



11th May 2018

Otago Regional Council
Consultation Document for the 10 Year Plan
Freepost 497
Private Bag 1954
Dunedin 9054

Via email: longtermplan@orc.govt.nz

Dear Sir / Madam,

RE: QLDC SUBMISSION

Thank you for the opportunity to present our submission in relation to the Otago Regional Council's Long Term Plan.

We are keen to be heard in relation to our submission.

Yours sincerely,



Mike Theelen
Chief Executive
Queenstown Lakes District Council



Jim Boulton
Mayor
Queenstown Lakes District Council

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) has had the opportunity to consider the Otago Regional Council's (ORC) Long Term Plan (LTP) 2018-28 and offers its congratulations on production of an accessible and well-considered plan.
- 1.2 From a strategic perspective, it's clear that the vision, outcomes, goals and priorities of the ORC's LTP are fully complementary with QLDC's approach to the next ten years. Our vision statement is "vibrant communities, enduring landscapes, bold leadership".
- 1.3 QLDC expresses its thanks for the inclusion of a number of issues that directly impact our community on a local level and would like to provide feedback in relation to the following:

Significant Issues from the Consultation Document:

- Climate change – position supported
- Water monitoring – position supported
- Urban water quality – position supported

Other matters of importance:

- Demographic projections – use of peak visitor numbers essential
- Emergency management – increased resources required
- Public transport – improved bus routes and frequency needed
- Wilding Trees – enhanced support needed
- Future Development Strategy – partnership with ORC required
- Housing Infrastructure Fund – improved engagement required
- Wastewater schemes – partnership model suggested

2.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

- 2.1 QLDC fully supports ORC's initiatives to better understand the impacts of climate change on all areas within the Region, as provided for in the preferred option.

3.0 WATER MONITORING

- 3.1 QLDC also supports the extension of the water monitoring programme, particularly in relation to the provision of buoys and boat-based monitoring in Lake Hayes, Wanaka and Wakatipu. We note the options analysis for Lake Hayes but wish to highlight that in 2016 the QLDC requested that the ORC fund remediation for this iconic lake. It has taken a full year for the Council to reach a position of considering remediation and the anticipated funding to actually undertake this remediation is not included in the plan. Last year we requested that \$200,000 be included in the ORC budget to undertake this remediation. This request continues to stand.
- 3.2 Additionally the Council would like to request a more reactive approach on the part of the ORC in the event of declaring areas unsafe for swimming. It is critical that these matters are monitored daily and

that the notices are lifted in a timely manner. This is both an important community issue but a matter of reputation for the district and region.

- 3.3 We welcome the opportunity to work collaboratively with the ORC in monitoring and protecting our district's lakes, rivers and waterways.

4.0 URBAN WATER QUALITY

- 4.1 QLDC supports the acceleration of the strategy for urban water quality. We look forward to being involved in the development of the strategy and being consulted as a key stakeholder throughout.

5.0 DEMOGRAPHIC PROJECTIONS

- 5.1 ORC has accurately reflected resident and average population growth for the Queenstown Lakes District in the Ten Year Plan. However it is of significant concern that the ORC has failed to take into account and plan for peak visitor numbers as opposed to average visitor numbers. QLDC is surprised that this was not highlighted during the audit process.
- 5.2 On any given day, it's essential that the district's infrastructure, public transport and emergency management response capability is scaled to cope with peak visitor day numbers. This dramatic variation in population figures is a nuance that is uniquely pronounced in the Queenstown Lakes District. It may put this issue into perspective to remind the ORC that QLDC predicts that within ten years at peak time our population will be bigger than the city of Dunedin.
- 5.3 The quantum increase of visitor growth and pressure on the district is significant over the next ten years.
- 5.4 QLDC requests that the ORC revisits the population projections provided in September 2017 and replaces average visitor day numbers, with peak visitor day numbers. This will require the subsequent reassessment of all provisions planned for the Queenstown Lakes District, to ensure that sufficient resources and activities are planned and allocated to meet demand.
- 5.5 If the ORC does not revisit the population projections, the premise for investment and level of service in the Queenstown Lakes District may be flawed. This will place the achievement of key outcomes, goals and strategic priorities at significant risk.

6.0 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 Whilst QLDC is keen to support the initiatives of the ORC in relation to emergency management (as outlined on p51), we hold a clear position that the existing provisions are inadequate for the resilience and response requirement of the Queenstown Lakes District.
- 6.2 Within the assumptions given on p99, the plan emphasises that the Regional Response Group will be ready to respond to any natural disasters in the next ten years. The Otago Regional Response Group has made some good inroads around preparedness but the entire Otago Regional Response Group is

based in Dunedin (with the exception of the Emergency Management Officers). With all the best will in the world the QLDC finds this assumption unrealistic. In a regional event resources will not be adequate to respond across Otago, particularly during the first critical hours and days.

- 6.3 The current level of investment into the Queenstown Lakes - namely a single Emergency Management Officer to cover the entire district and manage the significant tourism sector resilience pieces and administer Community Plans for Queenstown, Wanaka, Arrowtown, Glenorchy, Kingston, Makarora, Hawea and Luggate, together with a number of community associations and hold all the relationships with elected members, staff and emergency services - is not reasonable or tenable in the fastest growing District in New Zealand.
- 6.4 In the event of an Alpine Fault rupture, Queenstown Lakes District will be the most significantly impacted part of the Otago Region. It will be critical for our small communities, our tourist operators and local residents to be prepared to be resilient. That requires more and ongoing investment in planning, engagement and education than one officer can be expected to manage across the entire District.
- 6.5 When considered alongside the complex nature of our District, with isolated rural communities and vulnerable tourist populations; the challenge becomes exacerbated.
- 6.6 In order to meet the strategic priority of 'resilient communities', the ORC needs to significantly increase dedicated emergency management resources in the Queenstown Lakes District and provide two Emergency Management Officers. We appreciate this will have a modest ratings impact, but believe our community will support such an important investment.

7.0 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

- 7.1 QLDC commends the ORC key goal of achieving a 'connected community' with a 'service delivery that puts community first'. Passenger Transport is clearly a critical element in the delivery of this goal.
- 7.2 However, it is difficult to understand the intent of the plan in relation to the Queenstown Lakes District, particularly regarding the anticipated enhancement of the Wakatipu Basin service.
- 7.3 QLDC contends that the ongoing success of the service relies on both the introduction of new routes and the increase of frequency. Whilst this is partially acknowledged in the documentation, there is inconsistency between the Consultation Document and the Supporting Documents as to exactly with this entails for our district. We wish to reiterate that the Council would like to be consulted on these matters and consider prioritisation on a collaborative basis, including route planning and development. Given QLDC is providing a direct subsidy to this service it is our express expectation that we will be including in goal setting, prioritisation, decisions and timing.
- 7.4 QLDC has identified the following factors as critical to the success of the service ongoing in the district:
- The delivery of a Malaghan Road loop route linking Arrowtown and Queenstown
 - increased frequency of service across the network – both off-peak and during peak periods

- provision of additional services to meet demand for key events

8.0 WILDING TREES

- 8.1 QLDC commends ORC on its recognition of the scale and threat posed by wilding conifers to the region's water and land resources in the Long Term Plan.
- 8.2 The ORC Long Term Plan provides funding for wilding tree control. QLDC requests that ORC considers a substantial increase to its financial commitment to eradicating wilding conifers, as QLDC contributes \$500,000 annually in its Long Term Plan.
- 8.3 QLDC recommends that ORC work closely with existing community groups such as the Wakatipu Wilding Conifer Control Group.
- 8.4 QLDC asks that ORC supports National Wilding funding in Otago, with staff support provided in-kind to administer the programme.
- 8.5 Furthermore, QLDC requests that ORC involves and works closely with QLDC on the development of the Pest Management Plan.

9.0 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

- 9.1 QLDC would like to highlight the need for effective collaboration with ORC in developing a Future Development Strategy (FDS) for the Queenstown Lakes District. QLDC is required to prepare an FDS in order to comply with the National Policy Statement on Urban Development Capacity and to develop it through a process involving meaningful collaboration between related authorities which in this context must include both Central Otago District Council (CODC) and ORC.
- 9.2 As previously discussed with ORC officials, we would greatly appreciate greater involvement from ORC experts in the development and evaluation of options and in facilitating engagement with CODC. We would therefore like to formally request that resources are made available to provide input to the process and to provide alignment ongoing.

10.0 HOUSING INFRASTRUCTURE FUND (HIF)

- 10.1 QLDC requests that the ORC engages more effectively with QLDC on its current HIF applications. In particular, QLDC is keen to work with the ORC in relation to Kingston consenting matters and on other HIF applications in relation to transport issues. To date, the engagement on these matters with the ORC has been reasonably challenging.

11.0 WASTEWATER SCHEMES

- 11.1 QLDC notes that there are now successful examples of regional councils partnering with local councils to subsidise wastewater schemes in smaller communities. We commend this form of proactive approach from regional councils. As such, QLDC would like the opportunity to explore the

potential for this form of collaboration with the ORC. This would enable both parties to invest in the right community and environmental outcomes for our district.

12.0 CONCLUSION

- 12.1 QLDC strongly urges that the ORC revisit its demographic projections for the Queenstown Lakes District and amends the LTP on the basis of peak visitor numbers (as opposed to average visitor numbers). The quantum of growth over the next ten years must be factored and planned for at peak population.
- 12.2 Emergency management assumptions and provisions must be reviewed for the Queenstown Lakes District and a second, dedicated Emergency Management Officer included in the plan.
- 12.3 QLDC congratulates the ORC for the development of the initial bus network in the district, but is keen to work with ORC to develop critical next steps. These will be integral to building positivity around public transport, delivering a mode shift and embedding new travel behaviours. In particular an investment in more frequency of services and new services to widen the catchment will be essential in 2018/19.
- 12.4 QLDC commends ORC's recognition of the commitment required to eradicate Wilding Conifers, but requests additional funding and support. Further focus on the development of a pest management plan is required.
- 12.5 QLDC is also keen to engage with the ORC effectively and partner in the delivery of a number of initiatives, most notably in relation to the QLDC Future Development Strategy, HIF projects and the delivery of smaller community wastewater schemes.
- 12.6 To conclude, QLDC fully supports the ORC in its endeavours to address key issues for the Otago region, especially in relation to climate change, water monitoring and urban water quality but acknowledge some frustration at the lack of committed remediation budget.