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RED BRIDGE RIVER PARK TRUST

6 Other Comments

Would you like to comment on any other aspect of this draft 10 Year Plan?

See attached submission

RED BRIDGE RIVER PARK

Charitable Trust

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Submission to Queenstown Lakes District Council – 10 Year Plan

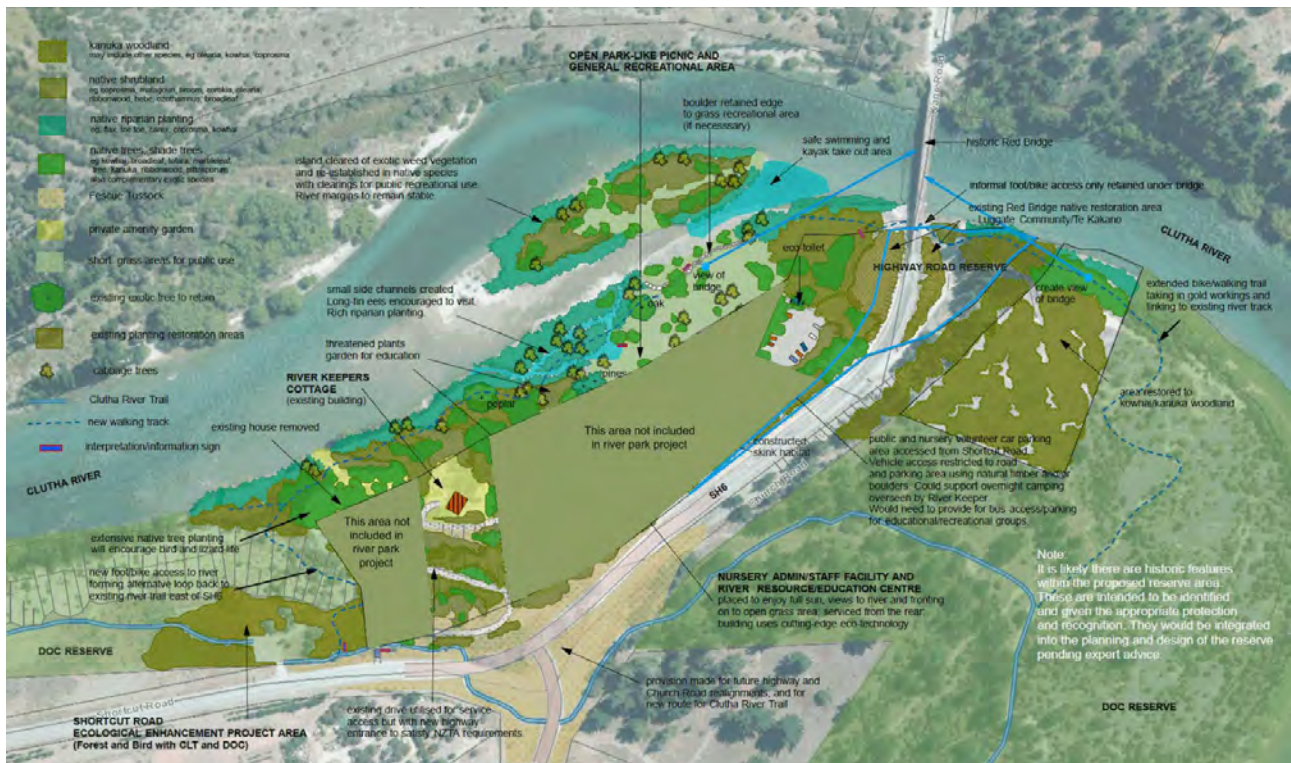
by: Lewis: Verduyn-Cassels, for the Trust, via email

Introduction:

The Red Bridge River Part Trust is a registered charitable trust formed in mid-2014 to establish a river park and native recovery centre on riverside land at the Luggate Red Bridge on the Upper Clutha Mata-Au River.

Originally, we envisaged a riverside conservation park including four properties that were being sold by Contact Energy Ltd. Two properties were subsequently sold to other buyers, while a third property adjoining the Red Bridge has been gifted to the QLDC. The remaining property has been purchased by the Trust under an agreement that took over a year to negotiate, whereby the Trust has made an up-front deposit on the market value and is required to make a further settlement of \$159,000 by 2 April, 2020.

The area of the river park, when Memorandums of Understanding are in place with the Department of Conservation (Marginal Strip), and the Queenstown Lakes District Council (Section 12 adjoining the bridge), will be approximately 5.2ha.



This original plan shows the two areas subsequently removed from the project.
We will update our project plan accordingly.

Although the property purchased by the Trust is only 0.4ha it is the key to the viability of the project in the long-term. This is because it will support the basic operation of the park by providing the Trust with native plants from an on-site nursery, and a regular income and source of labour from the lease of an on-site cottage to a park caretaker/riverkeeper.

Mission of the Trust:

To create and maintain a river park and native recovery centre at the Luggate Red Bridge near Wanaka. The Trust is committed to native restoration, stewardship, ecosystem education, and freshwater research, upholding the fundamental principle that our natural environment must be protected, restored, and kept healthy, for the benefit of our community of life.

Features of the River Park:

- **Recreation Area:** A walking/biking/fishing access track along the riverside will add a loop to the main river trail, so that trail users can traverse the park before returning to the main trail. There will be a kayak/raft take-out area, and a common recreational area for picnics, school groups, local gatherings, and special events such as weddings.
- **Outdoor Education:** Outdoor education activities for schools, technical and tertiary institutions, including kayaking, water safety, freshwater ecosystem studies, and native restoration. School groups can have their own restoration plot so that they can monitor plant growth and biodiversity progress. Trustee, Jeromy van Riel, is a teacher of Te Reo Maori in Wanaka at both secondary and tertiary levels.
- **Freshwater Research:** Freshwater ecosystem research and management involving universities, NIWA, and Manaaki Tuna (Longfinn eel group Massey University), to study the impacts of land use intensification coinciding with major changes in national and regional policy. Limnologist, Dr Marc Schallenberg, is a specialist Trustee.
- **Native Nursery:** Ecological restoration with an on-site native nursery to ensure a long-term supply of plants for the project, and eventually other river-based projects. The Trust will partner with *Te Kāhano Aotearoa* Trust which supports community-based native habitat restoration in Wanaka and the surrounding area.
- **History Archive:** The river park is an archaeological site with Chinese gold-mining features such as stone huts and tailings. The Trust will interpret and archive the local heritage, including the Luggate punt, the unique Luggate Red Bridge, and Upper Clutha gold-dredges.
- **Park Riverkeeper:** An on-site park caretaker/riverkeeper will work for the Red Bridge River Park Trust, to manage the native nursery, undertake native restoration, maintain the park, and liaise with visitors including school groups, work experience volunteers, and tourists, fostering a culture of stewardship. In this way, the Trust's property will support the charitable purposes of the Trust in perpetuity.

Partners in Conservation/Restoration:

The Trust intends to partner with interested parties to advance the project, including:

- Queenstown Lakes District Council
- Department of Conservation
- *Te Kāhano Aotearoa* Trust
- Luggate Community Association
- Upper Clutha Tracks Trust
- New Zealand Transport Agency
- Forest and Bird Central Otago Lakes
- Mt Aspiring College and Otago Polytechnic
- Fish and Game Otago
- and others as opportunities arise

The Red Bridge Entrance to Wanaka:

The Red Bridge crossing over the Clutha Mata-Au River, and the immediate riverside area, is an important and attractive entrance to Wanaka for travellers coming via the Lindis Pass. This area is highly visible and popular. Tourists and local people are daily visitors.

The block of land immediately adjoining the bridge has been gifted to the QLDC by Contact Energy Ltd. This land is included in the Trust's river park plan. As such, the Trust wishes to work closely with the QLDC to achieve the best outcome for the community.

We would expect the Council to contribute some funds or resources toward the improvement of this area. For example, some signage may be required, and other minor works such as placing rocks to prevent traffic along the riverbank.

Our 5-Year Funding Challenge:

In accordance with the purchase agreement between the Red Bridge River Park Charitable Trust and Contact Energy Ltd., the Trust has paid an upfront deposit for the 0.4ha property at market value, and is required to provide a further settlement of \$159,000 within five years, due on 2 April 2020. The Trust has already received a \$10,000 pledge for 2016, and a further \$200 in donations, so the Trust currently requires \$148,800 to achieve final settlement.

The Trust will be seeking some funding support from various community-focused agencies as we advance the river park project, both for specific project work, and toward our \$148,800 final settlement goal.

However, at this stage, it is unclear how this funding challenge will progress. From the Trust's perspective, it is important to remember that the long-term security of the Red Bridge River Park depends on obtaining sufficient funds to achieve this final settlement in 2020.

Support from the QLDC:

From the outset, the Council has supported this project, recognising that it is consistent with the common objectives of the community as determined by the 2020 workshops. We are especially pleased to have the support of the Wanaka Community Board, the members of which have taken the time to visit the site, share their ideas, and express their enthusiasm.

With the ongoing support of the QLDC, and many others, we intend to transform the riverside at the Red Bridge into a healthy ecosystem, while creating a river park that will become a unique asset to the community and the region.