

**Infrastructure Committee
23 November 2017**

Report for Agenda Item: 1

Department: Property & Infrastructure

Bennetts Bluff Car Park and Viewing Area - Single Stage Business Case

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to proceed with the design development and implementation of the proposed alternative location for the Bennetts Bluff car park and viewing area.

Recommendation

That the Infrastructure Committee:

1. **Note** the contents of this report; and
2. **Direct** the General Manager of Property and Infrastructure to proceed with Option 3: car park and viewing area at the alternative site.

Prepared by:



Name: Gareth Noble
Programme Director

9/11/2017

Reviewed and Authorised by:



Name: Peter Hansby
GM Property & Infrastructure

9/11/2017

Background

- 1 There is an existing pull-off area at Bennetts Bluff which is used by tourists and locals as a viewpoint for Lake Wakatipu. It is located on a curve where the sight distance is insufficient for the speed environment. This combined with inadequate parking capacity is a safety issue.
- 2 The project was included within QLDC's minor improvements budget however the tendered costs exceeded the project budget. The original Single Stage Business Case was developed to request NZTA funding for the project and proposed safety improvements.

- 3 Construction was due to commence on site in September 2017, however work was placed on hold following further assessment of tension cracks and rock fall hazards located behind the crest of Bennetts Bluff.
- 4 The engineer advised that the remedial options are limited, technically challenging and are likely a significant cost. Through peer review of the report, QLDC have been advised that further geotechnical investigation is required to fully understand the extent of the rock fall hazard, risk mitigation actions and associated costs.
- 5 In consideration of the above, an alternative location for the car park and viewing point has been evaluated for further development and implementation.

Comment

- 6 Road safety is a key priority in the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport 2015/16 – 2024/25. The project has a high strategic fit with the Government Policy Statement 2015 as well as being an improvement that was included in the QLDC 17/18 Annual Plan. By completing this project it will remove the risk of vehicles parking on a 35km bend where at times approaching traffic is exposed to a large number of vehicles (including buses and campervans), parked close to the edge of the road as well as pedestrians.
- 7 A pre-construction Road Safety Audit of the Bennetts Bluff location was undertaken by MWH (Stantec) in May 2017. This highlighted a number of significant and serious concerns that could be mitigated through relocation of the viewing area and car park to a suitable location.
- 8 MWH have undertaken a review of a nearby location that would be suitable for providing a carpark and lookout facility. The alternative location requires the construction of a pull-off area and appropriately sized carpark. It would require a short uphill walking track to be constructed to provide access to a lookout point of Lake Wakatipu.
- 9 The alternative location is not as accessible as the original lookout due to it being serviced by a short walking track. The alternative location does provide the ability for a larger carpark to be installed and additional services to be co-located if it was deemed appropriate. The site does have the ability for accessibility options to the lookout site to be incorporated into the design.
- 10 At this stage there has been no engagement with the Department of Conservation (DoC) who control the land where the alternative lookout is proposed. There is an existing track and area currently being utilised for carparking located on the proposed site.

Options

- 11 Option 1 Do nothing

Advantages:

- 15 There will be no further project related costs.

Disadvantages:

- 16 The road safety issues are not addressed.
- 17 The rock fall hazard and risks are not sufficiently considered and/or mitigated.
- 18 Option 2 Further Geotechnical Investigation. Physical works remain on hold while further investigation of the rock fall hazard is undertaken in order to develop a management plan and confirm risk mitigation actions prior to construction of the viewing area and car park

Advantages:

- 19 The investigation and construction works may be funded through NZTA's Minor (Resilience) Improvements Programme.
- 20 The risks associated with the rock fall hazard will be reviewed and addressed.
- 21 The existing lookout location will be retained and continue to be utilised.

Disadvantages:

- 22 As is, the tendered location for the viewing area and car park is not considered safe and has high levels of risk due to the rock fall hazard. This option does not immediately address this risk as the existing viewing area will continue to be used until the rock fall hazard is addressed.
- 23 Additional time is required for undertaking the investigation and design of remediation works for the rock fall hazard.
- 24 It is expected that any remediation or risk mitigation works are likely to incur significant cost and will exceed the available budget for this project.
- 25 The road safety issues are not immediately addressed and will require resolution of the rock fall hazard prior to being addressed.
- 26 Option 3 Proposed alternative site. Proceed with design, consenting and land tenure associated with viewing area and car park in the alternative site location, subject to such amendments as may be necessary to provide for accessibility to the lookout. Undertake recommended risk mitigation works associated with the rock fall hazard.

Advantages:

- 27 The viewing area and car park are considered an appropriate alternative to the tendered location.
- 28 It is a lower cost solution that satisfactorily addresses the road safety issues.
- 29 Acts as a temporary mitigation measure for the rock fall hazard by removing the carpark and lookout from directly under this area.

Disadvantages:

- 30 This option does not fully address the rock fall hazard associated with Bennetts Bluff. It is expected that this will be addressed as part of a separate project.
- 31 Traffic/road alterations are required and the speed environment is higher at the proposed alternative location.
- 32 The proposed location is on DoC land and will require a land use agreement.
- 33 The location is not as convenient as the existing or tendered location and the 'view' cannot be seen from the road.
- 34 This report recommends **Option 3** for addressing the matter because this option is not impacted by the rock fall hazard which resulted in the project being placed on hold, and is anticipated to address the safety issues in a timely manner. The estimated project costs are under budget (17/18 annual Plan) and this design solution is expected to achieve maximum benefit and value for money with regards to access, parking and views.

Significance and Engagement

- 35 This matter is of medium significance, as determined by reference to the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy as it relates to Council's roading network which is identified as a significant asset.

Risk

- 36 This matter relates to the strategic risk SR6a Assets critical to service delivery, as documented in the Council's risk register. The risk is classed as moderate. This matter relates to this risk because the recommendations address safety matters relating to road infrastructure.
- 37 The recommendation option considered above mitigates the risk by relocating the carpark from an area at risk of rock fall ('treating the risk - putting measures in place which directly impact the risk').

Financial Implications

- 38 The costs expended to date have already been accounted for in the 2017/18 Annual Plan. The approved budget for this project is \$557,542.00.
- 39 The table below provides a breakdown of the estimated costs to complete Option 3. Additional costs will be necessary in order to provide for accessibility options.

Project Estimate	
Costs expended to date:	
- Design	\$39,353.50
- Construction	\$23,748.07
(excludes internal costs)	
Detailed Design, MSQA, Safety Audits & Tender Evaluation (15% of construction estimate)	\$23,250.00 (estimate)
Internal Costs (5% of construction estimate)	\$7,750.00 (estimate)
Construction Costs (includes 10% contingency)	\$155,364.00 (estimate)
Accessibility requirements	TBD
Total	\$ 249,465.57 (excluding accessibility)

Council Policies, Strategies and Bylaws

40 The following Council policies, strategies and bylaws were considered:

- QLDC Corporate Risk management framework.

Local Government Act 2002 Purpose Provisions

41 The recommended option:

- Will help meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure, by providing a safe alternative carpark and lookout;
- Can be implemented through current funding under the 10-Year Plan and Annual Plan;
- Is consistent with the Council's plans and policies; and
- Would not alter significantly 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.

Consultation: Community Views and Preferences

42 The persons who are affected by or interested in this matter are local residents and ratepayers of the Queenstown Lakes District Community, in particular the Glenorchy community, the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA), and the Department of Conservation.

- 43 The Council has engaged with the Glenorchy community and NZTA regarding the proposed upgrade to the existing Bennetts Bluff lookout, both groups have been supportive of a resolution to address the safety hazard. Neither group is yet to be engaged with in regards to the alternative proposed location.

Attachments

- A Bennetts Bluff Single Stage Business Case