

**QLDC Council  
28 August 2014**

**Report for Agenda Item: 2**

***Department:***

**Planning and Infrastructure**

**2: Temporary Road Closure Application for the Targa South Island Motorsport Event 2014**

**Purpose**

- 1 To make a decision on an application for temporary road closures for the Targa South Island Motorsport 2014 Event.

**Executive Summary**

- 2 Club Targa Incorporated has applied to the Council to close the Crown Range Road/Cardrona Valley Road on Saturday the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2014 from 0725 to 1300 and the Glenorchy-Queenstown Road from West Farrycroft Row to Wyuna Rise from 1330 to 1900. This closure will also affect roads adjoining the closure area where 50 metres of each road will be closed during the closure period.
- 3 Ultimately Council needs to reach an opinion on whether the proposed closures would be likely to impede traffic unreasonably. This report concludes that the road closures would impede traffic. A decision on whether this is reasonable or unreasonable requires consideration of the benefits and methods of mitigating the 'negatives'.
- 4 We are presently waiting for clarification of these aspects, and we understand that these will be presented by Club Targa at the Council meeting. Assuming then that the Council is satisfied that the statutory test is met, we recommend approval of the application with conditions.

**Recommendation**

*That Council:*

- a. **Approve** the temporary closure of the Glenorchy Road between Farrycroft Road and Wyuna Rise on 1 November 2014 between 1:30pm and 7:00pm. The closure will also entail 50 metres of each road where it intersects with the main road closure, including Geary Lane, Closeburn Road, Cove Lane and Fisherman Lane.
- b. **Approve** the temporary closure of the Crown Range/Cardrona Valley Road between the State Highway 6 junction and Prospectors Lane on 1 November 2014 from 7:15 am through to 1:00pm. The temporary closure

also entails 50 metres of each road where it intersects with the main road closure, including Jeffrey Road, Glencoe Road and Eastburn Road.

c. **Agree** to the following conditions to the approved road closures covered by a. and b. above:

- 1 Traffic Management Plan must be approved by Queenstown Lakes District Council's Infrastructure and Assets Group prior to the event taking place.
- 2 The road closures are to be advertised on two local radio stations twice daily for the two weeks prior and on the morning of the event.
- 3 The event organisers are to arrange suitable disposal methods for recycling and rubbish/refuse.
- 4 The applicant notifying all affected parties via an affected party notice, of the extent of the temporary road closure; this notification to be undertaken five working days prior to the event no later than 14-21 days prior to the event date to advise users of the impending closure.
- 5 No later than 14 days prior to the event, the provision of signage advising of the extent and time of closure being erected at
  - the intersection of Riverbank Road and Cardrona Valley Road
  - the two state highway approaches to the intersection of the Gibbston Highway (SH6) and the Crown Range Road
  - on Frankton Road (SH6a) for westbound traffic and
  - on the westbound approach to the One Mile Roundabout
- 6 Provision of a \$5000 bond to Council on the understanding that Council, may deduct reasonable costs associated with road inspections and repair of minor damage associated with the event
- 7 The applicant agreeing to meet Council's costs in the repair of damage not covered by the \$5000 bond addressed in condition 6.
- 8 Targa to make provisions for controlled access for residents and businesses during the event to the satisfaction of the Planning and Infrastructure Group. This will at minimum entail controlled public access on Glenorchy road every two hours during the road closure period.
- 9 In cooperation with Glenorchy businesses, the provision of accommodation / hospitality facilities for the comfort of trampers and other visitors at the Glenorchy end of the route for the duration of the Glenorchy Road closure.
- 10 Publicity of the road closures to users of the national park to the satisfaction of the Police and Department of Conservation

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21/08/2014

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## **Background**

- 11 We have received an application to temporarily close sections of the Glenorchy and Crown Range/Cardrona Roads (including 50m on some intersecting roads) for the Targa South Island Motorsport 2014 Event. The roads affects are illustrated in the map in Attachment A.
- 12 Clause 11 of the 10<sup>th</sup> Schedule to the Local Government Act 1974 enables Council to close roads. In 2006 Council adopted a document headed "Criteria for Closing Significant Roads" to guide it when considering planned temporary road closures. This document is attached (Attachment B).
- 13 The criteria document requires that applications affecting arterial roads for the durations sought by the Targa application be considered by the 'Utilities Committee.' In the absence of a Utilities Committee, a decision on the Targa application must be made by Council.

## **Comment**

### The Targa South Island Motorsport 2014 Event.

- 14 The event is to occur over October and November this year. It will start in Christchurch and finish in Queenstown. It is organised by Club Targa Incorporated and takes the form of a series of time trials on public roads.
- 15 The proposal affects two arterial roads within the Queenstown Lakes District on 1 November 2014. These are:
- The Crown Range/Cardrona Valley Road between the State Highway 6 junction and Prospectors Lane in Cardrona. It is proposed that this section of road be closed from 7:15 am through to 1:00pm.
  - This closure will also entail 50 metres of each road where it intersects with the main road closure, including Jeffrey Road, Glencoe Road and Eastburn Road.
  - The Glenorchy Road between Farrycroft Road (at Closeburn) through to Wyuna Rise. This section of road would be closed between 1:30pm and 7:00pm

- This closure will also entail 50 metres of each road where it intersects with the main road closure, including Geary Lane, Closeburn Road, Cove Lane and Fisherman Lane.
- 16 The closed roads would be under the control of Targa officials at the start and finish venues. All side roads would be taped and marshalled to ensure all non-event vehicles and spectators remain off the road when it is closed for the event. All competing vehicles must be 'road legal.'
  - 17 When closed, the roads would only be used by vehicles taking part in the event. Club Targa initially stated that there would be no exceptions for residents or other vehicles. We understand that it is now planning to make provision for limited and controlled access during the road closure. In the event of an emergency, the 'Course Clerk' would ensure unimpeded access by emergency services.
  - 18 The event holds Motor Sport New Zealand Public Liability Insurance cover of \$10,000,000.00. A St John Ambulance Officer and or a Medical Intervention Vehicle (MIV) type vehicle will be located at the start of each 'stage' along with additional MIV in a roaming capacity.

#### Matters to be considered

- 19 The scope of matters to be considered in reaching a decision is set out by the Local Government Act 1974. Clause 11 reads:

'The Council may, subject to such conditions as it thinks fit (including the imposition of a reasonable bond), and after consultation with the Police and the Ministry of Transport, close any road or part of a road to all traffic or any specified type of traffic (including pedestrian traffic)....

- (e) For a period or periods not exceeding in the aggregate 31 days in any year for any exhibition, fair, show, market, concert, filmmaking, race or other sporting event, or public function:

Provided that no road may be closed for any purpose specified in paragraph (e) of this clause if that closure would, in the opinion of the Council, be likely to impede traffic unreasonably.'

- 20 The Council document "Criteria for Closing Significant Roads" (Attachment A) provides some guidance on application of clause 11. The Crown Range Road and Glenorchy-Queenstown Road are arterial roads which are identified in the Policy as having importance to the wider public as arterial traffic routes.
- 21 The Council's decision on road closure can be subject to judicial review. The Local Government Act 1974 states the Council can close roads if in the opinion of the Council; the closure is unlikely to impede traffic unreasonably.
- 22 The key part of the document covers the matters to be considered when determining whether the 'closure would, in the opinion of the Council, be likely to impede traffic unreasonably.' In balancing the pro's and con's of a road closure

proposal the document effectively asks Council to consider a series of questions that can be distilled down to the following five points:

- Is there a real possibility that traffic will be impeded?
- Is an alternative route available (or is there so little traffic that the absence of an alternative is not important)?
- Is there a benefit or level of community comfort with the proposal that makes the closures not unreasonable?
- Is the event likely to evolve in future years to something that has a more severe impact?

23 Precedent exists in other part of New Zealand for closing arterial roads for this rally where the closures are publicly notified and submissions are heard by the Council. It is noted that other Councils have specific policies around the closure of roads for motorsport events and these policies specifically identify roads suitable for temporary closure.

24 To assist the Council make its decision, staff have consulted with the Police and have publicly notified the application. This report presents:

- Information provided by Club Targa Incorporated on the event
- The views of the Police on the proposal
- Information provided by submitters in response to the public notification
- Club Targa's responses to the points raised by submitters.

25 The following sections of this report address each of these points before providing an assessment of the proposal against the Council's *Criteria for Closing Significant Roads*.

#### Club Targa Information

26 Club Targa's advocacy for the event is presented in Attachment C: Community Opportunity. This outlines Club Targa's view of the community benefits associated with the New Zealand event. It does not specifically break these down into benefits specific to the Queenstown Lakes District. The presentation notes that in 2007 the event generated over \$7.5m to the New Zealand economy.

27 The 2014 event represents the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the event in New Zealand. The club is making a feature of this by bringing the event to the lower South Island for the first time. This year's event is proposed to start in Christchurch and finish in Queenstown.

28 As well as media attention the Targa material points to the following other benefits of the event:

- Accommodation demand created by the event
- Benefits to charities
- Use of community clubs, schools and service groups are used for lunches, marshalling and other fundraising opportunities.

29 An economic impact report compiled in 2007 advised that the Targa NZ event generated over \$7.5 million to the New Zealand economy.

30 We are advised that Club Targa representatives intend to attend the Council's meeting and provide further information on the event.

### Police Consultation

31 The Police, through Senior Sergeant John Fookes, have expressed the following safety concerns:

- Lack of an alternative route for emergency access to Glenorchy
- Impact on trampers wishing to access the tramps and walks from Glenorchy. Mr Fookes notes that many of these people will be from outside the area (often starting their tramps outside the Wakatipu area) and unlikely to be aware of the closures until they arrive in Queenstown. This raises knock-on issues around delayed starts/arrivals, particularly when weather conditions are poor.

32 The Police have not made comments in respect of the Crown Range Road.

33 More detail of the Police concerns is set out in Attachment B: Summary table of submissions.

### Public Responses to Notification of Proposal

34 Ten formal submissions were received in response to the public notification of the application, with one being withdrawn after concerns were addressed by Targa.

35 The table in Attachment B summarises the submissions that have been received together with the separate responses from Club Targa and QLDC infrastructure officers. A more detailed presentation of the submission points and Targa responses is in Attachment E. The nature of the concerns raised by the submissions covered impacts relate to:

- Restricted access, including emergency access, to properties on and beyond the route
  - *Targa response: access will now be provided at predetermined times during the event. Immediate emergency access to be provided*
  - *QLDC Infrastructure response: Supports the proposals for emergency and limited access, provided conditions proposed by QLDC are imposed.*
- The closure of an arterial route on businesses, recreation grounds and residences
  - *Targa: Is talking with Dept. of Conservation over wider notice of road closures. Acknowledges impact on trampers entering/exiting tramps in afternoon. Proposes escorting vehicles out of Glenorchy around 4:30pm.*
  - *QLDC Infrastructure: Acknowledges Targa's efforts but risks highlighted by Police and DoC remain. Targa needs to directly address the safety issues further through provision of waiting areas*

*and consideration of alternative transport between Glenorchy and Queenstown.*

- The unsuitability of the road for a rally style event
  - *Targa: No response*
  - *QLDC Infrastructure: The closures of arterial roads will affect large numbers of people and businesses*
- Noise
  - *Targa: The vehicles are standard regulation road worthy cars*
  - *QLDC Infrastructure: The sections of road being used are well away from main residential areas*
- Safety
  - *Targa: Road books will be provided for the Crown Range section to inform competitors of corners and hazards*
  - *QLDC Infrastructure: It is not believed that the event will encourage racing behaviours.*
- Potential damage to the road
  - *Targa: Road legal cars are to be used. The event is insured and Targa will make good all damage.*
  - *QLDC Infrastructure: The Targa approach is supported, provided Council inspection and ancillary costs are met by Targa.*
- The precedence value of a decision to allow these road closure
  - *Targa: No response*
  - *QLDC Infrastructure: Crown Range Road does have precedents where for short periods the road was closed for a single event. However, during the duration of the event, arrangements were made to allow vehicles to travel over the road. The proposed road closures will create a precedent. However, there is a process that is to be followed with criteria to be considered.*
- Limited economic benefits to the community and negative impacts on businesses
  - *Targa: Refer to Attachment C: Community Opportunity*
  - *QLDC Infrastructure: While national benefits have been referred to in the Community Opportunity presentation, the specific local economic benefits are unclear. Targa has been asked to provide more detail.*

36 NZ Police advises that it considers the closure of Glenorchy-Queenstown Road would unreasonably hinder access to Glenorchy with there being no reasonable alternative route for traffic.

37 The Department of Conservation (DOC) has also stated it does not support the closure of Glenorchy-Queenstown Road as it will affect access to DOC properties and impact on public safety. The Department of Conservation has provided the Council with a formal submission on the proposal. DoC has no comments on the proposed closure of the Crown Range Road.

- 38 Targa is in consultation with the Glenorchy Community Association (GCA). The GCA have requested further details about the proposal and have been asked to identify community groups who might benefit from fundraising activities associated with the event. A submission from them is not with this report; they are intending to meet with the event organisers on the 4<sup>th</sup> of September 2014 to discuss the proposed closure.
- 39 Since the submissions were received, Targa has reduced the extent of their closure application on Glenorchy Road<sup>1</sup> to that detailed in this report. When advised of the change to the application, the submitters wished for their submissions to stand.

#### Assessment of Proposed Road Closures Against Council Criteria

- 40 Paragraph 14 set out key questions that need to be answered ahead of making a decision on the Targa proposal. These are addressed below:

- Will traffic be impeded?

Answer: Yes

The two roads are arterial roads that provide routes for the public to get to inter and intra-regional destinations. It is recognised that Targa has attempted to address concerns around access to properties within the closure route and that they are working with businesses who have submitted against the closure to accommodate their business activities. The Crown Range is relatively highly trafficked. Closure of these roads will inevitably 'impede traffic'.

- Is an alternative route available (or is there so little traffic that the absence of an alternative is not important)?

Answer: Yes (Crown Range)/No (Glenorchy Road)

The alternative route to the Crown Range Road is State Highway via the Kawarau Gorge. November is relatively quiet compared to the ski-season or the height of summer. Through signage and other means it will be possible to direct motorists to the alternative route.

The Council has considered and given approval to temporary road closures on the Crown Range before. These have been of short duration for the Tour of Southland (closure period of approximately 40 minutes for the final stage of the race).

There is no alternative route for the Glenorchy Road. The closure would affect tourist operations as well as locals wanting to use the road. The Department of Conservation's point regarding November being part of the busy season for access to the National Park tramps needs to be noted.

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<sup>1</sup> The original proposal was for Glenorchy Road between the One Mile Roundabout and the Wyuna Rise to be closed.



- Is there a benefit or level of community comfort with the proposal that makes the closures not unreasonable?

Answer: Uncertain

### Economic Benefits

As stated earlier the benefits of the event have been alluded to but not specified in terms of what the event will bring to the district. It is accepted however, that there are economic benefits to the District in having this event held in the region. These have not been quantified. This should be balanced against the economic losses potentially suffered by business operators due to the closures and the wider impact on the community in terms of disruption to traffic.

As raised by some residents it is also not clear how wide the benefits will be felt, with the view that the benefit will be received by the organiser, while the public are left with the negative effects.

Accepting that there will be negatives around the proposed road closures, it is difficult to establish whether the benefits will outweigh those negatives.

Targa has supplied the following information:

- In Glenorchy they are liaising with the community as relation to fundraising in that Targa will operate a passage control where competitors pay a gold coin donation to pass by, and a car wash where all competitors are required to pay \$5 to have their car washed. Additionally the 200+ competitors, each with a driver & co-driver so 400+ people, will be looking for refreshments during their stop in Glenorchy.
- In Queenstown they have contracted the local netball club to provide lunches in exchange for a fundraising opportunity.
- They have a stage marshal group for the Glenorchy Road and another for the Crown Range both of which will be receiving donations.
- In relation to the Cardrona stage they have organised for our Targa Tour participants to have breakfast at the Cardrona Hotel. They expect there to be 200-250 people stopping for breakfast.
- To date no full economic benefit has been calculated for the South Island event, but in relation to the Queenstown area they expect to have up to 1,500 people accommodating for two nights, they will be dining each night, and on the Saturday night they expect the majority of them will be celebrating the success of the event in the town.
- An independent economic assessment undertaken by APR Consultants at the request of the Rotorua District Council for a previous two day Targa event found that the average spend per person was \$939.88 over and above entry fees, but they expect that this will increase for the South Island event.

- Targa has directed us to their Community Report which is included within the Attachments.

#### Community Comfort with the Proposal

With the closure of the Glenorchy Road, the submissions indicate concern from the Police, the Department of Conservation and some residents. Some concerns, particularly around trampers accessing/exiting the National Park, access during the event and emergency access may be able to be addressed if conditions are set.

Residents, DOC and Police consider they haven't seen enough from Club Targa to be satisfied themselves that the concerns raised by submitters will be addressed adequately. These relate to

- Access arrangements for residents and businesses during the road closure, with the suggestion that it will be now possible to traverse the roads under controlled circumstances
- Arrangements for 'accommodating' trampers and other visitors when the road closures are in place, particularly in poor weather.

We are continuing to discuss these aspects with Club Targa and will report outcomes to the Council meeting. The conditions recommended are intended to address these concerns.

- Is the event likely to evolve in future years to something that has a more severe impact?

Answer: No

The Targa event has remained with a roughly similar format for the past 20 years. It cannot be compared with, say, a triathlon event which may attract growth in participants year after year.

41 In summary, this assessment points to uncertainty over the benefits of the event to Queenstown Lakes District and concern that the negatives have not yet been adequately mitigated but identifies that benefits exist. Conditions attached to the road closure approvals are intended to render the impeding of traffic to be reasonable.

### **Options**

42 The Council has three broad options

- to approve the road closure application with or without conditions (Conditions suggested relate to a bond to cover Council's costs relating to the road inspections and other activities directly resulting from the event and controlled access for residents and businesses during the event)
- to decline the road closure application

- to decline the road closure application in its current form but state they will consider a revised application involving an alternative road closure to the proposed Glenorchy-Queenstown Road and Crown Range Road closures and/or a reduced closure time for the Crown Range Road. Targa have advised that they would be happy to discuss a proposed modified road closure.

43 With respect to the first and third options the criteria document recommends conditions for approval such as an inspection of a Council officer before and after the event, provision of an events plan, evidence of suitable insurance to the satisfaction of the Council's insurance brokers, continuing communication with affected parties (those on the closure route, the Police transport operators) and a requirement that the applicant obtain any other necessary approvals such as resource consent and associated permits. These are similar to conditions applied to other road closures, so if the road closure is approved, they will need be applied here. A series of conditions is being discussed with Targa and will be offered up by Club Targa at the Council meeting

44 With respect to the third option, the Criteria document notes that there may be alternative ways to implement an event which the applicant has not thought of. An alternative is that closure of the Crown Range Road is reduced and/or the road closure be staged in an alternative location. Coronet Peak Road was an option originally proposed by the event organisers but it is of note that both Tour of Southland and the Queenstown Car Club Coronet Peak Hill Climb intend to use this road in November and public notification for an amended road closure application, with an opportunity for the public to advise us of any concerns, will need to occur.

45 This third option, however, is unlikely to be feasible given the time required to develop the alternative route proposals, and then go through the road closure procedures.

46 A new application using a different road would need to be publicly notified again.

## **Financial Implications**

47 The event would be funded entirely by Club Targa. As a condition of approval – if Council supports that option – we would recommend that a bond of \$5000 be required to cover reasonable Council costs in undertaking inspections and other demands created by the event, with the balance returned to Club Targa after the event.

48 There is a possibility that the road could be damaged by the racing associated with the event. Club Targa have advised that they possess MotorSport New Zealand Public Liability Insurance cover of \$10,000,000.00. We will need to verify this cover is sufficient by consulting with our insurance advisors before final approval for any road closure is given. Advice on this will be provided at the Council meeting

## **Local Government Act 2002 Purpose Provisions**

49 Section 10 (2) of the Local Government Act 2002 has been considered in the submission of this report to the Subcommittee.

50 The approval of a temporary road closure application is a regulatory function and the recommendation noted in this report is efficient, effective and appropriate to present and anticipated future circumstances.

## **Council Policies**

51 The following Council Policies were considered in the preparation of this report:

- Council's Policy of Significance
- Criteria for Closing Significant Roads.

The report recommendation is not significant under the Council's Policy on Significance as it does not moderately or substantially affect ratepayers, Involves more than \$2 million of budgeted or \$200,000 of unbudgeted expenditure, Involves ownership, control, construction, replacement or abandonment of a strategic asset (as defined in the Act and/or Policy), Involves Council's shareholding in CCTO or CCO and does not Affect's the Council's capacity to carry out, or the cost of carrying out, an activity identified in the LTP.

52 The Council's Policy Guideline relating to the 'Criteria for Closing Significant Roads' has been considered in the preparation of this report.

## **Consultation**

53 Consultation has been undertaken by Council in the form of the public notification of the road closure proposals. The road closure application was advertised on 23 July 2014 and any party who had a concern was invited to lodge a submission.

54 Connectabus, the emergency services, Council contractors, the NZ Police and the Department of Conservation have been advised of the road closure application.

55 Club Targa has been active in the region consulting with those on the road closure routes, with the Glenorchy Community Association and with businesses within Glenorchy. We have received a list of all who have been consulted and Targa have obtained approval signatures where people have provided them and left flyers when people were not available. We do not know if this list is a complete record of all who might be affected.

56 Club Targa wished to be advised of any comments regarding the closure, that Council may receive from residents or businesses, in order to re-consult with them to achieve a mutually satisfactory agreement. However, several of the submitters expressed a desire to have their submission held for the Council only and out of respect for their privacy, not all submissions have been forwarded to Targa for review.

## **Publicity**

57 It is recommended that should the road closure proceed, that Targa will arrange some publicity around the road closures. This is addressed in the proposed conditions. This would be consistent with instances where these roads are closed due to planned works and natural events outside the Council's control.

## **Attachments**

- A Map showing the roads to be closed
- B Criteria for Closing Significant Roads
- C Summary table of submissions
- D Club Targa Community Opportunity Information
- E Submissions on the road closure and where applicable, responses from Club Targa.