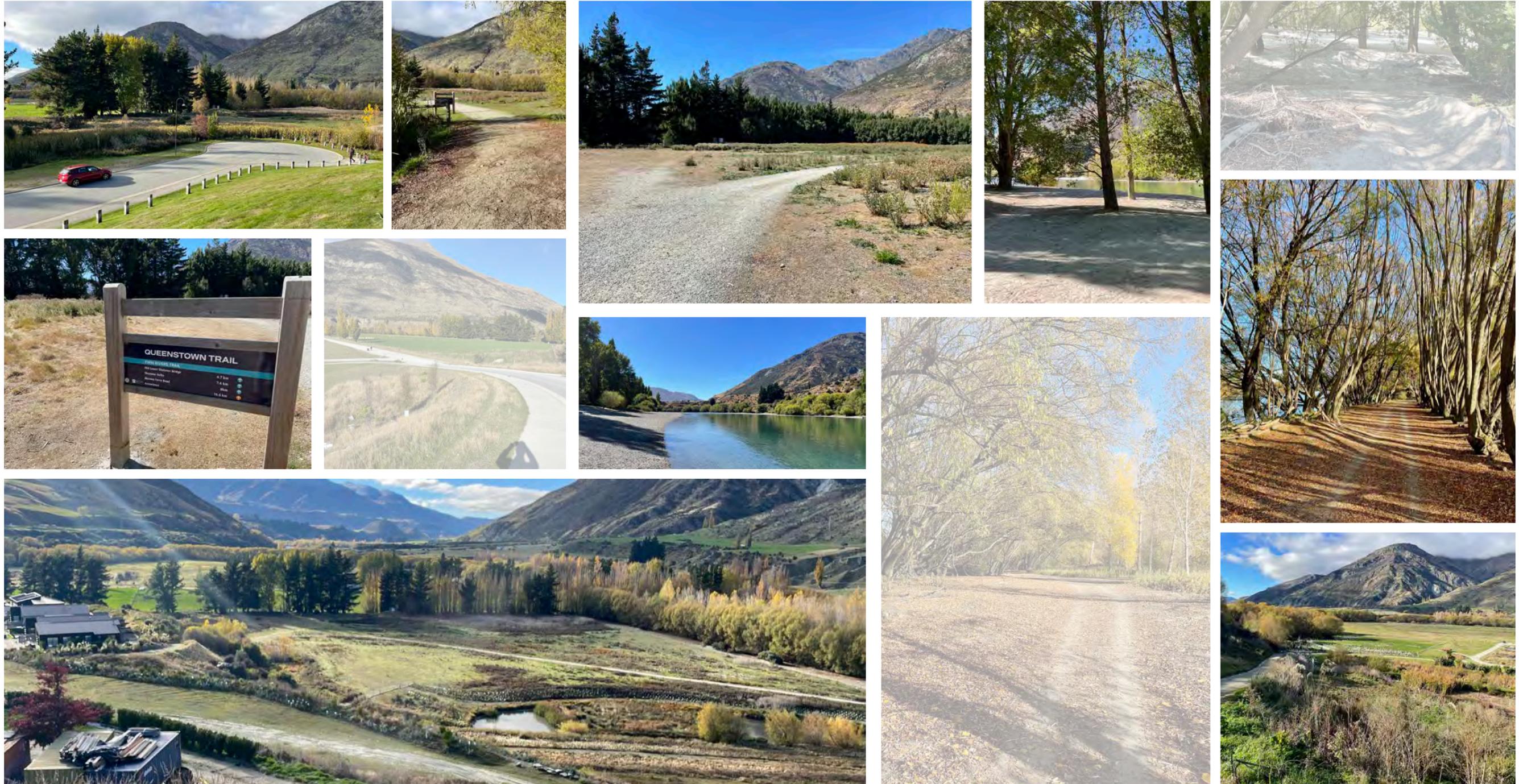
Opportunities:

- Arrival points with parking and wayfinding signage
- Connection between Widgeon Park and Bridesdale Bush Trust area
- Toilet block, Bridesdale Bush Trust events space
- Soil remediation and rabbit proof fencing to allow open grassland and native planting
- Successional tree planting to replace seeding exotics and reduce willow creep
- Specimen trees to provide shade
- Natural play elements and street furniture
- Mountain bike jump and skills area
- Incorporation of a dog park to accommodate higher density development within the Ladies Mile corridor (different age ranges)
- Increased educational awareness of Ngāi Tahu cultural narrative through wayfinding and signage



1 : 4000 Site Analysis Plan

1.5 SITE PHOTOS



All Photos by Beca
February and May 2025

1.6 STRATEGY

OVERARCHING STRATEGIES

Widgeon Park Reserve has two QLDC overarching strategies that create a foundation for the development of the reserve, the 'Parks and Open Spaces Strategy' (2021) and the 'Lake Hayes Estate, Shotover Country and Bridesdale Farm (LHESCB) Reserve Management Plan' (2021). Both documents provide a clear vision and objectives for the development of reserves within QLDC management, as well as specific policies for Widgeon park and Bridesdale Bush Reserve.

Parks and Open Spaces Strategy

The relevant objectives from the strategy include:

- Parks and reserves are diverse, multipurpose and provide for communities, mana whenua and visitor
- Open spaces are well designed, accessible and valued
- We are able to plan for and accommodate growth
- Open spaces are treasured and protected
- Open spaces contribute to enhanced biodiversity, improved water quality and reduced Green House Gas emissions.

Within this document Widgeon Park Reserve is classified as a 'Community Park', which remains an accurate classification.

"A community park is an area of open space on flat or undulating land that provides a variety of informal recreation experiences for residents across a neighbourhood/suburb. The park should include:

- Multiple kick around or play spaces
- Socialising areas, including picnic and BBQ facilities
- Perimeter or walking trail
- Small scale recreation infrastructure such as club rooms, public toilets



Image by Beca. May 2025

LHESCB Reserve Management Plan Vision:

"Lake Hayes Estate, Shotover Country and Bridesdale Reserves provide a range of reserves that generate community connection and enable access to open space, recreation, the natural environment and provide for wellbeing."

Relevant objectives:

- To accommodate appropriate activities for all ages and abilities in defined areas that enhance the community's access to, use, and enjoyment of the reserves.
- To provide reserves that positively contribute to the open space character and support balanced positive social, cultural, and environmental outcomes.
- To support the natural ecological systems within the reserves, including native biodiversity habitat and sustainable water quality processes.
- Develop a plan for improvements.
- To recognise the reserve is subject to floodwater and a high water table, and therefore to develop appropriately.

Policies specific to Widgeon Park Reserve:

- Maintain existing mature planting where it provides public benefit such as wind screening and shade.
- Plant and revegetate to provide for ecological enhancement and carbon sequestration.
- Retain the largely passive nature of the reserve.
- Support the development of parking areas that are appropriate for the recreation use of the reserve where they do not conflict with existing uses.
- Allow for small-scale structures associated with recreation activities on the reserve where they provide public benefit.

- Allow for natural water processes, including establishment of wetlands and flood events.

KAI TAHU VALUES

The following Kāi Tahu values have been adopted from the QLDC Blue Green Network (September 2025) and will be incorporated into any development within the reserve:

- Ki Uta Ki Tai
- Ahi Kā Roa
- Ira Atua Tangata Atua
- Mauri
- Wairua
- Mahika Kai

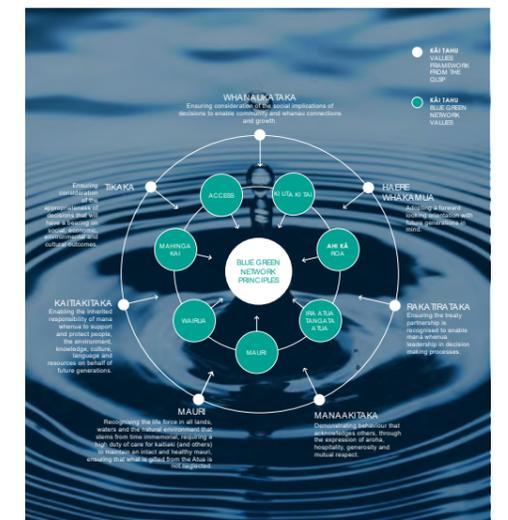


Figure 01: Kai Tahu Values Diagram From 'Draft Blue Green Network (September 2025)'

1.7 PROCESS

ENGAGEMENT FEEDBACK

Who we engaged with

- Lake Hayes Estate Community Association
- Bridesdale Bush Trust
- Aukaha
- Te Ao Mārama Inc. (TAMI)
- Queenstown Trails Trust
- QLDC Arrowtown-Kawarau Ward Councilors
- Community via Let's Talk page, drop in sessions and online submissions

KEY MOVES

A series of key moves were identified through the engagement process to guide the future development of the park. Together, they provide a cohesive framework for the development, enhancement, and use of the park while preserving its unique character.



Remediate soils



Continue to develop the Bridesdale Bush Reserve area and establish a new toilet block



Link Widgeon Park and Bridesdale Bush Reserve community area



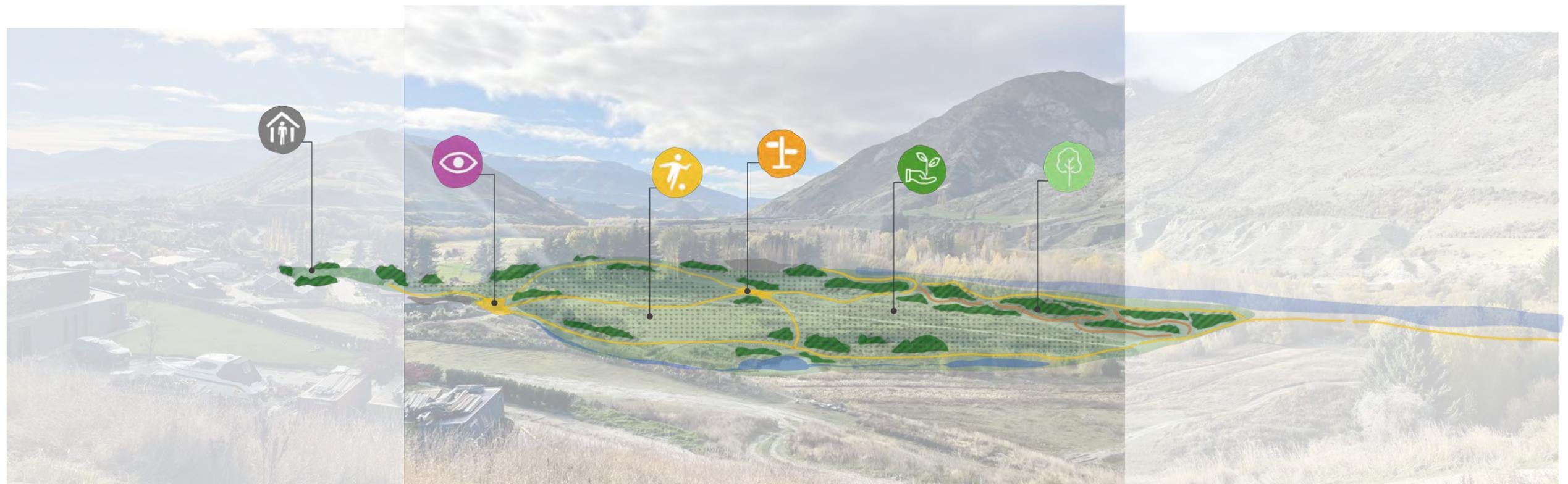
Restore vegetation patterns to encourage biodiversity back into the park



Connect the site with integrated trail network



Utilise park extents for passive and active recreation



2.1 CONCEPT PLAN

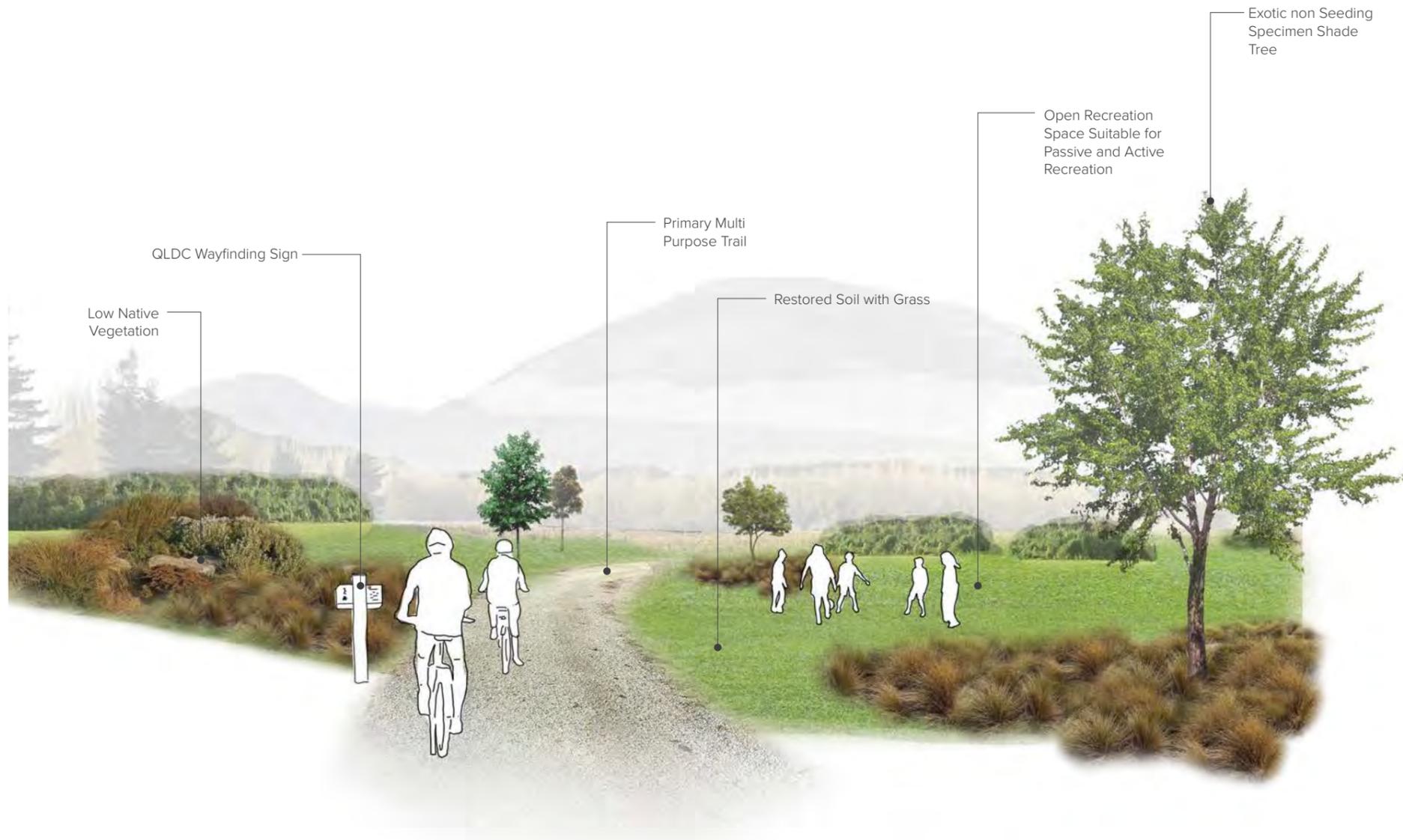
- Provide a vital connection between the community area and Widgeon Park
- Improve pest control measures, increasing rabbit proof fencing and gates at access points
- Restore and regenerate soils within fenced area and introduce pockets of native planting and shade trees
- Clear exotic wilding species and introduce successional planting replacements
- Introduce a native planted buffer between the river trail and the park to reduce crack willow creep
- Develop community area as planned and provide new toilet block
- Provide an arrivals space at 'Widgeon Place' with gravel car park, wayfinding, congregation point
- Improve trail network through and within the park including a loop track
- Provide natural play and mountain biking facilities for a range of age groups
- Provide a range of open spaces within the park for passive and active recreation, which can be used for larger events than those held at Bridesdale Bush Trust community area
- Provide picnic area adjacent to nature play area including BBQ, seating and shade structure
- Consider retaining section for leasing purposes, subject to future review



2.2 SKETCH PERSPECTIVES

Perspective 01

View from primary trail with open recreation spaces, looking south towards the Remarkables and Kawarau River.



Precedents



2.2 SKETCH PERSPECTIVES

Perspective 02

View from Widgeon Place street entrance at confluence of trails looking south towards natural play area.



Precedents



3.1 SOIL AND TREE MANAGEMENT

SOIL QUALITY

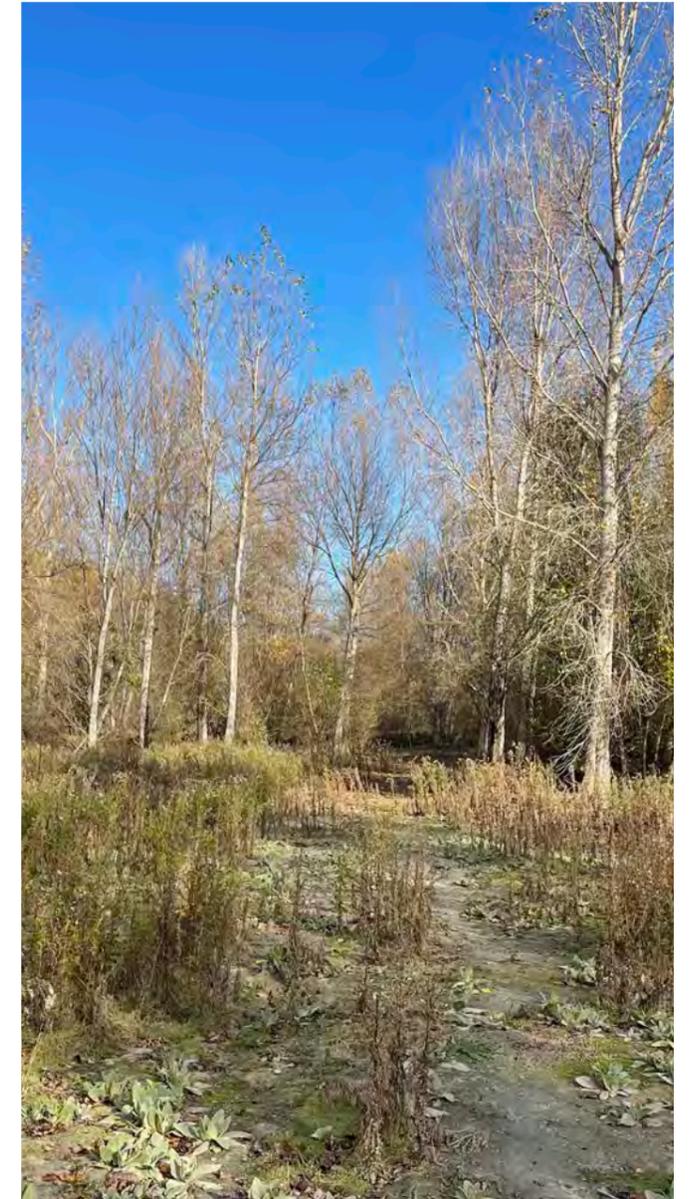
Soil quality within the park is of moderate to low quality, however due to the rabbit infestation on the park the overall ground condition and soil make up is very poor.

Targeted pest control measures are to be put in place to prevent further damage, following this, improvements in soil quality through aeration, nutrient management, and moisture control are essential for ensuring the vitality of new plantings and fostering a robust ecosystem.

VEGETATION REMOVAL

There are a number of areas of existing vegetation highlighted for removal as part of this development plan. These include areas of poplars and willows to the southern end of the park and the conifer shelter belt that lines the centre of the park.

The development of a long term vegetation management plan is recommended to carry out removals, successional replacements and ongoing maintenance over time. Trials in localised areas should inform the methodology.



Images of current soil condition and willow + poplar trees. May 2025.

3.2 PLANT SPECIES

PLANTING PHILOSOPHY

The overall landscape planting strategy aims to restore and enhance the underlying landscape patterns and processes of the site as well as providing open grassland areas with shade trees for passive and active recreation.

The design aims to provide;

- An arrival experience that provides seasonal interest using a mix of deciduous trees and native understory planting
- Open grassland areas that contain a mix of mown and meadow grasses
- Shade trees that break up the open space network without limiting views to surrounding landscapes or opportunities for passive recreation uses
- Native buffer planting that enhances sense of place and improves recreational user experience by creating areas of interest and changing landscape patterns within the park
- Species that support indigenous biodiversity and ecology and complement existing naturalness of the site
- Enhancement of the wet low lying area to the southern end of the park with native riparian planting that thrives in wet/dry conditions
- A low flammability plant palette that reduces fire risk
- CPTED passive surveillance principles considered in planting design and species selection
- Consideration to be given to fruit tree species in future design phases

TREES

- (— Exotic species)
- (● Shelter Belt species)



Aristotelia serrata
Wineberry



Cordyline australis
Ti Kouka, Cabbage Tree



Coprosma sp.
mix



Fucospora sp.
Mountain & Red Beech



Griselinia littoralis
Kapuka, NZ Broadleaf



Hebe salicifolia
Koromiko



Hoheria sp.
Lacebark



Metrosideros umbellata
Southern rata



Oleria sp.
varies



Pittosporum tenuifolium
Black matipo



Plagianthus regius
Manatu, Ribbonwood



Podocarpus laetus
Totara



Pseudopanax sp.
Lancewood



Sophora microphylla
South Island Kowhai



Acer sp.
Maple



Tilia sp.
Linden



Ulmus sp.
Maple



Quercus sp.
Oak

GRASSES AND SHRUBS



Austroderia richardii
Toe toe



Hebe sp.
Varies



Tussock sp.
Tussock



Coprosma acerosa 'Hawea'
Groundcover coprosma



Phormium sp.
NZ Flax



Meadow grasses

3.3 MATERIALITY AND WAYFINDING



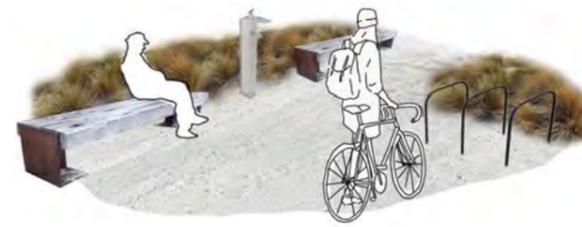
WAYFINDING AND SIGNAGE

- Wayfinding, signage content and materials to be in accordance with QLDC signage guidance.
- 'Whakatipu Active Travel Network' Signage guideline principles to inform design: Connection, Consistent, Visible, Legible, Language and Continuity.
- Types of signage include: local connections, large plinths, barrier bollards, distance markers and directional bollards.
- Wayfinding / signage elements are found at every entrance to the park as well as at trail junctions.



TRACKS AND TRAILS

- Clear material distinction between connection, park and meandering pathways.
- Materials are indicative of the area and readily available.
- Wayfinding element at key junctions.
- Opportunity for informal mown meadow trails throughout site.



FURNITURE

- Furniture materials to be aligned with materials used in QLDC parks / reserves.
- Furniture to include: picnic tables, bench seating, dog and waste bins, cycle racks, drinking fountains and BBQ shelters.
- QLDC standard furniture to be used for elements such as drinking fountain and waste bins.
- Materials to consider include: reclaimed hardwood timbers, corten steel and schist rock.



PLAY

- Nature play area located close to 'Widgeon Place' street entrance.
- Materials sourced from within the park, such as timbers from felled trees to create none structural play elements. e.g. timber steppers or balance logs.
- Proprietary nature play items such as: swing, seesaw, carousel, climbing net and slide.
- Educational insect / bug hotel created using materials sourced from site
- Softfall surface to be bark mulch.

Attachment C: Widgeon Park Reserve Development Plan Community Feedback (Written Submissions)

Widgeon Park Reserve Development Plan

The real question to be asked about the Widgeon Park Development Plan is: Why is the plan being drafted in isolation from Council's work on developing sports fields on council-owned land at 516 Frankton-Ladies Mile, less than 2 km away, within the same Eastern Corridor neighbourhood? Where is the wider vision?

Let's make better use of both Widgeon Park and 516 Frankton-Ladies Mile. Any playing fields proposed at 516 Ladies Mile could readily fit within the part of Widgeon Park that is proposed to be left undeveloped and "retained for leasing purposes". **Let's have better-integrated reserve planning and think about how to achieve the best value for ratepayers.**

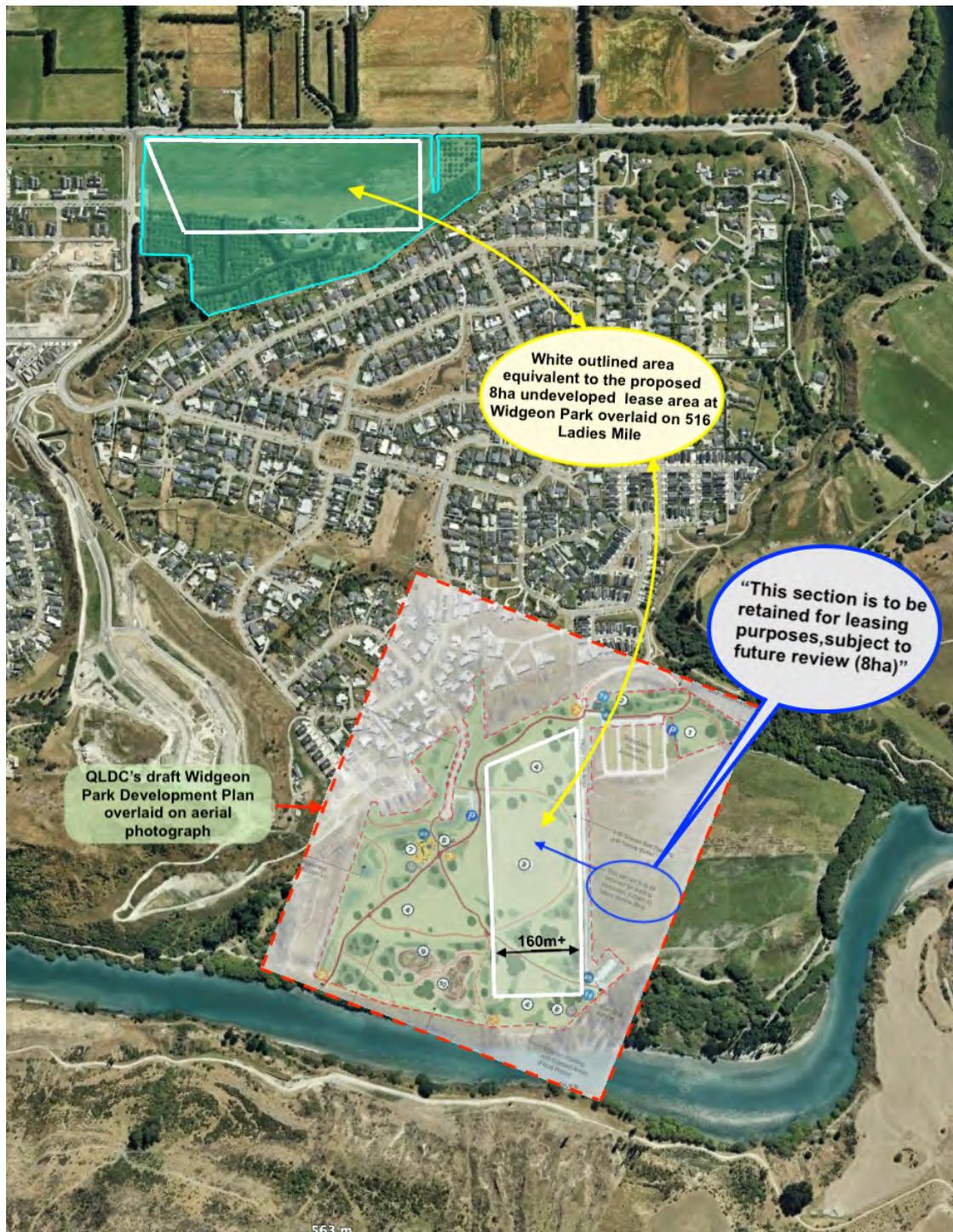


Fig 1: Any sports fields proposed for 516 Frankton-Ladies Mile could fit within the "undeveloped area" at Widgeon Park

There are a number of good activities proposed to be included in the concept plan for Widgeon Park, but, together, they occupy only 13.4 ha of the entire 21 ha site. Council's concept plan shows an unused 7.6 ha area being "retained for leasing purposes, subject to future review (8ha)." This is the fenced-off area that has previously been leased to a local farmer for grazing.

This 8ha area is outlined in white on the Development Plan and on the images above and below. It is 160+ metres wide. Wide enough to accommodate a whole row of regulation length sports fields in an E-W orientation. Wide enough to accommodate even more regulation sports fields in a side-by-side N-S layout. Widgeon Park can accommodate all of the activities exactly as shown in the concept plan and still accommodate multiple sports fields.

The land at 516 Ladies Mile is too valuable to be used for sports fields, especially when less valuable land is already held by QLDC as reserve and is apparently only going to be leased for grazing.

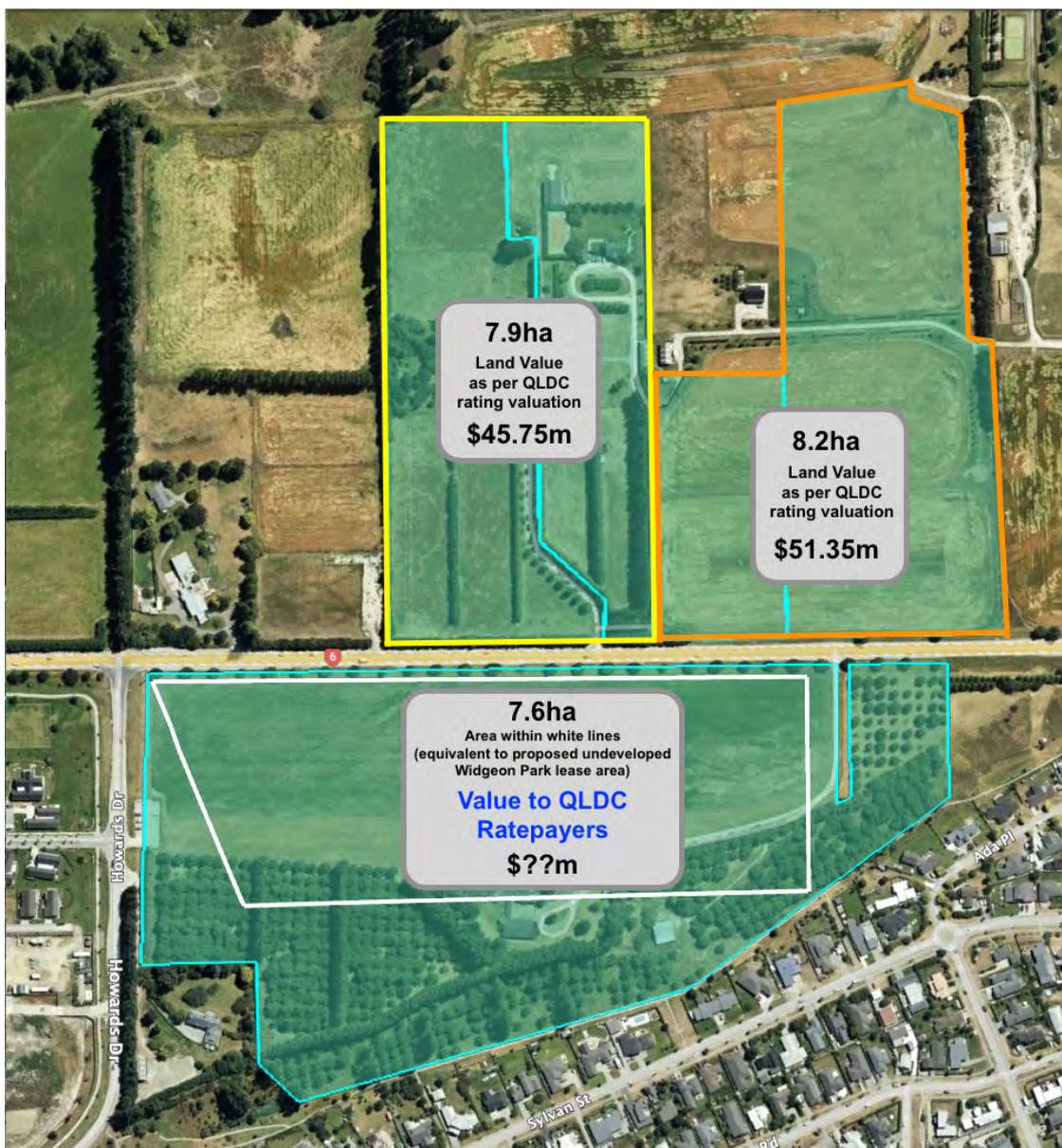


Fig 2: QLDC's rating land values of two areas of land of approximately 8ha opposite 516 Frankton-Ladies Mile.

QLDC's landholding at 516 Frankton-Ladies Mile is one of the best, undeveloped blocks of land in the Eastern Corridor. It has 594 metres of frontage onto Frankton-Ladies Mile, as well as road frontages onto both Howards Drive and an unformed legal road to the east.

The land is freehold. It is not classified as reserve and there is no requirement on council to develop it for playing fields. Council is entitled to sell the land or develop it for other purposes.

There is a planted, sloping strip along the southern edge of the 14.6 ha site, which leaves 11.5 ha of flat land level with Frankton-Ladies Mile. A part of the flat area, say 3.5ha, could be utilised for a central, local park and for buildings for a community centre. This would still leave 8 ha of flat land, with a value in the vicinity of \$50m.

This surplus land should not be developed for sports fields. The Queenstown Lakes district community cannot afford such waste when other QLDC owned land is available. The surplus land should be sold.

The proceeds could be used to off-set the original purchase price of the house and land at 516 Frankton-Ladies Mile; to develop a local park near Howards Drive; and to develop playing fields at Widgeon Park (though the Long Term Plan already shows \$5.4m being allocated for development of playing fields in the eastern corridor within the next two years and this money could be re-allocated to Widgeon Park). If council wanted to demonstrate real vision, it could also use a small portion of the proceeds to acquire the 16.8ha site adjoining Widgeon Park (current rating value \$2.8m). The two sites could be recontoured to raise their level above the level of the Kawarau River in flood conditions and developed over time into a 40ha regional sports facility with: trail connections; frontage along a nationally recognised river; uninterrupted views of the Remarkables; and an alternative road access.

Questions should be asked as to why 516 Frankton-Ladies Mile has been proposed for the development of sports fields. Is it just because the site is owned by QLDC and the original purchase decision has to be justified? Is it desirable to locate playing fields adjacent to a busy highway? Or will this just encourage spectators to stop their vehicles and park randomly alongside the road, as happens in similar situations elsewhere? Is the site as sheltered as the lower land at Widgeon Park? Will it provide as pleasant an environment for users as Widgeon Park could provide?

There will no doubt be nay-sayers who will point out that the land adjoining Widgeon Park (not the reserve itself) has held water after heavy rainfalls and question its suitability for sports fields. But there are some simple engineering solutions: such as re-establishing and maintaining the high-level flow path on the inner bend of the river and recontouring the land near the river edge at the upstream end of the site. There is also the option of raising the level of part of the site using material excavated from local construction sites. Contractors would pay to be able to place clean-fill in this location. Look how quickly the Council-owned clean-fill site below the airport runway has filled up (while generating revenue for both Council and the site operator, who are both paid for every cubic metre of fill delivered to the site).

Likewise, the views of some of the residents of Lake Hayes Estate, as they relate to new activities, need to be treated with caution. In 2019, Chris and Michaela Meehan sought to establish the Winton Tennis Centre on land adjacent to Widgeon Park. This philanthropic gesture would have seen two covered tennis courts, six uncovered courts and a tennis academy established for the Wakatipu community, on privately owned land near Widgeon Park, at no cost to council. This proposal was opposed by a group of Lake Hayes Estate residents and the resource consent application was declined. Let's please not let this NIMBY attitude prevail over the interests of the wider Queenstown Lakes district community.

All of the other activities proposed on the concept plan for Widgeon Park are supported.

Remarkables Park Limited
10 September 2025



The Academy



9 September 2025

Queenstown Lakes District Council
Private Bag 50072
Queenstown
9348

Dear Queenstown Lakes District Council,

Re: Submissions on the Draft Concept Development Plan for Widgeon Park Reserve

On behalf of The Academy, I am pleased to enclose a set of letters written by our students in response to the Draft Concept Development Plan for Widgeon Park Reserve.

Our class spent a full day at Widgeon Park where we explored the natural setting and enjoyed its open spaces. Using your plan, the students brainstormed ideas, visualised where the proposed developments might be placed, and considered how the park could be both improved and protected. Their letters reflect the discussions we had as a group and the perspectives they developed as young citizens.

We greatly appreciate the opportunity for our students to engage with a real community planning process and to practise sharing their ideas in a meaningful way.

If you would like to contact me about this submission, I can be reached at:



Thank you for considering the voices of our students as part of your consultation.

Yours sincerely,

Simone Putensen



16 September 2025

Queenstown Lakes District Council
Private Bag 50072
Queenstown
9348

Dear Council Members

Re: Draft Concept Development plan for Widgeon park Reserve

I am a kid from the Academy. We recently went to Widgeon park. because we are learning about nature and survival. I am writing about some ideas about Widgeon Park that I would like you to know.

Access

I love how natural everything is there, but there is one problem: it is a little bit hard to transport stuff there. So you could put in a wharf. This would mean people could launch their jet skis and small boats

Recreation

Some people might not have water with them so if you put in water fountains around the place this would provide humans and dogs with water. As a kid myself, I think all the kids and maybe

adults would like it if you add some sort of swing above the water so kids can jump off the swing into the water. The jump track was a good idea, I also think a good idea would be a half pipe.

Biodiversity

I think it would be a great idea to have a bird house and bug holes so we can all help the very special animals and insects from extinction and predators especially for the pollinators so they can keep doing their job. It would be a good idea to add more fish to the water so then we could catch fish easier.

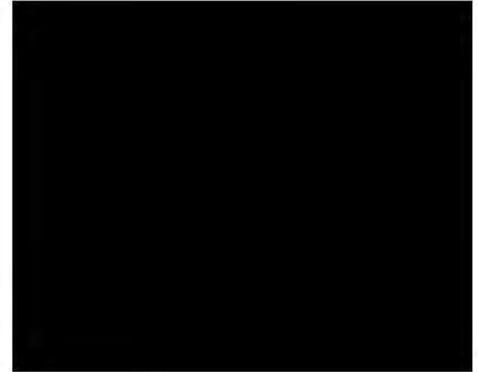
Thank you for listening to our ideas. We hope this will help you grow Widgeon Park.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dakota', is written above a horizontal blue line.

Dakota Rose Russek

The Academy



Queenstown Lakes District council
Private Bag 50072
Queenstown
9348

Dear Council Members

Re:Draft Concept Development plan for Widgeon Park
reserve

Hello I am a student at the Academy and we have visited Widgeon Park. I love Widgeon park the way it is. We spent hours playing and building a fort. It was amazing.

- Wild life

We saw some wildlife like kereru, tui and piwakawaka. I think that more people would enjoy it if it had more native wildlife and fauna.

Maybe you could have a space where people could teach and learn or teach people skills like how to make a fire, bivouac building but all in a designated area.

There could be more toilets and a designated area for people to hang out. Your idea of a community space near the entrance is ok, but maybe this area could be closer to the Natural Play area you're thinking of putting in.

Thank you for reading this. I hope that this will help you with ideas.

Yours sincerely,

Miller

Elsie Miller.

Queenstown lakes District council
Private Bag 50072
Queenstown
9348

Dear council Members

RE: Draft concept Development Plan for Widgeon Park Reserve.

We have recently been to Widgeon Park Reserve. I have some ideas for you.

Access:

I like the road because it allows us to go swimming, however make the road a bit flatter. The potholes are very bumpy. Your ideas for the paths are very good and the gravelled car park could be a bit bigger for more people. The wildlife is great and your ideas for getting more into the area are good. You could also put more toilets in the park

and also a wharf would be good for boats and jet skis and kayaks. Maybe on the far right though so it doesn't interfere with swimmers.

Recreation:

A standing wave would be good for all the Queenstown surfers because the closest surf break is in Hawea which is like one hour away from Queenstown. Also, you could, if you wanted to, put some hot pools in the forest and a skate park would be great. The jump track is a great idea.

Biodiversity and Natural Character

We noticed the beautiful birds, and wildlife, and native plants, and more would be incredible. You could have a sign to keep all pets on leashes so they don't go and kill native animals. It would be cool to have bird houses and bug houses, which would be great.

Thank you for listening to our voices.

Yours sincerely,



Forest Aotea Smith ([REDACTED])



Queenstown Lakes District Council

Private Bag 50072

Queenstown 9348

Dear Queenstown Lakes District Council,

Re: Submission for Widgeon Park Reserve Draft Concept Plan

I am writing as a student of the Academy. We have recently visited Widgeon Park and studied both its natural environment and how people use it. We would like to share some of our ideas for the Draft Concept Plan.

Environment / Wildlife

Firstly, I feel that by welcoming more wildlife to the river, it can increase the chance of people catching fish. Making the Kawarau river become clean, popular and a great swimming hole. This can make people's swims 10x funner, better and so much more! Secondly, by creating more paths going in and out of the Park, It may encourage people to explore the stick huts, burned camp fires, and even create some. By doing so, this can make Widgeon Park Reserve become a great place to visit and just have fun.

Improvement

Widgeon Park could do with some small playgrounds, (natural ones) making it become a fun, addictive place to visit, and to top it off, some toilets and rubbish bins would make the place more clean and local. However, the roads throughout the park will need improvement. The bumps, pot holes, and sharp stones make

driving through Widgeon park a lot harder. By improving this, it can make quick access in and out of the park. Which is way better than a bumpy slow drive.

Recreation

I think that by adding some information plaques it can make people more interested in Widgeon Park, it can be an awesome opportunity to learn about the place you're in, and can encourage people to look up on the internet and research about Widgeon. Making it a very popular and interesting place to visit.

Thank you for listening to our ideas. We hope they will help you design a park that people can enjoy while also protecting the environment for the future.

Yours sincerely,

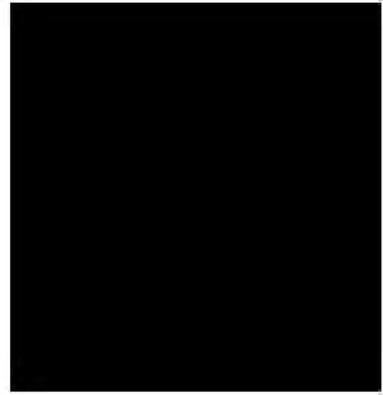
He

Harper Lethbridge [REDACTED]

Queenstown Lakes District Council

Private Bag 50072

Queenstown 9348



Dear Queenstown Lakes District Council,

Re: Submission for Widgeon Park Reserve Draft Concept Plan

I am writing as a student of the Academy. We have recently visited Widgeon Park and studied both its natural environment and how people use it. We would like to share some of our ideas for the Draft Concept Plan.

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Recreation

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Thank you for listening to our ideas. We hope they will help you design a park that people can enjoy while also protecting the environment for the future.

Yours sincerely,

He

Harper Lethbridge 

QLDC

Private Bag 50072

Queenstown

9348

Dear QLDC,

Re: Draft Concept Development Plan For Widgeon Park Reserve

I am a student at The Academy and a citizen of Queenstown. And I have recently visited Widgeon Park and studied its natural environment and I have seen how people use it. I would like to share my ideas for the park with you.

Access:

The current road that we have is a perfect fit for visitors entering the park. However, I think it would be better if we have a boat ramp on the other side of the river and an old fashioned bridge to connect both sides.

Recreation:

I think a summer ski park consisting of pipes and rails would be a good fit because a lot of people come to Queenstown for just skiing and they would stay for the summer as well. Another thing to add would be canopy platforms in the taller trees to admire the park. With some toilets dotted around.

Biodiversity & Natural Character:

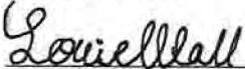
To make Widgeon Park a truly special place we could plant native trees wherever there isn't an activity going on in the park. We could also release hundreds of native birds in the area to give it an even more native feel.

Balancing Perspectives:

I know everyone won't agree with my ideas as they would prefer different facilities and some may even argue just to leave the park as it is but in my opinion I think a majority of people would absolutely love it. I believe the council can balance this out by adding smaller things such as a playground and a garden.

Thank you for taking the time to read my submission I hope these ideas are useful.

Yours Sincerely,



Louie Timothy Wall 



Dear QLDC

Re Draft Concept Development Plan for Widgeon Park Reserve

I am a student at The Academy and recently visited Widgeon Park Reserve. We have been learning about survival skills and how to improve the environment. I am writing to say I have got ideas about how we could make it better.

Access

We like that there is a road which allows people to drive there but there should be some improvements. I think the pot holes need to be filled in because it is bumpy and can damage your car or truck. I also think the car parks need to be bigger because there are going to be more upgrades there and more people will go to Widgeon Park Reserve. Finally, I think it would be great to add some toilets, a dog poo bag box and bins.

Recreation

I think there should be a park built so kids can have fun. I also think a bike jump track for older kids and a bike jump track for younger kids would be a good idea. These tracks should be natural dirt. It should be natural dirt because it keeps the natural feeling.

Biodiversity and Natural Character

I think there should be a bug hotel in the proposed Natural play area. It will attract more birds and will increase biodiversity. The bug hotel could be made out of natural materials. This will attract pollinators in that area which would help the vegetables in the community gardens. Also, maybe you could plant a "Food Forest" around the Community Gardens. This could have trees like lemons, apples, orange etc, and the community could help themselves to it. The fruit that isn't picked, will then be treats for the birds around that space too.

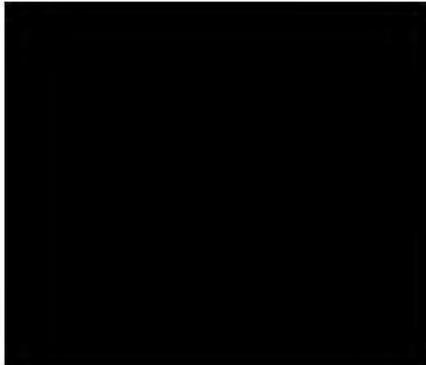
Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I hope its been helpful for your decisions.

Sincerely,

Luke Theyers

Luke Theyers (





Queenstown Lakes District Council

Private Bag 50072

Queenstown 9348

Dear Queenstown Lakes District Council,

R.E Submission for Widgeon Park Reserve Draft Concept Plan

I am writing as a student of The Academy. We recently visited Widgeon Park Reserve and studied its natural environment and how people could use it. We would like to share our ideas for Widgeon Park Reserve's future.

Access

The access to Widgeon Park is okay but we think it could be a lot better. For example the main road could use some attention. It's got big pot holes which makes it very bumpy. If you're going to upgrade Widgeon Park more people will come down this so you need to make sure the roads are well kept. Even if you just fill in the pot holes it would make the road a lot better and less bumpy. Along the road there should also be a cyclist track so they are not biking through mud.

Recreation

Widgeon Park could benefit from a couple more facilities. Your ideas of a community recreation space is good. I think there should be more levels for bike tracks. For example Grade 1, Grade 2, Grade 3, and then a jump park. This way bikers from different levels can improve and benefit from this change. We all agree

that the natural playground is a great idea but a good option is to put toilets there as well as a flying fox. It could either be at the playground or somewhere completely different. But at the same time we think the park should not be over-built because we want to keep its natural beauty and wildlife.

Biodiversity

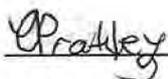
We noticed that there are many birds, trees, and native plants at Widgeon park. But we would like to see lots more wildlife. One way you could increase the wildlife is to make a native area full of native trees and plants that way birds can make homes here, bugs can make home here, and even lizards can make a home here. You could also make paths through this area but if dogs are in here they have to be on a leash. You might be thinking where can I put this native area? You should use one of the open spaces for it. Perhaps next to the proposed Natural Play Area. Creating this area you are making a safe home for these animals.

Natural character

Widgeon Park Reserve has a lot of natural character and we would like to keep it. But we all agree that if you put courts here it will ruin it. Where you're planning to put it would not work for many reasons, one it's a home for many animals, two it's very swampy there, and three you would have to cut down native plants to get enough room. Maybe you could have native courts by the playground. Widgeon park is a great place to find natural character so we should not ruin it.

Thank you for listening to our ideas. We hope you take them into great consideration and make sure you create a park for people to enjoy while also protecting the environment.

Yours sincerely,

 _____

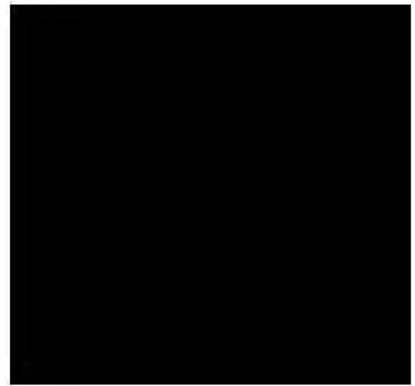
Olivia Pratley 

Queenstown Lakes District Council

Private Bag 50072

Queenstown

9348



Re: Draft Concept Development Plan for Widgeon Park Reserve

Dear QLDC,

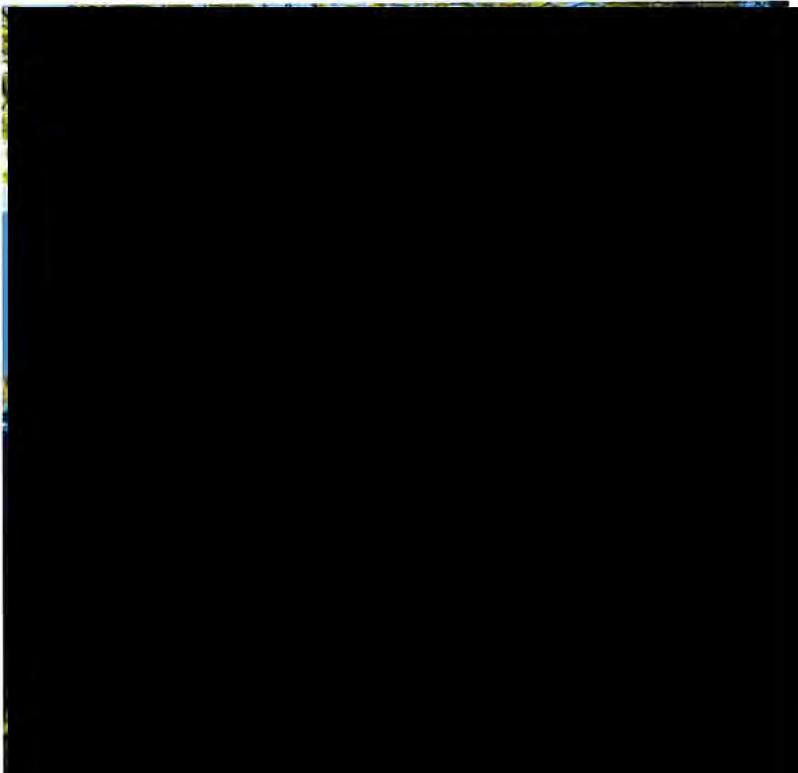
I am a student writing from The Academy about the plans to upgrade the widgeon park reserve. On our field trip to the reserve, we explored and thought about what was already good and what could be improved.

The park has relatively okay access, however, the park does not have any signs or direct access to the main road. The reserve was very quiet. A good idea would be to redo the road to make the access better, as some people do not enjoy



gravel roads and cannot drive on them. Widgeon Place doesn't go all the way to Widgeon park and Hayes Creek Road is in a bad state with too much gravel and potholes everywhere.

In terms of recreation, the park is certainly short on facilities and resources. I think that you are very sensible to add toilets and/or playing areas. It would also be good to have some rules such as not to break or damage other people's creations. A fun kids activity camp would also be a great idea as it would mean that kids can learn survival skills and it could also collect money for a charity as the parents would need to pay for their kids to do the camp. And I think that your ideas to add more facilities like shelters are great, though you definitely need more toilets.



Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. I hope my feedback helps you make widgeon park better!

Yours sincerely, William van Wayenburg, 

WVW



Queenstown Lakes District Council

Private Bag 50072

Queenstown

9348

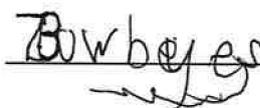
Re: Draft Concept Development Plan for Widgeon Park Reserve

I am a student at The Academy in Queenstown. We finished our learning about survival and primitive skills with a trip to Widgeon Park Reserve, and while we were there, we looked at your development plan and brainstormed ways that the space could be improved.

I really like your plans. My teacher saw a beehive and bug hotel space in Mangere Bridge in Auckland a while ago, and I was thinking that you can have an area with something like that too. The beehive had a glass back with wooden doors that you can open and have a look inside. There were tunnels that you could crawl through that were built inside a "bug hotel" and you were able to open little doors to the glass / perspex sections and have a look at the bugs going about their business. This could be in the natural play area.

I hope you like our ideas.

Yours sincerely,



Zak Bowbyes 