

QLDC Council
26 May 2016

Report for Agenda Item: 1

Department: Property & Infrastructure

Queenstown Traffic and Parking

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to identify the most immediate traffic and parking issues within Queenstown Town Centre and propose solutions that can be implemented in the short term.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Note** the contents of this report;
2. **Approve** the implementation of traffic and parking methods.

Prepared by:



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9/05/2016

Reviewed and Authorised by:



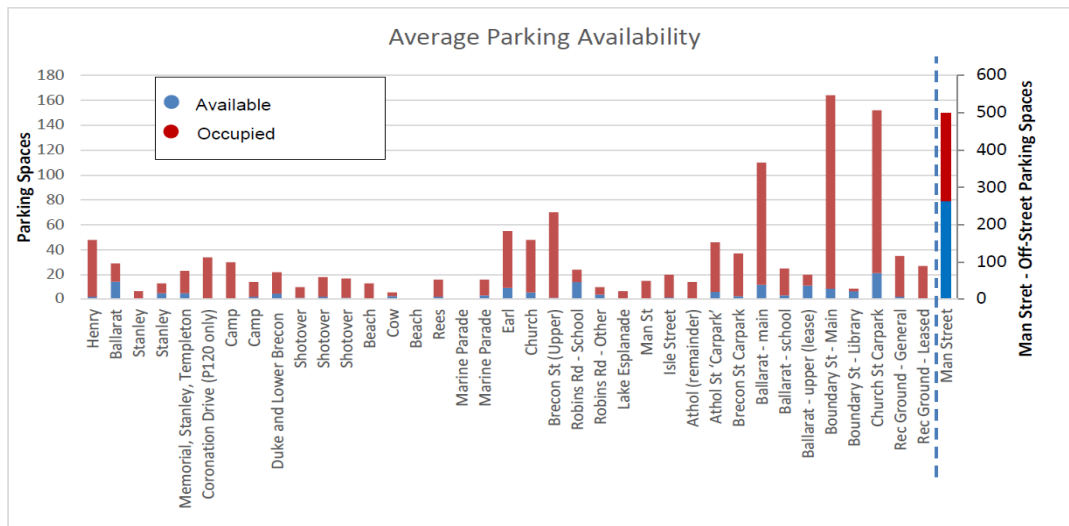
Peter Hansby
General Manager
Property and Infrastructure

13/05/2016

Background

- 1 The traffic and parking issues in the Queenstown Town Centre are acknowledged by Council through previous reports (December 2015, April 2016). At a high level, strategies are being pursued to identify short and long term solutions, and further studies to accurately understand the issues.
- 2 Through this work, and through officer's consideration, several short term measures can be adopted to make an immediate impact. These are detailed below and if endorsed by Council will be published in a summary document (see Attachment B) – similar to that already issued in January 2016 – a minimum of two weeks before implementation.
- 3 To have the desired effect, which is a step change mainly in parking behaviour, requires bold moves. The emphasis in these changes is to keep the traffic moving in and around the Town Centre and particularly the Central Business District (CBD). Congestion is being partly caused by vehicles circling the CBD in a search for spaces, and partly by inappropriate parking.
- 4 To keep things moving it is necessary to remove the cause of some problems, which are large campervans that are parking in unsuitable sized and positioned spaces, and increase the level of turnover in short term car parking spaces. The following recommended solutions are reversible and will be implemented as a trial over the winter period. If successful, they will be made permanent.
- 5 Implementation would follow detailed costings and be immediate if within existing budgets.
- 6 The annual traffic and parking survey (Attachment A) identifies the following key issues in Queenstown:
 - a. There has been an increase in travellers across all modes, but the most significant increase in volumes are for cars and pedestrians with an increase of 18% and 27% respectively when compared with the three previous years. (Para 2.1.1)
 - b. Previous reports suggest a spike in vehicle traffic in 2014, however there are still more cars over the 2016 survey period than any other year. This being the case, we suggest that 2015 was a negative spike, and that there has been an exponential increase in traffic since 2011, with car volumes at 4140, 4840, 4910, 5790, 5090, 5880 between 2011 and 2016 respectively. **If this increase continues over the next few years, Levels of Service within the city centre may cause significant delays to the road network.** (Para 2.1.1).
 - c. Overall, parking spaces were 91% occupied for the duration of the day with an increase in availability of 4% between 10am and 1pm and 12% between 1pm and 4pm. (Para 3.1.1 and Fig 3 – below)

Figure 3. Queenstown Parking Survey - Average Parking Availability by Location



*Note – For easier visual analysis, the Man Street off-street parking uses the secondary vertical axis (on the right) as it has a significantly greater number of parking spaces than the other sections.

Comment

Central Business District Parking

- 7 Parking within the Central Business District (CBD) is to be maintained at the 2015 level. This is achievable, even though a number of developments are occurring which will see these facilities relocated.
- 8 The CBD includes the roads as shown in Figure 1 below.

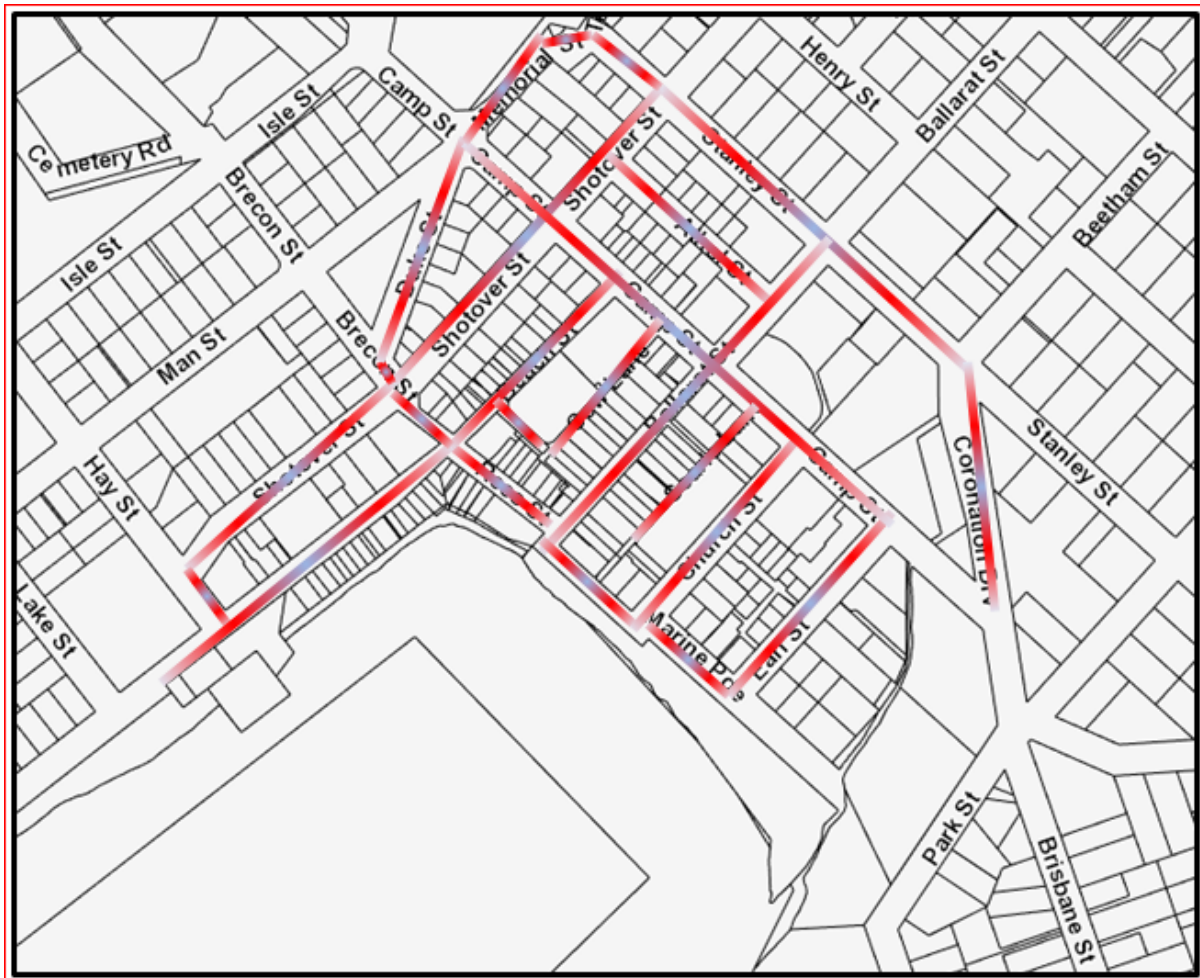


Figure 1 Central Business District – Queenstown

- 9 Within the CBD, parking is restricted in capacity due to the confined area. In addition to the on-street car parks (including Athol Street), there are further public spaces available in the Council's Church Street facility, which also currently leases space commercially.
- 10 There are two large parking facilities on the edge of the CBD which also serve the Town Centre being Ballarat Street (Council owned - 155 spaces total) and Man Street, (privately owned – but available for public and leased parking – 498 spaces total).
- 11 Recent and proposed losses of CBD car parks include:
 - a. 4 in Shotover Street – for traffic light installation at the Stanley/Shotover intersection.
 - b. 6 in Cow Lane/Beach Street (4 on Cow Lane converted to loading zones, and 2 parks removed from Beach Street) as part of the Beach Street pedestrianisation. These changes are temporary as part of a trial.
 - c. 14 in Marine Parade (to take advantage of a new development to improve the pedestrian experience and improve the cycling links into the CBD).

- 12 To compensate for this, 60 car park spaces will be freed up in the Church Street car park for public use. This spare capacity (the remaining 36 spaces) will allow further changes in the CBD to occur without an overall loss. These spaces will be made available by moving leased spaces to a private provider within the Town Centre.
- 13 A review of charging levels for these spaces and all parking within the CBD will be commenced in June 2016.

Campervans

- 14 Campervans create issues with parking in the CBD due the standard size of the parks available. It is proposed that signage will be introduced to prohibit campervan parking in the CBD (and elsewhere if required) and to direct them to nominated (and suitably provisioned parks).
- 15 An indicative scheme for the rearrangement of the Boundary Street car park was reported to Council in April 2016. This will allow a specific provision for campervan parking (in close proximity to the town centre) which increases in the summer period. This scheme will include Boundary Street and the spaces adjacent to the library. At night, the central space will be utilised for overnight bus and coach parking and the campervan bay against Gorge Road will be made available for overnight parking of smaller buses.
- 16 Directional signage will be sited on all arterial approaches and will be installed prior to implementation.

Winter Rush Hour

- 17 The winter period is identified as a key problem area for skiers wishing to drop off equipment in the town centre. Although the overall solution will be a mix of commercial operators' own practices, such as extra staff, collection points out of town, proactive unloading of skis, hotel drop-offs and pick-ups, Council can also assist by reducing waiting times, encouraging a faster turnaround. Consequently 8 car parks in Duke Street and 6 parks in Athol Street will be given a seasonal time limit.
- 18 This will allow that from June to October inclusive, the maximum permitted time is 15 minutes (reduced from 30). Signage will also show that return within one hour (to the same bay of car parks) is prohibited. This will discourage short distance moves that effectively allow longer parking hours.
- 19 In other months these spaces will revert to the current 30 minutes. This reversion could also be considered as a trial and feedback will be sought towards the end of the winter.
- 20 Alternatively, the above measure could be more specific, and limited to between 4pm to 6pm June to October.
- 21 Officers also recommend that all on-road car parks on Shotover Street are treated in a similar way and are awaiting formal approval from NZTA.

- 22 Officer's recommendation is that the most stringent measures above are all adopted together, to give maximum effect to the scheme (Duke, Athol and Shotover reduced to 15 minutes all day, 0800 – 1800).

Enforcement

- 23 The changes to parking will need to be communicated well to the public. This will also need to be subject to increased levels of enforcement to be effective. Recent monitoring of the Beach Street trial (and information contained in Attachment A) confirms that parking time slots need to be more actively managed.
- 24 This additional enforcement also extends beyond parking zones, and vehicles that block roads, loading bays, parking zones, footpaths and turnaround areas will be subject to immediate infringement notices. Additionally (and for the same reason as above), no return times to the same "bay" will be implemented across the town centre. All the CBD car parking spaces will be grouped into bays and numbered.
- 25 It is noted that a balance must be struck between being too heavy-handed by ruining the visitor's experience in Queenstown (especially when addressing vehicles engaged in dropping off skis and unloading/loading visitor groups) and the wider aim of keeping the traffic moving. Stricter adherence to the time limits enforced by greater numbers of staff will assist this, as staff can direct vehicles to these shorter term parks.
- 26 Signage changes to all parking areas will be required.
- 27 In the same way as other users, delivery and service vehicles have an accepted role in the town centre, but need to comply with the aim of keeping traffic moving and not impeding roads and footpaths. If there is no parking / loading space available then they will be moved on. Blocking roads and footpaths with vehicles and incorrect traffic direction will be enforced again, immediately.
- 28 More effective use of loading zones is also proposed. Signage will also be changed to reflect this and opportunities for dual use, such as reverting to Taxi ranks after 10pm, will be taken. Two loading zones in Lower Beach Street will be repurposed as a bus stop for smaller vehicles and the time limits for bus stops at Steamer Wharf will be reviewed with representatives from the Bus and Coach Association NZ to ensure that turnover is optimised.

Cycling and Walking

- 29 Given the known parking issues combined with growing congestion, other modes of transport are encouraged by Council already. To make this more realistic, officers are engaged with the Queenstown Trails Trust, in identifying the correct location for cycle shelters/facilities, as they should serve both recreational and commuter needs.
- 30 The Parks and Reserves Manager has indicated that cycle shelters could be sited on reserves, and sites on the approaches to the town centre will be investigated. Initially these are at the end of Park Street (but within the Gardens) and at the eastern end of St Omer's Park.

- 31 These and other possible locations within the town centre will be investigated in more detail and installed before the next summer season. Early indications are that commuter cycling routes into the Town Centre / CBD are from Frankton, Fernhill and Arthurs Point, which is not unexpected.

Options

- 32 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.

33 Option 1 – Do nothing

Advantages:

- 34 There are no advantages under this option as the problems of traffic and parking will grow for the foreseeable future.

Disadvantages:

- 35 The problems of traffic and parking are assumed to be far from their peak at this time, given that the expected and continued growth is not just a short term issue or anomaly. Taking no action in the short term will exacerbate the problem.

36 Option 2 – Wait until all the implementation projects within the Queenstown Town Centre Transport Strategy are fully scoped and costed.

Advantages:

- 37 This would ensure that a transport solution is fully integrated and that all alternative modes are provided for.

- 38 This would ensure that any risk of duplication or reversal is minimised.

Disadvantages:

- 39 The strategy contains some 29 individual implementations ranging from the large (Inner Links/Public Transport) to quite minor tasks, and may not be fully detailed in this or the next financial year (noting that some tasks have already been completed, and more will be completed in the very short term).

40 Option 3 – Approve the immediate implementation of the methods identified in this report, with the aim of completion within 3 months (August 2016).

Advantages:

- 41 This approach would see an immediate impact on the problems areas as identified.

- 42 The ongoing integrated approach of the remainder of the work streams can still proceed.

- 43 As the methods are all reversible, there is little risk if they are incorrect.

Disadvantages:

- 44 The short term implementation will need to be supported by a programme of education for the public to alert them to the changes.
- 45 This report recommends **Option 3**. The traffic and parking issues are current and immediate action is required.

Significance and Engagement

- 46 This matter is of low significance, as the overarching strategy (Queenstown Town Centre Transport Strategy) has previously been adopted (December 2015).

Risk

- 47 The report to the December Council meeting described the risk associated with the strategy as relating to

“the strategic risk SR1: Current and future development needs of the community (including environmental protection), as documented in the Council’s risk register. The risk is classed as high. This matter relates to this risk because it is fundamental to the future performance of the transport system.”

- 48 This report is a key element in the management of the risk because it provides governance oversight of the strategy impacts.

Financial Implications

- 49 The implementation tasks are already included within the existing budgets. The above methods have not been costed as yet but will not all be actioned if the budget is exceeded, without referring back to Council.

Council Policies, Strategies and Bylaws

- 50 The following Council policies, strategies and bylaws were considered:

- a. Significance and Engagement Policy
- b. Queenstown Town Centre Transport Strategy 2015
- c. Traffic and Parking Bylaw
- d. Traffic Control Devices Manual.

- 51 This matter is included in the 10-Year Plan/Annual Plan through the provision of \$150k per annum. The business case work set out in the strategy may result in changes to the long term plan, which would generally be addressed in the development of the 2018-28 10-Year Plan.

Local Government Act 2002 Purpose Provisions

- 52 The recommended option:

- a. Will help meet the current and future needs of communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions in a way that is most cost-effective for households and businesses by planning and implementing transport improvements for the Queenstown town centre;
- b. Can be implemented through current funding under the 10-Year Plan and Annual Plan;
- c. Is consistent with the Council's plans and policies; and
- d. 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

53 The persons who are affected by or interested in this matter are the district's residents and businesses, and visitors to the district.

54 The Council has undertaken public consultation over the strategy. This is detailed in the report on the strategy to Council's December meeting.

Attachments

- A Queenstown and Wanaka Traffic Survey
- B Queenstown Town Centre Transport Strategy Graphic