

BEFORE THE QUEENSTOWN LAKES DISTRICT COUNCIL HEARINGS PANEL

UNDER

the Resource Management Act 1991

IN THE MATTER

of the review of parts of the Queenstown Lakes District Council's District Plan under the First Schedule of the Act

AND

IN THE MATTER

of submissions and further submissions by
REMARKABLES PARK LIMITED AND
QUEENSTOWN PARK LIMITED

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF ROBERT JAMES GREENAWAY ON BEHALF OF
REMARKABLES PARK LIMITED AND QUEENSTOWN PARK LIMITED**

(RECREATION AND TOURISM)

STREAM 13 REZONING HEARINGS

9 June 2017

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1. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- 1.1. My name is Robert James Greenaway.
- 1.2. I am an independent consultant recreation and tourism researcher and planner.
- 1.3. I graduated from Lincoln University in 1987 with a three-year Diploma in Parks and Recreation Management with Distinction, and completed 18 months of postgraduate study in conservation management.
- 1.4. I hold the status of an Accredited Recreation Professional with the NZ Recreation Association (**NZRA**), and am a member and past Chair of the NZRA Board of Accreditation for member accreditation to professional status.
- 1.5. I am also a 'core group' member of the New Zealand Association for Impact Assessment.
- 1.6. In 2011 I was appointed as an inaugural Board member of the Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Recreation Council, to assist Sport New Zealand with the implementation of the National Outdoor Recreation Strategy, amongst other things.
- 1.7. I was awarded the Ian Galloway Memorial Cup in 2004 by the NZRA (of which I am a past Executive member) to recognise 'excellence and outstanding personal contribution to the wider parks industry'. In 2013 I was awarded the status of Fellow with the NZRA.
- 1.8. I was employed in the fields of recreation and tourism at Tourism Resource Consultants (1990-1995) and at Boffa Miskell Limited (1995-1997) before beginning to work independently in 1997.
- 1.9. I have completed more than 350 consultancy projects nationally since 1997 and have presented evidence at more than 80 resource management hearings; more than half for the Environment Court or EPA. In the Queenstown Lakes area, I have provided evidence for land developments at Peninsula Bay (in 2006 and 2016), Parkins Bay, Riverrun (Albert Town) and Hill End. I have worked on numerous other projects in the District, including the Queenstown Airport runway extension safety area, NZOne runway reconsenting, Wilkin River jet boating consents, and Clutha River hydro reconsenting and other hydro investigations; and am also presenting evidence on the Queenstown Lakes District Council's (**QLDC**) Proposed District Plan (**PDP**) for the beneficial owners of Sticky Forest in Wanaka. I have been assisting with the

Remarkables Gondola proposal since 2015. I presented evidence for Queenstown Park Ltd (**QPL**) to the QLDC Hearings Panel in April 2016 on Chapter 21 – Rural, Chapter 22 – Rural Residential and Chapter 33 Indigenous Vegetation.

2. CODE OF CONDUCT

- 2.1. I have read and am familiar with the Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses in the current Environment Court Practice Note (2014), have complied with it, and will follow the Code when presenting evidence to the Council. I also confirm that the matters addressed in this statement of evidence are within my area of expertise, except when relying on the opinion or evidence of other witnesses. I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions expressed.

3. SUMMARY

- 3.1. My evidence considers:

- (a) the submission made by **QPL** on the Queenstown Lakes District Council's PDP; and more generally
- (b) the potential effects of the land uses proposed within the Queenstown Park Special Zone (**QPSZ**) on existing recreation and tourism values; and
- (c) the fit of the proposed tourism development within the QPSZ with tourism in Queenstown.

- 3.2. My main conclusions are as follows:

- (a) Tourism is fundamental to the Queenstown economy and community and is experiencing substantial growth beyond national averages. Mr Philip Osborne has presented evidence to the Hearings Panel on this issue on behalf of Council (6 April 2016) and I need not review this issue much further. However, this growth is a cause of local traffic, accommodation and activity congestion, which can lead to visitor dissatisfaction and a negative commercial and community spiral. Congestion and access limits can either be used as a deliberate mechanism for controlling growth, and/or innovative methods can be used to accommodate growth while limiting its adverse effects. I consider the QPSZ proposal to be of the latter ilk.

- (b) The QPSZ proposal has very limited potential for adverse effects on existing local recreation values, while offering benefits by, for example, extending the regional trails network.
- (c) The proposal responds well to local tourism congestion issues by creating a significant attraction with very little dependence on the local road network, while increasing the capacity of existing tourism infrastructure near Queenstown airport as a summer and winter destination.
- (d) The QPSZ rules could be strengthened by the addition of assessment criteria for controlled and restricted discretionary activities to include:
 - (i) Whether proposed public access opportunities complement regional walk, river and cycle networks for both construction standard and connectivity;
 - (ii) Whether public access on proposed public walk and cycleways are secured in perpetuity via an appropriate legal mechanism;
 - (ii) The degree to which the applicant guarantees that public access areas and tracks will be maintained to an agreed standard and one which matches that of the regional walk and cycle network; and
 - (iv) The ability of gondola construction activities and bridge and wharf design to avoid or minimise effects on existing recreation and tourism activities on and beside the Kawarau River.

4. INTRODUCTION

- 4.1. QPL is proposing a tourism development and gondola on the Remarkables Station land, linking Remarkables Park with the Remarkables Ski Area via a visitor activity and accommodation area on terraces above right bank of the Kawarau River. Activity areas for two 'Rural Visitor' pods are sought, along with six Rural Residential settings.
- 4.2. My evidence largely concerns only the gondola and Rural Visitor pods. Effects on tourism and recreation of the Rural Residential pods almost entirely reflect the findings of Mr Stephen Brown in relation to maintaining landscape, natural character and visual amenity values. To aid his analysis I have supplied Mr Brown with my assessment data (particularly that in my Attachment 1) to describe the potential viewers of the pods and other proposed development areas.

- 4.3. I understand that the Rural Visitor pods are expected to feature visitor accommodation, retail, visitor attractions of the artisan (including food and beverage) variety, and gondola infrastructure. Additional visitor and biking trails may be developed as activity options by themselves or as an addition to the gondola experience, with descent by mountain bike.
- 4.4. The proposal includes public walk and cycle bridges at one or more of three indicated points across the Kawarau River, and one or more of five ferry and jet-boat landings on its true right bank. These three access options – gondola, ferry / jet boat and walk and cycle – limit the requirement for visitor access by road, which is a significant advantage of the proposal and a key reason why I support the concept as a means of supporting growth while limiting – and potentially reducing – transport congestion issues in Queenstown.
- 4.5. I consider in my evidence:
- (a) Existing recreation and tourism activities which could be affected by the development proposal;
 - (b) How the proposal will fit with existing and future tourism patterns in Queenstown; and
 - (c) How the submission by QPL, in particular the QPSZ, can ensure positive outcomes for public recreation near the Kawarau River and avoid or minimise adverse effects.

5. EXISTING RECREATION AND TOURISM VALUES AND EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSAL

- 5.1. Attachment 1 to my evidence provides a summary of central and local government agency expectations for management of the recreation and tourism values of the upper Kawarau River valley and the tourism and recreation activities occurring there.
- 5.2. In summary, management agencies are seeking:
- (a) Provision for a wide range of recreation and tourism activities while maintaining the area's natural qualities;
 - (b) Ability of the Remarkables Ski Area to support increased visitor numbers;
 - (c) The provision of quality visitor facilities;

- (d) Maintenance and improvement to public access opportunities where appropriate;
- (e) Maintenance of locally significant fishery values (specific to the Otago Fish & Game Council); and
- (f) Public access on the true right of the Kawarau River linking with existing Queenstown Trails (specific to the Queenstown Trails Trust).

5.3. Existing recreation and tourism activities in the upper Kawarau River valley are:

- (a) Grade 1 rafting and kayaking, including commercial family activities from the Shotover confluence;
- (b) Commercial and private jet boating (but by far the former) above the Arrow confluence, but mostly above the Shotover confluence (KJet and Thunder Jet);
- (c) Walking and cycling on the true left – probably the biggest use of the area counted in the tens of thousands;
- (d) Fishing on the River, mostly in summer with around 3000 angler days on the entire Kawarau but mostly in the clear water upstream of the Shotover confluence, with one commercial guide operating;
- (e) Rock climbing on the Rastus Burn Rocks beside the Remarkables Ski Area access road and beyond the proposed gondola corridor; and
- (f) Tramping and other climbing areas are to the south and west of the Remarkables Ski Area.

5.4. The scenic values of the setting underpin all these activities and the potential effects of the proposal are largely limited to changes in landscape values (the other effect is the more frequent use of the Kawarau River). Landscape effects are reviewed in the evidence of Mr Stephen Brown. Of importance is the location of many existing visitor activities in the bottom of the river valley beside or on the water, from where views of the river terraces are limited. Above the Shotover confluence, the gondola cable and cabins will be obvious, as will any bridges and jetties above or beside the River.

5.5. Mr Brown has contributed to the proposed QPSZ provisions with the aim of avoiding or minimising potential adverse effects on landscape values and to provide QLDC with an appropriate assessment and control framework.

- 5.6. The proposal otherwise supports tourism and recreation activities by increasing the use of the Remarkables Ski Area, which is already developed for commercial activities, and providing public recreation access to the right bank of the Kawarau and linking those new trails with existing routes on the left bank.
- 5.7. Other effects will include increased jet boat activity on the Kawarau River and additional landing sites, and potentially increased fishing pressure caused by the close location of visitor activities and accommodation. The latter will require the issuing of fishing licences and will be based almost all below the Shotover confluence. The former will be controlled via the Queenstown Lakes District Navigation Safety Bylaw and, as defined by the proposed QPSZ, discretion over the location of wharves and their impact on public access. I am advised that construction of the gondola cable is likely to require only a very short halt to jet boat activity and use of trails beneath it. Other construction activities are on private land or public land with no recreation use (most of the Rastus Burn Recreation Reserve outside the Remarkables Ski Area).
- 5.8. The gondola corridor includes part of the QLDC-administered recreation reserve to the south of Lake Hayes Estate, allowing consideration of locating a gondola station on the reserve. The QLDC as property owner would retain full discretion over the potential for this development.
- 5.9. In summary, adverse effects of the proposal on recreation and tourism are likely to be minor, and have controls available via, for example, the Navigation Safety Bylaw and issuing of fishing licences, as well as the proposed QPSZ. The River currently features regular jet boat activity and cannot be considered a remote or undeveloped recreation setting, although it retains high landscape values.

6. FIT WITH QUEENSTOWN TOURISM

- 6.1. The QLDC *Economic Development Strategy* (February 2015) notes that the region is highly dependent on tourism for its economic and social welfare, and is an all-season destination. While noting that economic risk in the region will be reduced if there is a diversification in economic activity (by growing the 'knowledge-based sector' for example), the Strategy retains gaining more cash per head from the visitor industry as a core priority. Destination Queenstown in its 2016-17 Business Plan seeks also to achieve sustained growth in visitor numbers (a 6% increase in annual visitor expenditure and 4% growth in the number of visitor guest nights for 2016-17).

- 6.2. The Economic Development Strategy also notes that the region – and especially Queenstown – has a growing tourism infrastructure problem (pp12-13):

The growing resident and, in particular, the visitor population is placing pressure on infrastructure and the District's ability to adequately fund maintenance and improvements. The Economic Futures Taskforce report concluded that although current infrastructure is generally adequate for the existing population, the infrastructure network struggles at peak tourism periods....

Although the local population is forecast to grow relatively strongly, visitor numbers are forecast to grow strongly too and the proportion of residents to visitors may decline over time. Hence parts of the rating base will continue to get stretched to cover infrastructure costs for the combined resident and visitor population....

In addition, there are perceptions that some parts of Queenstown do not offer the upmarket ambience often experienced in other resort towns. There have been concerns from landlords and retailers that there is insufficient building maintenance, an increasing number of low-end-of-spectrum retail shops and restaurants, and non-optimal traffic routes in the town centre.

- 6.3. The Strategy recommends two development priorities relevant to tourism and the Queenstown Station proposal (p17):

Encourage higher contribution visitor activity: This priority is about growing the proportion of higher value visitors, encouraging visitors to spend more in the District, diversifying our visitor offerings and ways they can contribute to our community, and further reducing seasonality in visitor expenditure. Note that Wanaka has capacity and needs longer stay visitors. The priority builds on the District's existing strengths in the visitor economy and leverages its natural amenities. Increasing the value derived from visitors rather than just visitor numbers can also reduce some of the pressure on infrastructure and the environment. The priority aligns with Destination Queenstown and Lake Wanaka Tourism strategies.

Future proof infrastructure: This priority is focused on expanding funding options for investing in infrastructure; ensuring that adequate investment is made to maintain high quality infrastructure; and ensuring that funding sources and investment reflect the incidence of costs and benefits. The priority will directly address the challenge of the increasing pressure the District is facing to provide for adequate investment in infrastructure and help to ensure high quality connectivity.

- 6.4. In my opinion, the proposal is an elegant response to Queenstown's infrastructure issues. Importantly, it is entirely off the public grid and is tourism infrastructure with no demand on the ratepayer (as noted at paragraph 8.77 in Mr Ulrich Glasner's evidence on infrastructure for QLDC). Its ability to offer a non-vehicular activity option with very proximate access from the airport and accommodation in the Remarkables Park area, and with on-water and off-road access from central Queenstown, is likely to create reduced demand generally for private or rental vehicle use by visitors. The proposal will therefore support additional visitor activity with limited additional loading on existing infrastructure compared with intensifying visitor services in central Queenstown or any satellite location which will be dependent on the road network.

The main capacity limitations are the ability to provide visitor accommodation, which is part of the proposal, and the capacity of the Queenstown International Airport.

- 6.5. While the proposal includes free public access tracks on the right bank of the River, the core attraction is commercial and provides links between other commercial services, including those at the Remarkables Ski Area. Most importantly, the service will grow off-season (i.e. not winter) activity in the Ski Area, offering more reliable employment and utility from existing infrastructure with little additional investment beyond the gondola terminus.
- 6.6. Importantly, the proposal provides much of the trail network extension and connectivity sought by the Queenstown Trails Trust as shown in my Attachment 1. Several options for joining the network across the Kawarau River are shown and include connectivity to Kawarau Falls. While full access to Gibbston on the true right of the River is not contemplated by the existing proposal, this option is not foreclosed. I am advised that potential safety issues toward the eastern end of the QPL property currently limit the option of easily completing this link, although its development would clearly be of significant regional benefit. A connection between the ski area and Gibbston is also shown as a desired future route by the Queenstown Trails Trust, and while this is not defined as a component of the Comprehensive Development Plan, the option is not precluded if it complies with other proposed provisions of the QPSZ for, for example, vegetation clearance and landscape effects.
- 6.7. In summary, the proposal leverages existing infrastructure (Remarkables Ski Area and Remarkables Park) and local natural attractions to provide a new visitor service that will be high yield and have no impairment on existing tourism services or values. It supports both Destination Queenstown's objectives and those of the QLDC Economic Development Strategy.

7. QUEENSTOWN PARK LTD SUBMISSION

- 7.1. My understanding of the QPL submission is that it seeks to develop a statutory planning regime which enables and controls the proposed developments within the QPSZ, giving adequate certainty for investors while ensuring potential adverse environmental effects are avoided, remedied or mitigated. From a recreation and tourism perspective and considering, especially, the evidence of Stephen Brown, I consider that there is a strong potential for a tourism development to occur on the site with minimal adverse effects.

- 7.2. I prefer the QPSZ option compared with the PDP Rural Zone as the planning regime for the proposal, although this could be a reflection of my more common role in hearings where I help develop or respond to consent conditions for large infrastructure proposals. The Special Zone offers more specificity for what is a major stand-alone development akin to those already supported by special zones in the Queenstown Lakes District. It also allows me more capacity to understand the controls for proposed conditional and discretionary activities.
- 7.3. With that in mind, I have suggested the following considerations for relevant proposed controlled and restricted discretionary activities, and make some consequent observations:
- (a) Whether proposed public access opportunities complement regional walk, river and cycle networks for both construction standard and connectivity. Accordingly, the formation of a cycle/walking trail from Boyd Road to the proposed pedestrian bridge at Rural Visitor Activity Area 3 is a required element of the Comprehensive Development Plan.
 - (b) Whether public access on proposed public walk and cycleways are secured in perpetuity via an appropriate legal mechanism. Subdivision of Queenstown Park land would trigger requirements for esplanade reserves, and public trail would most likely be located within these.
 - (c) The degree to which the applicant guarantees that public access areas and tracks will be maintained to an agreed standard and one which matches that of the regional walk and cycle network. With the trail largely, if not fully, located on esplanade reserve, maintenance arrangements would most likely be as for any similar part of the regional trail network.
 - (d) The ability of gondola construction activities and bridge and wharf design to avoid or minimise effects on existing recreation and tourism activities on and beside the Kawarau River. This requirement is covered by the provisions of the proposed QPSZ.
- 7.4. The QLDC as property owner retains full discretion over use of its recreation reserve to the south of Lake Hayes Estate for any gondola infrastructure.

7.5. I do not see any need to add controls to the QPSZ for on-river activities, as these will be subject to the Navigation Safety Bylaw. The location of wharves is proposed to be a restricted discretionary activity with discretion over their location and effects on public access to and along the Kawarau River defined in the proposed QPSZ.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1. In my opinion, the QPSZ proposal will complement Queenstown's tourism industry. It effectively responds to local infrastructure issues while supporting expectations to accommodate additional visitors, and to extract more income from each of them by supplying high-quality activity and service options in a managed natural setting.

8.2. By controlling its potential landscape effects, the proposal will be able to function with minor adverse effect on existing enjoyment of the upper Kawarau Valley, which currently features frequent motorised activity in the form of jet boats, mostly above the Shotover confluence. It would become a busier visitor setting.

8.3. The QLDC retains control via the proposed planning provisions over critical elements of the development proposal.

8.4. There are established expectations for the development of public access on the true right of the River, and the proposal provides for a connection from Boyds Road to an appropriate new river crossing. Further development options for public access are not foreclosed.

Robert James Greenaway

9 June 2017

ATTACHMENT 1: RECREATION AND TOURISM ACTIVITY REVIEW

Proposed Queenstown Park Gondola

Existing recreation and tourism activity review

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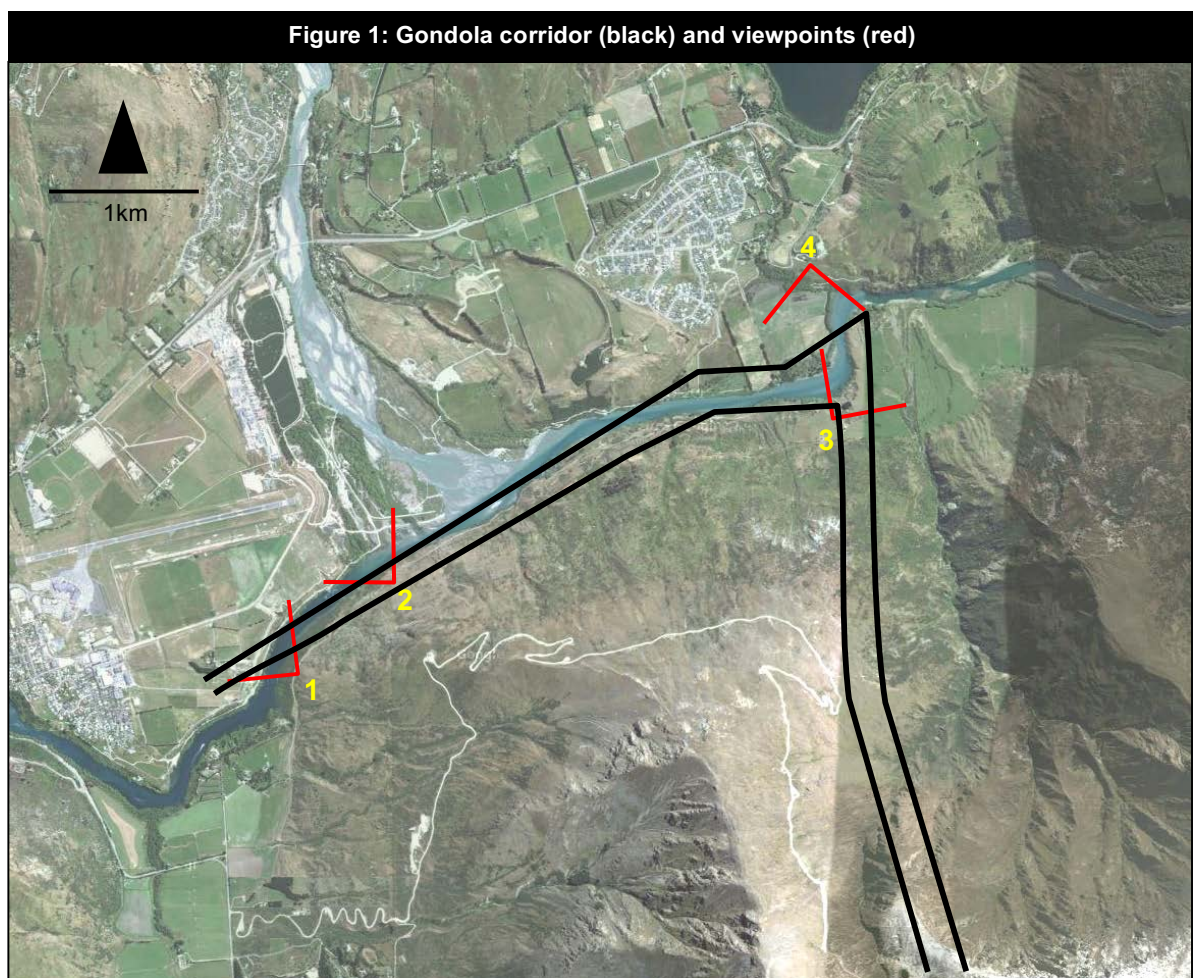
1 Introduction

This is a review of the existing tourism and recreation values of the Kawarau River valley area near Queenstown Park which could be affected by Queenstown Park Ltd's proposal for a gondola and tourism development on private land on the right bank of the Kawarau River. The report is based on literature review and interviews.

1.1 Setting description

This section gives a brief overview of the setting characteristics and the recreation opportunities near the development area.

Figure 1 shows the proposed gondola corridor and the four viewpoints referred to here. The corridor crosses the Kawarau River approximately 2500 metres downstream from Kawarau Falls and 1500 metres upstream from the centre of the confluence of the Shotover River.



Viewpoint 1 shows the location of the corridor crossing the Kawarau River, looking north-west from private land on the true right of the River. This shows the location of the Twin River Cycle Trail near the water's edge and river accesses from private land adjacent. This section of the Kawarau River normally runs very clear, being upstream of the Shotover confluence. The riverbanks on both sides are legal road adjacent to private land. At this point, the formed road alignment on the true right does not follow the legal road.

Viewpoint 1: Gondola cable crossing area



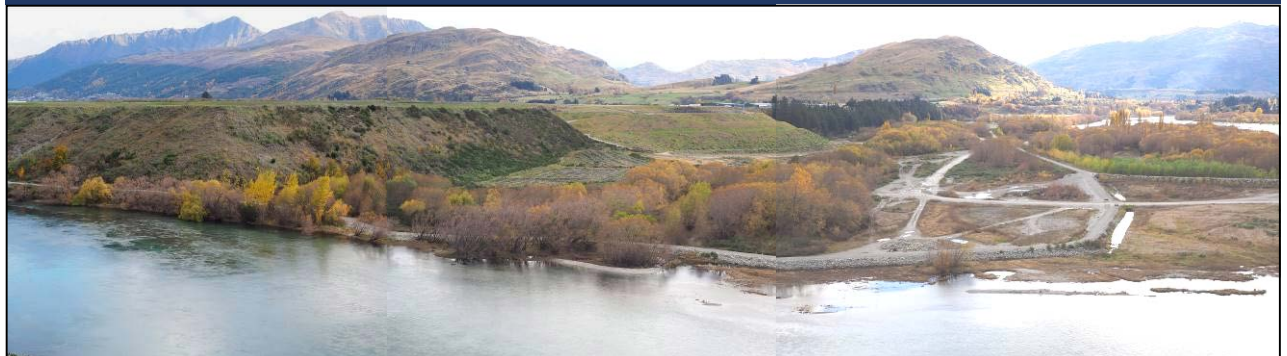
Viewpoint 2 shows the view north-west from private land on the true right of the River – on the gondola corridor – looking to the eastern end of the Queenstown airport runway and the river training walls at the western side of the Shotover River confluence. The Twin Rivers Cycle Trail runs along the Kawarau River's edge and follows the lower Shotover River north in the right of Viewpoint 2. Downriver of this point the sediment-laden Shotover River normally changes the Kawarau from clear to cloudy, with most angling activity upstream of this point on the true left. The majority of commercial jet boating occurs in this clear reach and the lower Shotover River.

Viewpoint 2: Gondola base station area



Viewpoint 3 looks north-east from just west of the proposed gondola base station. The discoloration introduced by the Shotover River is evident in the Kawarau River. The Twin Rivers Cycle Trail follows the true left of the River near water level and climbs to the first river terrace at the far right of the image.

Viewpoint 3: Shotover River confluence



Viewpoint 4 shows a view south towards the northern slopes of The Remarkables and the Rastus Burn valley. The corridor runs east – west along the lower slopes, and north to the Remarkables ski area via the western side of the Rastus Burn valley, which is almost entirely hidden in Viewpoint 4. The river terrace area in the foreground is largely private land, but the curved shed to the right marks the boundary of a large area of QLDC-administered recreation reserve to the south of Lake Hayes Estate. The true left of the Kawarau River is marked by the autumn-hued willows.

Viewpoint 4: View towards the northern slopes of The Remarkables

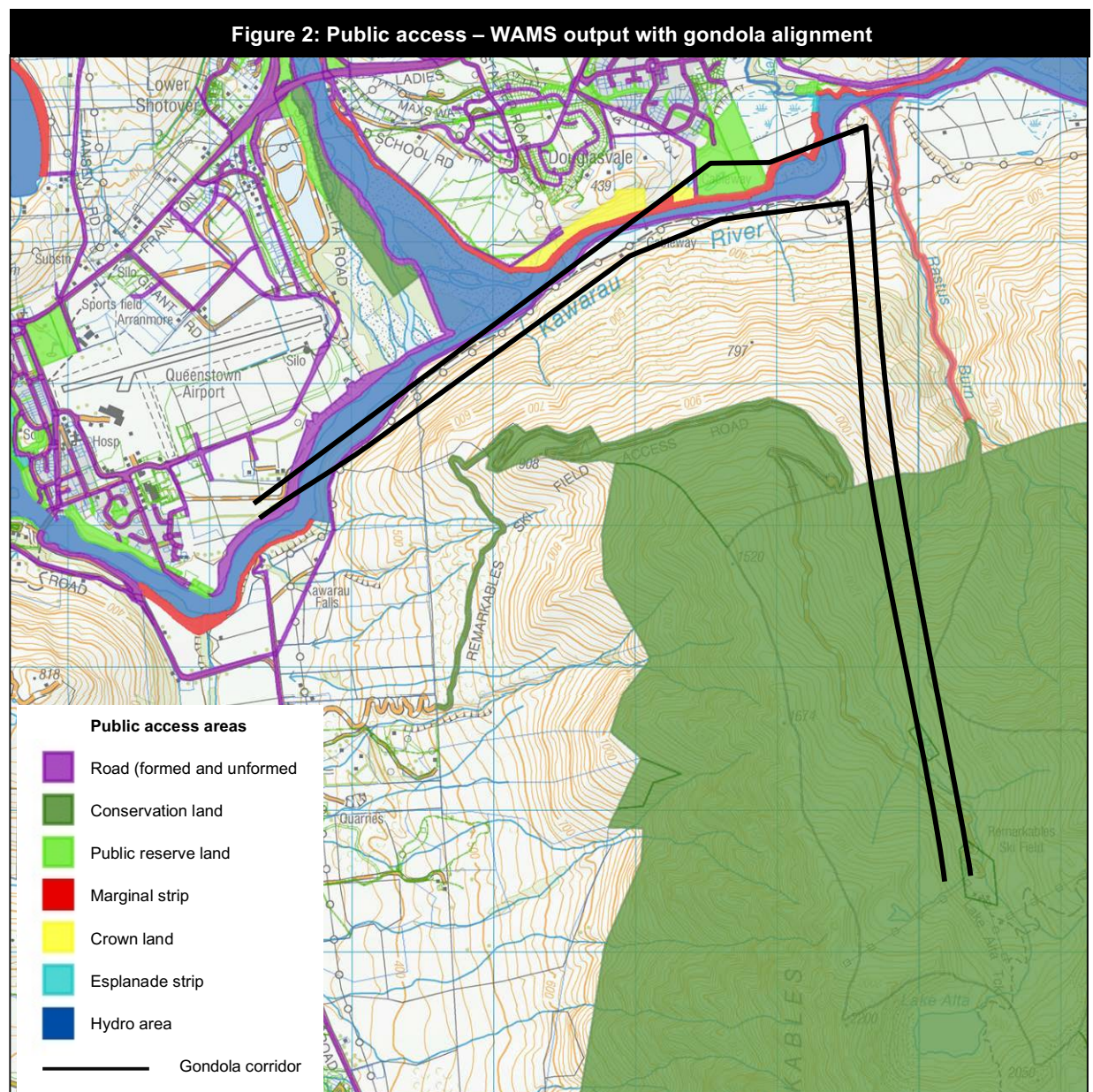


2 Access and land status

Figure 5 shows the Walking Access Commission mapping system (WAMS) for the land near the proposed gondola corridor. Public space shown in the WAMS output was checked against other GIS databases and several areas were subsequently added by the Commission.

The gondola corridor passes over public road, hydro areas and conservation land only. Near the corridor on the true left of the Kawarau Rivers are a series of parcels with different legal status providing access for the Twin Rivers Ride, including legal road, marginal strip, Crown land, reserve and esplanade reserve.

The alignment of the legal road on the true right of the Kawarau River extending from Kawarau Road, where it meets Boyd Road at Kawarau Falls, does not follow the formed road alignment. Although it appears possible to form a legal access to the Kawarau River near this point, the legal road enters the riverbed opposite the mouth of the Shotover River and there is no practical public access east of this point. Practical public access on the true right from the east ceases at the western end of Chard Road almost 10km to the east of the Shotover confluence –



although a very intrepid trekker could access the right bank from The Remarkables

conservation areas via the Rastus Burn and Owens Creek marginal strips, or access the River's edge more easily by boat.

Recreation access from the south to The Remarkables Ski Field is via the Lower Wye Creek Track, an 'advanced' tramping track ("People with moderate to high level backcountry (remote areas) skills and experience, navigation and survival skills required."¹) (Figure 3 in dashed magenta). DoC describes the 4hr route as a return trip on the same track, and states, "This is a high altitude walk and suitable for summer only, when snow may still be present. Be prepared for sudden weather changes."²

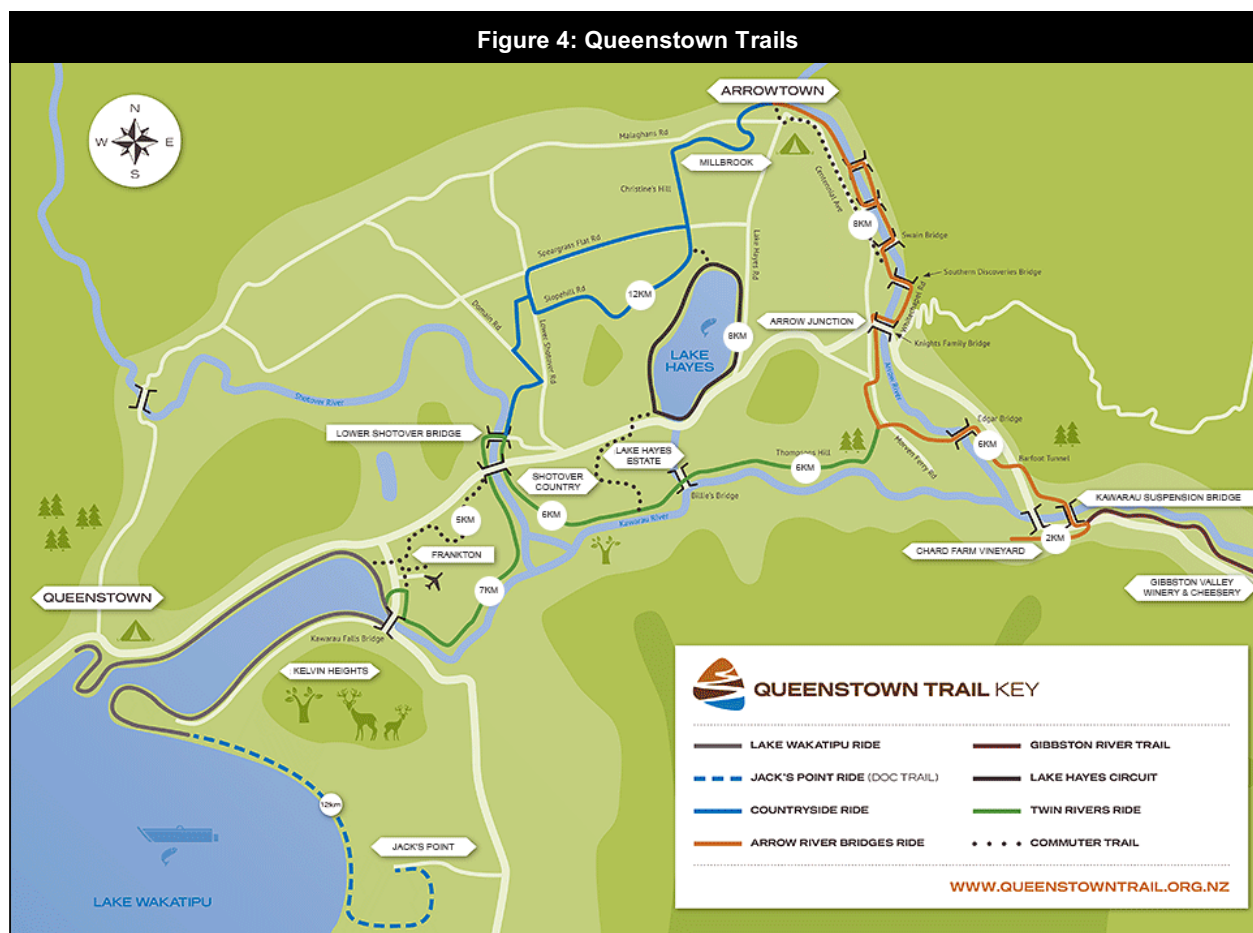


¹ <http://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/things-to-do/walking-and-tramping/track-categories/>

² <http://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/otago/places/remarkables-conservation-area/things-to-do/lower-wye-creek-track/>

However, the area east of the ridge of the Remarkables Range in the Double Cone area is generally accessible in summer for walking and tramping without relying on any formed track, and has backcountry skiing options in winter.

Recreation access on the true left of the Kawarau River is provided by the 'Twin Rivers Ride' from the Kawarau Falls Bridge to Morven Ferry Road (Figure 4 – a larger version is shown in Appendix 1).³



The gondola corridor does not fetter public access at any point, but may affect the amenity of users of neighbouring or nearby recreation settings and change access options for some of those settings.

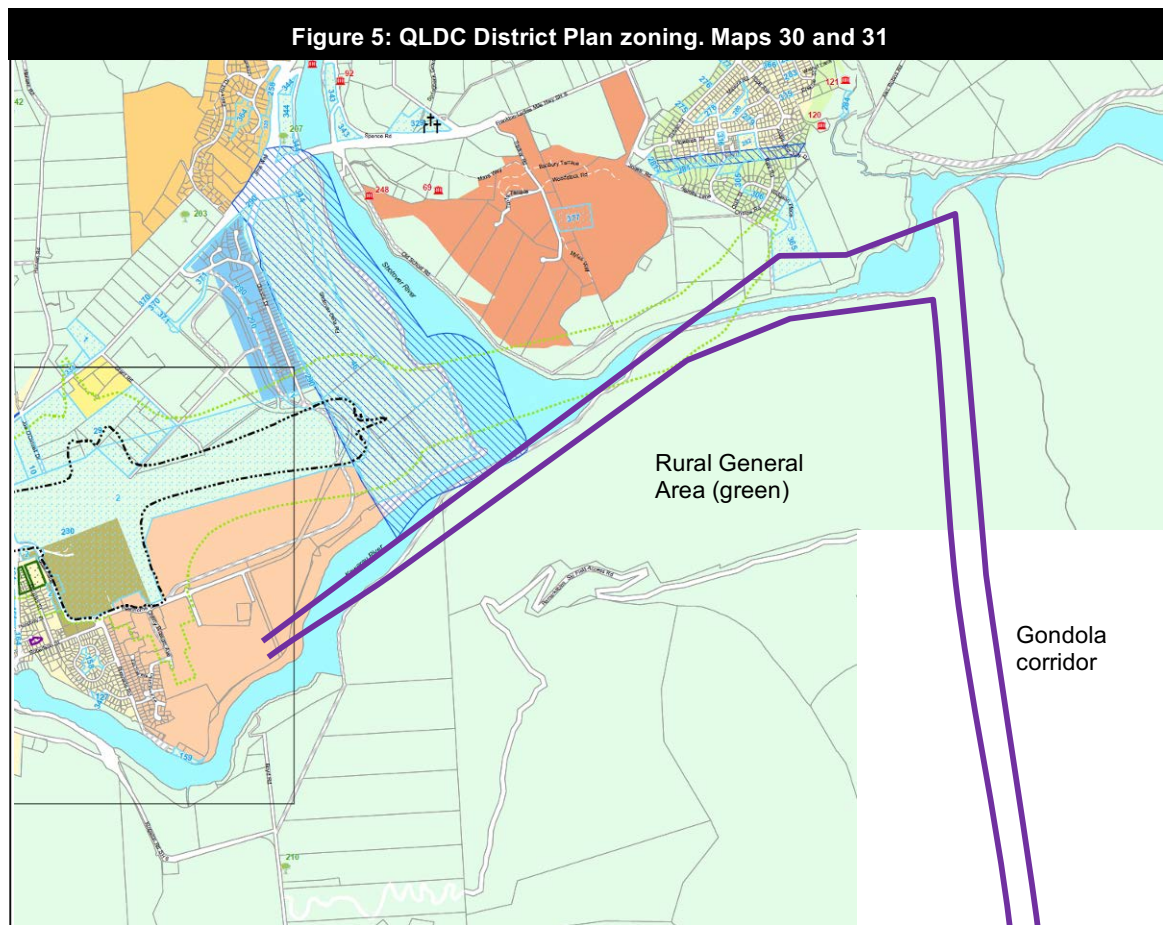
³ <http://www.queenstowntrail.co.nz/maps-and-rides/trail-maps/twin-rivers-ride-from-kawarau-falls-bridge-to-morvern-ferry-road/>

3 Setting management and agency data

3.1 Queenstown Lakes District Council

3.1.1 QLDC District Plan 2010

The gondola corridor originates in the Remarkables Park Zone and passes over, in the main, the Rural General Area zone, with the terminus in the Remarkables Skifield Policy Area (see planning map 13). The Environmental Results Anticipated for the Rural General Area for recreation are not detailed (besides in relation to freshwater values) and include 5.2.1 (xi) *Retention of a range of recreation opportunities*. However, the District Wide Issues for Open Space and Recreation (4.4) are more detailed and relevant, and provide a framework for assessing the effects of the proposal on regional recreation values.



The Plan notes (4.4.1 i):

The District provides a wide range of recreational opportunities. Its outstanding natural environment of lakes, rivers, mountains and basins provide an ideal setting for a variety of outdoor recreational activities. These are internationally recognised as the basis for the District's importance as a visitor destination, as well as encouraging residents to settle in the District. ...

Issues of relevance to recreation of the gondola proposal include (4.4.2 ii and iii):

Environmental Effects of Recreation Activities

Recreational activities may have positive and adverse effects on the amenities of their surrounding environment and on the enjoyment of people partaking of other recreational activities in the vicinity.

These may include effects: ...

- on people wishing to use reserves and other open space areas;*
- on public health, water quality and the pleasantness of an area.*

Effects on the Range and Quality of Recreational Opportunities

Residents of and visitors to the District currently have the opportunity for a wide range of recreational experiences. However, conflicts do occur between such activities with a loss or degradation of the quality and range of recreational opportunities available, particularly those involving remote experiences or peace and tranquillity.

Residents in the District and visitors require a range of recreation opportunities to meet their needs. Individuals who come to the District principally for adventure recreation, may also seek opportunities to pursue more passive types of recreation in tranquil surroundings. Equally some visitors come to the District mainly to enjoy the scenery and natural environment. Peace and a feeling of remoteness are often qualities sought by these people.

Section 4.4.3 (Objectives and Policies) sets out the following relevant considerations:

Objective 2 - Environmental Effects

Recreational activities and facilities undertaken in a way which avoids, remedies or mitigates significant adverse effects on the environment or on the recreation opportunities available within the District.

Policies:

2.1 To avoid, remedy or mitigate the adverse effects of commercial recreational activities on the natural character, peace and tranquillity of the District.

2.2 To ensure the scale and location of buildings, noise and lighting associated with recreational activities are consistent with the level of amenity anticipated in the surrounding environment....

2.4 To avoid, remedy or mitigate any adverse effects commercial recreation may have on the range of recreational activities available in the District and the quality of the experience of people partaking of these opportunities.

2.5 To ensure the development and use of open space and recreational facilities does not detract from a safe and efficient system for the movement of people and goods or the amenity of adjoining roads.

Objective 3 - Effective Use

Effective use and functioning of open space and recreational areas in meeting the needs of the District's residents and visitors.

Policies:

3.1 To recognise and avoid, remedy or mitigate conflicts between different types of recreational activities, whilst at the same time encouraging multiple use of public open space and recreational area wherever possible and practicable.

3.3 To encourage and support increased use of private open space and recreational facilities in order to help meet the recreational needs of the District's residents and visitors, subject to meeting policies relating to the environmental effects of recreational activities and facilities.

4.4.4 Environmental Results Anticipated

(i) A diversity in the type and size of open spaces and recreational facilities, equitably distributed throughout the District, to produce the following outcomes:...

(b) Provision of a wide range of recreational opportunities in recognition of the diversity of community recreational needs....

(e) Open spaces and recreational facilities that are convenient and accessible to users....

(iii) Recreational activities which do not adversely affect the environment.

Objective 6 of the Rural Areas chapter (5) refers to the Ski Area Sub-Zones and states:

Objective 6 -Ski Area Sub-Zone

To encourage the future growth, development and consolidation of existing Ski Areas, in a manner which mitigates adverse effects on the environment.

Policies:

6.1 To identify specialist sub-zoning for Ski Area activities.

6.2 To anticipate growth, development and consolidation of ski fields within Ski Area Sub-Zones.

Explanation and Principal Reasons for Adoption

The Council believes it is prudent to consolidate the effects of existing Ski Area activities within Ski Area Sub-Zones.

The Remarkables Park Zone has the purpose of providing for a (12.11.1):

... comprehensively managed and integrated high density development containing opportunities for a range of supporting and complementary activities. These include open space, visitor accommodation, transport, educational, recreational and commercial facilities.

Commercial Recreation Activities are Controlled Activities in the relevant activity areas, with control over the 'nature and scale of activities' (12.11.3.2 ii) amongst other things.

3.1.2 Queenstown Lakes District Navigation Safety Bylaw 2009

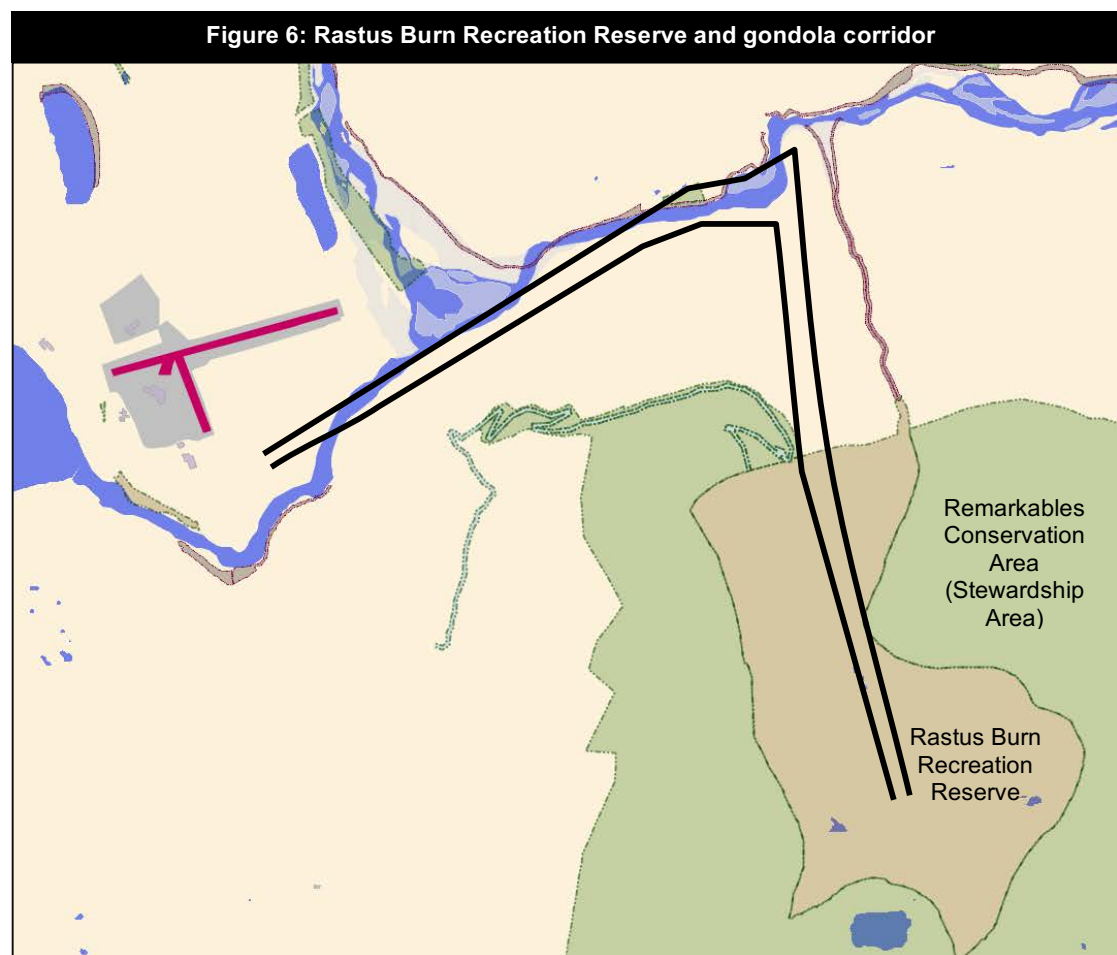
The Bylaw defines permitted uses of the Kawarau River near the proposal area. It restricts powered craft on the Kawarau River to only above the Arrow River confluence; and craft in that section are permitted to travel at more than 5 knots (with some minor exceptions). "Water skiing, aquaplaning or towing of persons with the use of a Craft or with the use of Personal Water Craft" are not permitted on the Kawarau River.

3.2 Department of Conservation

The gondola corridor passes through the 669ha Rastus Burn Recreation Reserve (gazetted under the Reserves Act 1977) which is partly enclosed by the Remarkables Conservation Area (Stewardship Area under the Conservation Act 1987). The Recreation Reserve is currently managed according to the operative 2008 Otago Conservation Management Strategy (CMS). However, the replacement 2015-2025 CMS is at the revised draft stage (post consultation) and contains useful advice as to future management expectations. Both documents are reviewed in this section.

The purpose of a recreation reserve under the Reserves Act is (section 17 (1)):

“...for the purpose of providing areas for the recreation and sporting activities and the physical welfare and enjoyment of the public, and for the protection of the natural environment and beauty of the countryside, with emphasis on the retention of open spaces and on outdoor recreational activities, including recreational tracks in the countryside.”

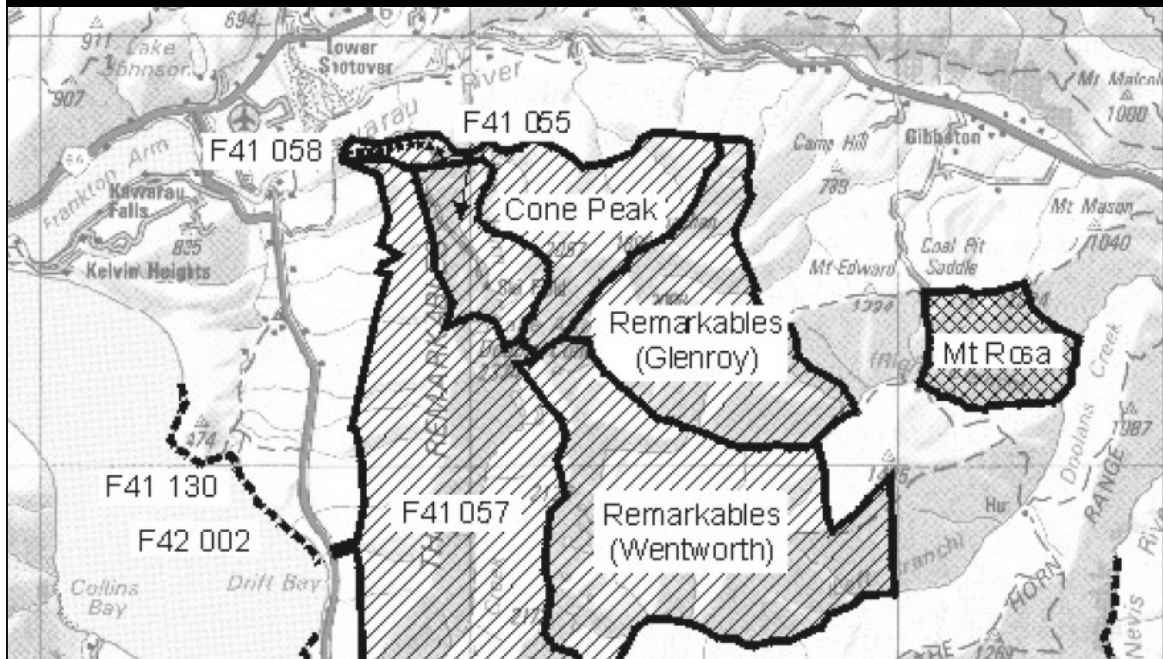


3.2.1 1998-2008 Operative CMS

The 1998 CMS identifies a slightly different boundary to the Remarkables Conservation Area shown in Figure 6 (see Figure 7). For the purposes of this assessment, the existing Rastus Burn Recreation Reserve boundary is taken to abut private land to the north (as shown in the draft revised 2015 CMS and other references in Section 2 of this report), and the gondola does not cross conservation land with an alternative status.

Recreation values in this area include (p325):

Figure 7: Remarkables District. Map 5-26 detail, 1998 CMS



Access to the ski area is by a highly visible, gravel, access road, suitable for private cars, up the north flank of the range. The road maintained by the Mount Cook Group is open all year and provides good access to this alpine area for tramping. In winter it is a toll road for access to the ski area. To the east, long ridges lead into the Nevis Valley. To the south, the Wye Creek valley is separated by a saddle from The Remarkables cirques and upper Doolans catchments. This is a steep-sided valley, also of high scenic quality, with a feeling of isolation, but is less enclosed than the Remarkable cirques. Glacial tarns are attractive features of the upper basin and waterfalls cascade in the lower valley.

Settings for recreation are predominantly back country drive-in, but with the core of high mountain lands retaining remote characteristics year round....

Scenic values of this area are among the highest in New Zealand and have achieved international recognition through tourism promotion. Views from the ski area road and Remarkables ridge (accessible by chairlift in winter) over Lake Wakatipu and surrounding mountains and valleys are spectacular....

Proximity to Queenstown makes this a popular scenic viewing area, by car or helicopter.

The remote character of most of this area, despite its relatively close proximity to Queenstown, is a special feature.

Best known of the area's values are its recreational opportunities, particularly the ski area visited by tens of thousands of skiers each year. Climbing, tramping and ski touring are also of importance while parapenting, hang-gliding, heli-viewing, botanising and photography are other pursuits popular in the area.

Identified management issues include (p326):

10.26.7 Management Issues

- Providing opportunities for enjoyment by increasing numbers of visitors, while retaining high values in terms of landscape, vegetation and recreation in a remote setting.

- *Proposals for southward expansion of recreation development, including extension of the skifield into other catchments.*
- *Ensuring appropriate current and future ski area design and management.*
- *Skifield development, eg, snowmaking and its water supply and storage; sewage disposal to Rastus Burn; slope grooming in areas of exposed rock; road maintenance and safety; car parking....*
- *Improving recreational facilities through track development and maintenance, marking and interpretation.*
- *Reduction in the degree of scarring of the north slope of The Remarkables by the Skifield road, and road batter stabilisation and revegetation.*

The objective for management of the Remarkables is (p327):

To protect the very high landscape and ecological values of the area, and its historic value, and the remoteness of parts of it, while allowing appropriate parts of it to be used for a range of recreational opportunities including the existing commercial skifield.

With Implementation methods to include (p327):

(d) Interpretation panels will be increased to extend public awareness and appreciation of the Rastus Burn area for enjoyment outside the ski season...

(f) Recreation and tourist concessionaire use of the area may be allowed where any potential adverse effects on the natural and historic resources and remote experience recreational opportunity can be avoided, remedied or mitigated, and subject to any requirements of the existing ski area lease.....

(i) Stabilisation of the skifield road so as to limit its visibility from the Wakatipu Basin will be sought through implementation of the restoration/revegetation plan which forms part of the ski area lease as well as treatment of road maintenance and upgrading....

(n) Liaison with neighbouring landholders will be maintained to facilitate increased recreational opportunities and retention of natural values, and goat and tree control.

(o) Signs will be erected at public access points to mark the limits of the land administered by the department, in conformity with district plan controls. The skifield road will be the principal access to the proposed [conservation] park....

Section 28.3 of the 1998 CMS (p588) considers an Otago Recreation Strategy and reviews 'principal management issues' for the conservancy. One of these is 'creation of new transport links' (p591). At the time the CMS was prepared, only the Haast-Hollyford Road and Snowdon Forest Monorail were live considerations. The CMS noted (p591):

If developments such as these eventuate, an impact assessment of opportunities displaced and created will be needed, and the impacts planned for. Apart from concerns the department may have based on its other functions, such as vegetation and indigenous species protection, a recreation-based response will be on the basis of changes in current opportunity, ROS classes and impacts on users.

The same section of the 1998 CMS considers 'commercial recreation' and states (p593):

Commercial recreation operations enable recreational enjoyment not offered by the infrastructure already in place on lands administered by the department. Recreational opportunities in the conservancy are considerably enhanced by commercial recreation operators, with skiing and scenic flights being prime examples.

With increases in international visitor numbers, present and forecast, and increasing demand for adventure and eco-tourism as a result, concession applications are expected to continue at a rapid rate. The lakes and alps areas are the prime areas for concessionaire activity, based on the land and waters surrounding the tourist towns of the lakes and the natural areas of the alps....

Commercial recreation activity which is permitted on land administered by the department will be closely compatible with the experiences being managed in any specific area. For example, concessions for activities in wilderness areas will have low group size, no facilities, no mechanised access....

Section 28.3.2 of the 1998 CMS considers the department's 'strategic directions' for the conservancy and states under the heading 'Enhancing Recreation Opportunities via Commercial Operators' (p602):

The department recognises the contribution that the private sector can make to providing for recreation and tourism.

A number of opportunities exist in Otago Conservancy to expand the number and range of activities which concessionaires can cater for - this may also involve concessionaires providing the actual facilities required for an activity. Currently four main types of concession activity occur in Otago; nature watching tours, skifields, guided tours and adventure activity.

While the department may allow commercial recreation on lands administered by the department, this would ideally be within the context of the department's broad recreation responsibilities, ie, that concessionaires would offer activities that:

- *do not have an unacceptable adverse affect (sic) on the resource;*
- *contribute to clients' appreciation of natural and historic resources;*
- *do not have an apparent adverse affect on other recreational users;*
- *are consistent with the management principles or direction applied to any land area.*

Within such a framework, there is considerable scope for increasing the range of commercial recreation opportunities on lands administered by the department, although the department itself will generally provide for activities that allow visitors to recreate independently of commercial operations.

Otago Conservancy will consider concession applications on environmentally and commercially acceptable basis, for activities that are not provided for elsewhere on land administered by the department, or are complementary to those provided on land administered by the department. Opportunities for appropriate commercial participation are identified in Chapter 10, and particularly in Special Places... 26 (Remarkables).....

Section 28.10 considers 'Commercial recreation and tourism' (p637), with the CMS noting that 'Commercial recreation and tourism can help the department offer a wide range of opportunities for outdoor recreation through the provision of facilities and services.' While noting that they also have the potential for adverse effects on natural and recreation values. The department's objective for commercial recreation and tourism is (p640):

To ensure that recreation and tourism concessions (including concessions for special events) bring benefits in terms of opportunities to enjoy natural and historic resources or recreational opportunities in natural settings, without causing undue adverse affects on those resources or settings or on the enjoyment of them by other people.

Assessment matters for concession applications are described, in line with expectations to avoid, remedy or mitigate potential adverse effects.

3.2.2 2015-2025 draft revised CMS

The northern area of the Remarkables are in the Western Lakes and Mountains/Nga Puna Wai Karikari a Rakaihautu Place in the revised draft 2015-2025 CMS.

The draft CMS notes: (p60):

Queenstown and Wanaka are focal places for a large number of visitors and the areas around these settlements are important nationally for commercial tourism. Three commercial ski fields (Coronet Peak, The Remarkables and Treble Cone), bungy jumping and rope swing operations are all located on public conservation lands and waters. Highly valued jet boating, rafting, helicopter, four-wheel driving, guided walking, historic appreciation and filming activities also use public conservation lands and waters. Approximately 20% of departmental concession activities nationally were located in this Place as at 2012.

And (p65):

The highest level of recreational use occurs in and around the Remarkables ski field. The ski field road provides access to the Remarkable and Hector Mountains year round. Parapenting, hang-gliding and scenic flights occur in some parts. Tramping, climbing (including ice climbing), backcountry camping and ski touring are available in the upper Wye valley easily accessible from the Remarkables ski field. Currently two heli-biking operations, authorised by concessions, occur in the Remarkables Conservation Area over summer.

Away from the busy ski field area, and particularly in the southern Hector Mountains and Nevis valley, a sense of solitude prevails in this backcountry area. Tramping, climbing, camping, kayaking, cross-country skiing and angling are popular activities. The historic road through the valley from Nevis Crossing to Garston is popular with four-wheel drivers.

The Remarkables Range, with its close proximity to Queenstown, and outstanding landscape and recreational values, is subject to many development proposals. Providing recreational and tourism opportunities for a growing number of visitors to some parts of the Remarkable Mountains, while ensuring protection of outstanding landscapes, indigenous ecosystems and natural character, is an ongoing challenge.

Expected outcomes for the Place include (pp66-69):

The mountains, lakes and rivers are cherished natural wonders that draw international and domestic visitors and provide an outstanding backdrop to and locations for a wide range of outdoor adventures and activities while supporting distinctive indigenous ecosystems and species....

More people enjoy a wide range of recreational opportunities and experiences within the mosaic of recreation settings across the Western Lakes and Mountains /Nga Puna Wai Karikari a Rakaihautu Place, provided by the Department, the community, and many commercial providers. The range of experiences and opportunities enable people to choose between remote, quiet and tranquil locations and busy, highly visited sites....

The Remarkables, Coronet Peak and Treble Cone ski fields provide for intensive use and are highly valued recreation and tourism opportunities enabling access to high-altitude areas. Recognition of the ski fields' location on public conservation lands and waters, and conservation interpretation, is readily apparent to visitors. Ski fields are

managed in a precautionary approach in terms of new and additional structures and terrain modification. Further development of existing ski fields may occur, in preference to any new ski fields. Disturbed areas are restored to an agreed standard comparable to that which was present prior to any development....

Collaborations and partnerships with Ngāi Tahu, business, communities and other interested parties have helped achieve more conservation and enhanced prosperity across this Place. Tourism concessionaires continue to contribute to conservation via sponsorships, donations, staff involvement in projects and raising awareness of the value of conservation through their tours and activities.....

The outstanding natural landscapes and ecological values of the Remarkables and Hector Ranges are intact and enjoyed by more people...

A range of recreational experiences is available in the Remarkables-Hector area ranging from largely unmodified environments where a sense of solitude and remoteness can be found in a largely unmodified environment (Wye Valley), compared to the busy Remarkables ski field.

The unmodified natural character of the upper Wye valley (including its alpine tarns and basins) remains free of built structures and developments. It is easily accessible by walking and people enjoy the natural quiet and the indigenous ecosystems and landscapes.

Relevant policies for the Remarkables-Hector part of the Place include (p72)::

2.3.20 Should not allow new permanent utilities, structures or facilities (both recreational and commercial) in the Upper Wye valley to protect the unmodified and high natural character of this valley.

2.3.21 When considering applications for new utilities, structures or facilities throughout this Place (with the exception of the Upper Wye valley), should have particular regard to the potential adverse effects on:

- a) natural ecosystems, landscapes and natural character, particularly in areas where structures and facilities are currently absent;*
- b) catchment water quality and quantity, including in Lake Alta;*
- c) ecosystem priority sites and threatened species;*
- d) natural quiet;*
- e) current recreational uses; and*
- f) opportunities available for such structures or developments off public conservation lands and waters.*

2.3.22 May allow further development and/or expansion of the Remarkables ski field (with the exception of the Upper Wye valley) in accordance with Policies 3.25.1 to 3.25.6 in Part Three, provided that adverse effects (including cumulative effects) are avoided, remedied or mitigated on the following values:

- a) the outstanding natural landscapes and ecological values of the Remarkables Range and the Hector Mountains;*
- b) the landscape and ecological (including water quantity and quality) values of the priority ecosystem site at Lake Alta;*
- c) the recreational experiences of other users; and*
- d) the ability of users to access the area year round.*

Section 3.10 considers structures and utilities on public conservation lands (p151), defining them as:

...facilities that provide essential public services, such as: telecommunications; energy generation and transmissions; sewerage; water supply and flood control; oil and gas transmissions; roads and airstrips; hydrological and weather stations; and seismic monitoring.

Structures and utilities can be temporary or intended for long-term use. They can share space (usually a public facility) or require exclusive occupation of space (usually a private facility). Both may be either commercial or non-commercial in nature. Regardless of the nature of the structure, there is legislative expectations, section 17U (4) Conservation Act 1987 that the necessity for the structure or facility to be constructed on public conservation lands and waters is clearly established.

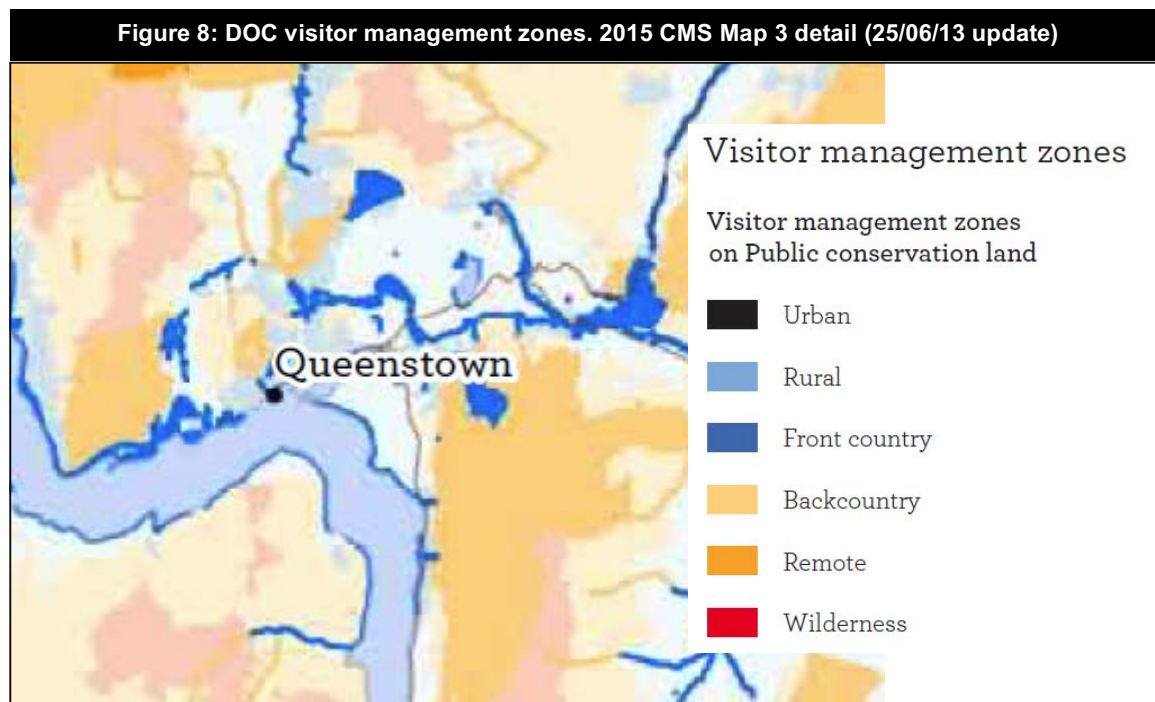
For the purposes of this assessment, the gondola is considered to fit this definition – playing a similar role to a road.

Relevant polices are:

3.10.1 Should apply the following criteria when considering applications to erect or retain structures or utilities or for the adaptive reuse of existing structures on public conservation lands and waters:

- a) the purposes for which the lands and waters concerned are held;*
- b) the outcomes and policies for the Places where activity is proposed to occur;*
- c) whether the structure could reasonably be located outside public conservation lands and waters;*
- d) whether the structure could reasonably be located in another location where fewer adverse effects would result from the activity;*
- e) whether the structure adversely affects conservation, including recreational values;*
- f) whether the structure is readily available for public use;*
- g) where the structure is consistent with the visitor management zone on Map 3 and as described in Appendix 12;*
- h) whether the activity promotes or enhances the retention of a historic structure;...*
- i) whether the activity is an adaptive reuse of an existing structure;....*

Figure 8 shows a detail from the visitor management zone map referred to in section 3.10.1(g) of the CMS discussed above. This shows the Rastus Burn Recreation Reserve and the Kawarau and Shotover River areas nearby as ‘frontcountry’ settings. These are defined in Appendix 12 of the draft revised CMS as:



General Description

- *Where the majority of visitation occurs; typically small areas, scattered within or on the periphery of large relatively natural areas*
- *Includes the vicinity of main ‘scenic’ roads passing through public conservation lands*
- *Often focused on a particular attraction*

Accessibility

- *Readily accessible areas, usually via sealed roads, or scheduled ferry or air services*
- *Mostly by car, but also tour buses and guided parties to some sites*
- *Enabled for people of most ages and abilities*

Predominant visitor groups

- *Predominantly short-stop travellers, day visitors and overnights*
- *Other visitors in transition to backcountry and remote settings*

Facility setting

- *Good-quality facilities, services and easy access*
- *Sometimes the origin for tramping tracks and routes, with signs and information to make this transition clear*
- *High degree of control via information and direction signs, and barriers*

Desired visitor experience and interactions

- *Varying, from activities with large groups, time with small groups/families, some time away from other groups and, in some cases, solitude*

Preferred maximum party sizes are also defined for each visitor management area (from 15 to 50 for frontcountry settings, with 30 or fewer people seen per visit duration) but these are well-exceeded in the Rastus Burn Recreation Reserve via activities in and around the Remarkables Skifield. It is taken, for the purposes of this assessment, that the concessions issued for the area are based on an expectation for very high levels of interaction.

3.3 Otago Regional Council

The Otago Regional Council Regional Policy Statement for Otago 1998 notes in various areas the importance of recreation and tourism to the regional economy and enjoyment of the area by residents and visitors. Section 5.3.4 (p47) notes the importance of ‘Otago’s outstanding natural features and landscapes’ and the need to protect them from ‘inappropriate subdivision, use and development’, ‘in order to ensure that those features and landscapes will always be a part of Otago and that they will be there for future generations to enjoy and as the basic resource for recreation and tourism’.

Section 5.3.6 (p48) identifies the ‘need to maintain and enhance access opportunities to Otago’s natural and physical land features’, explaining:

The provision of public access to Otago’s natural and physical resources is important to many of Otago’s citizen’s for recreation, tourism, scientific, educational and other purposes. The maintenance of existing public access opportunities and the enhancement of public access opportunities where this is restricted is considered to be a matter of regional significance and important to the achievement of integrated management of the region’s natural and physical resources. Many valued natural and physical features are part of the conservation estate and as such access to them is controlled by the Minister of Conservation. Commercial development or conservation protection of Otago’s natural features can restrict public access. The Regional Policy Statement cannot impose public access over privately owned land and permission needs to be sought from landholders, including Crown pastoral lessees, for access to or over such land.

3.4 Otago Fish & Game Council

The Otago Branch of the NZ Fish & Game Council administers its hunting and fishing resources according to its *Sports Fish and Game Management Plan for Otago Fish and Game Region 2015-2025*. This identifies the Kawarau River as a ‘locally significant’ fishery – classing it as both a ‘major river’ and a ‘rainfed river’.⁴

3.5 Queenstown Trails Trust

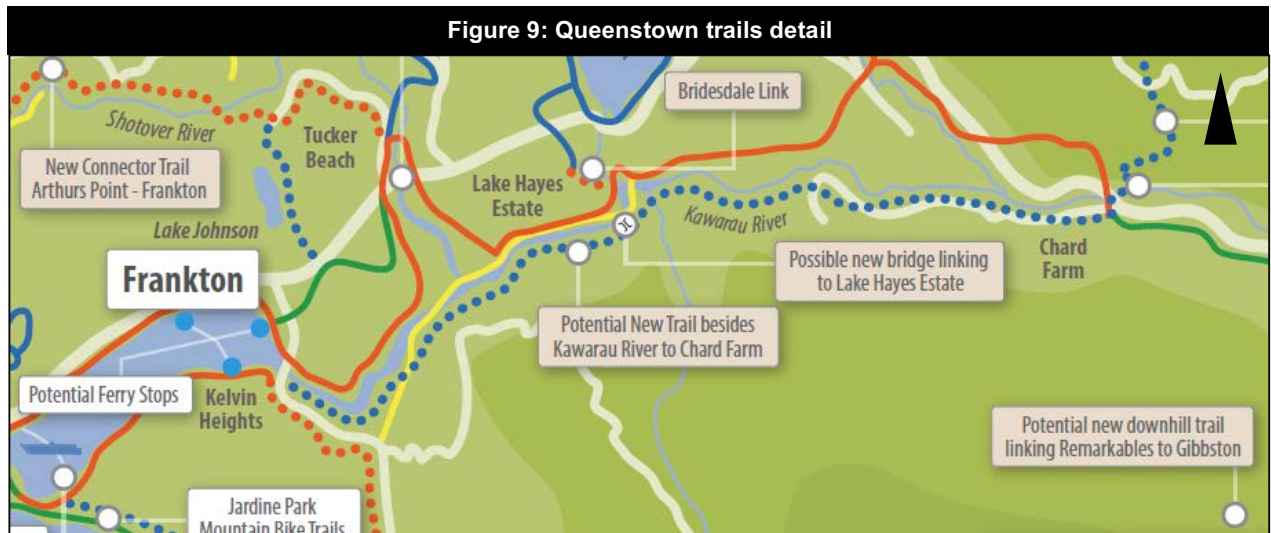
The Queenstown Trails Trust is a non-profit organisation dedicated to developing a network of public trails around the Wakatipu basin and is made up of local community members and representatives of the QLDC and Department of Conservation. The Trust has been instrumental in developing a substantial network of trails throughout the region, including the Twin Rivers Trail on much of the left bank of the Kawarau River

In 2015 the Trust prepared a 2015 Queenstown Trails Strategy in collaboration with the Department of Conservation, the QLDC, the tourism industry, walking and cycling groups, New Zealand Transport Agency and other stakeholders. Objectives of the strategy include to (p1) ‘Expand and enhance the existing trail network’ and to ‘Increase use of the trails by residents and visitors’. Appendix 1 shows the full extent of the trails (existing and proposed) with a key.

⁴ A query was sent to Fish & Game and they note the error for the next review of the Plan.

Figure 9 provides a detail, with a proposed route proposed for the true right of the Kawarau River (blue dotted line), and the very approximate location of an unformed legal road (in yellow). The proposed route is shown on private land, where it would need to be considering the legal road alignment (see Section 2 of this report). There is no detail in the text of the 2015 strategy as to how this access will be achieved.

A 'Potential new downhill linking Remarkables to Gibbston' is also shown (bottom right in Figure 9).



4 Activity descriptions – Kawarau Valley

4.1 Rafting and kayaking

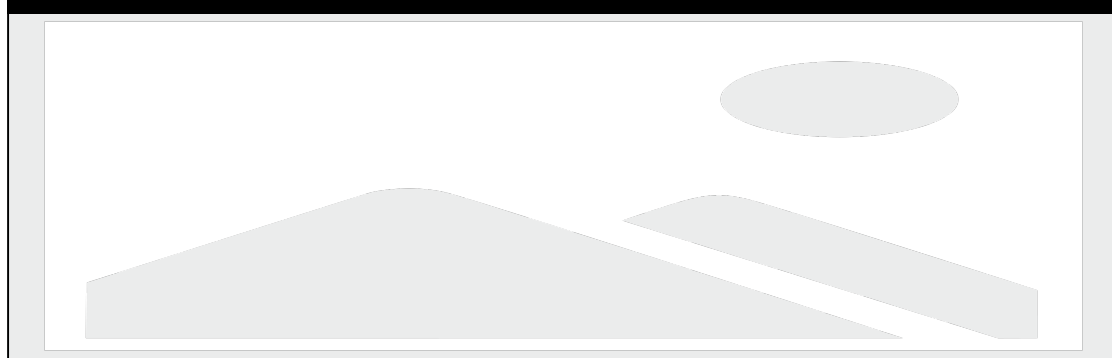
Whitewater kayaking and rafting opportunities on the Kawarau River begin below the confluence of the Arrow River (see for example Charles 2013). Above the Arrow, the River is grade 1 (easy moving flatwater). Queenstown Rafting offers a half-day guided 'Flow Fun Canoes & Rafts' trip from the confluence of the Shotover to the Morven Ferry site, advertising the opportunity with the online text:⁵

Specifically designed for those seeking a relaxed and scenic water adventure.

You literally 'go with the flow' and soak up the scenery along a beautiful stretch of the Kawarau River with the Remarkable Mountains as your backdrop. Float/paddle down this picturesque river in a raft or inflatable canoe with an experienced guide accompanying the trip while you take in the scenery and views.

Experience 7kms of a stretch of river that starts at the confluence of the Shotover and Kawarau Rivers and finishes at the historic and disused Morven Ferry site where you are transferred back to town.

Figure 10: Queenstown Rafting promotional image for the upper Kawarau River



4.2 Jet boating

The Jet Boating New Zealand (JBNZ) river guide⁶ describes the Kawarau River above the Arrow confluence and the Lower Shotover below Tuckers Beach as Class 1: "Easy boating / suitable for beginners / family boating". These stretches of river are rarely run as a club event by the Otago branch of JBNZ, but casual use by private boat owners would not be uncommon. Casual use of the Shotover River above Tuckers Beach is restricted due to commercial use, and is not permitted on the Kawarau below the Arrow confluence.

Shotover Jet's exclusive commercial operations on the Shotover River are limited to above Tuckers Beach.

Two commercial operators use the upper Karawau River: KJet and Thunder Jet.

KJet has been operating in the area for over 55 years. The company operates throughout the year and makes approximately 6,000 trips annually. The company can seat up to 140 people in their eight boats. The route taken is from Queenstown to Tuckers Beach on the Shotover River or shorter trips to the Shotover confluence. The maximum number of trips undertaken per day is approximately 60, but the company holds consents for a greater number.⁷

⁵ <http://www.queenstownrafting.co.nz/half-day/flow/>

⁶ See: http://jbnz.co.nz/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=63&Itemid=103

⁷ Shaun Kelly pers comm

Thunder Jet has been operating since 2009 and uses the same route as KJet, as well as heading further downriver on the Kawarau to the Arrow confluence. The company has consent to operate up to 40 return trips daily.⁸

Two routes are taken: one up the lower Shotover (Figure 11), extracted from the company's online promotions; and the second on the Kawarau River only. The latter route caters for around 10,000 passengers annually and is designed as a half hour ride tailored to the Asian coach market. The turn-around point is near the Arrow confluence. From May to September 2008, 344 trips were taken on the Kawarau River only. May and June were the most quiet with 40 and 34 trips respectively.

4.3 Walking and cycling

The corridor of the proposed gondola means it crosses over the path of the 'Twin Rivers Ride' from the Kawarau Falls Bridge to Morven Road (also called the Kawarau River Trail) (Figure 12). This has been developed by the Queenstown Trails Trust and forms part of the 120 km 'Queenstown Trail' which is promoted as a national cycleway (Figure 13).

The Queenstown Trails Trust uses the following text to describe the Ride:⁹

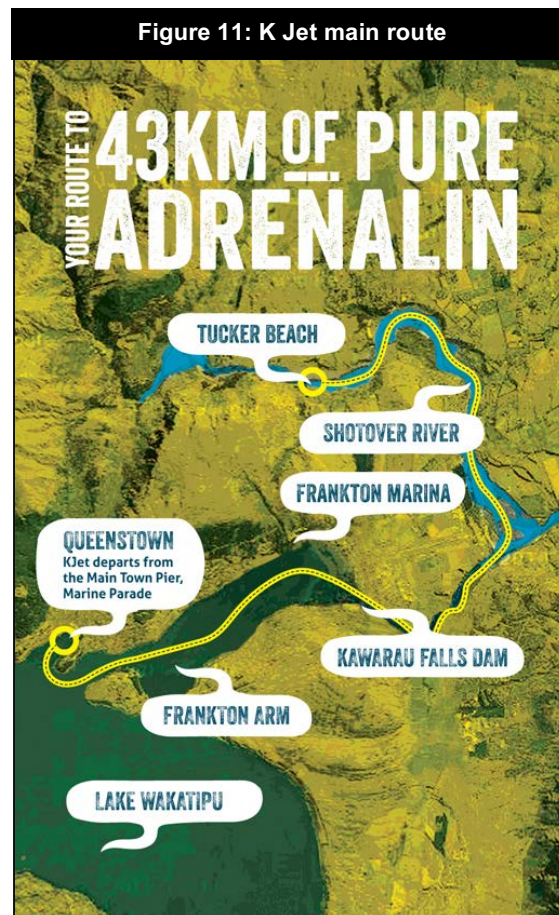


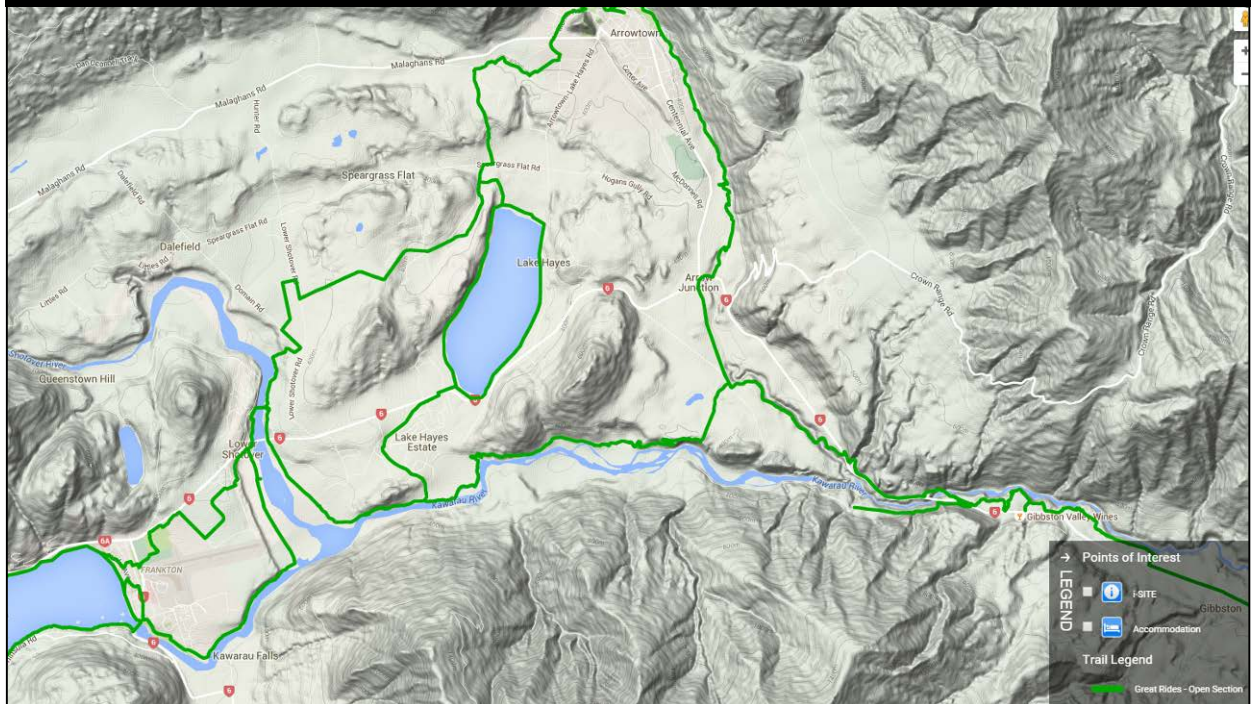
Figure 12: Twin Rivers Ride – Queenstown Trail map detail



⁸ Neville Kelly, pers comm

⁹ <http://www.queenstowntrail.co.nz/maps-and-rides/trail-maps/twin-rivers-ride-from-kawarau-falls-bridge-to-morvern-ferry-road/>

Figure 13: Twin Rivers Ride – Nga Haerenga map detail



Hugging two of New Zealand's most iconic and picturesque rivers, the beauty and remoteness of this section really sets it apart.

Make sure to take a picnic and refreshments as it's the most remote part of the trail. The ride starts at Kowhai Falls Bridge and after a short cycle through residential streets, the trail meanders down to wind along the Kowhai River's edge and takes you up into the famous Shotover Delta...

Wending your way along the banks of the Kowhai River there is a picture postcard view around every bend as you climb and descend to the sparkling aquamarine Kowhai river bed.

This ride includes a few steep-ish climbs but you'll be rewarded for your efforts with some of the most majestic views in New Zealand.

Just before you reach Billie's Bridge which crosses Hayes Creek [350 m upstream from the Rastus Burn confluence], head for the picnic sign on your right so picturesque. Sit back, relax and drink in the splendour and isolation.

At the top of Thompson's hill the longest and last hill on this ride, stop and admire the view across the Kowhai River up to the majestic Remarkables Mountain range. Relish the easy descent through tranquil pastoral land surrounded by three mountain ranges. Enjoy the experience of cycling through an underpass whilst deer roam on farmland above you. The Twin Rivers ride ends at Morven Ferry Road where you can either carry on to Arrowtown or head into the Gibbston Valley for a spot of lunch and wine tasting! If you need to arrange transport back to your home base for yourself and your bike talk to one our tour operator partners.

Kennedy (2015) reported track counts for the period 18 October 2012 to 31 May 2015 of:

- 18,452 'journeys' or individual trips at the Kowhai Falls Bridge (daily average 78) (this also includes users of the Lake Wakatipu Ride from Kelvin Heights to Queenstown CBD),

- 23,679 journeys near Riverside Road, almost 1 km downstream of the bridge and near where the gondola cable would cross the River (daily average of 25),
- 29,411 journeys on Old School Road (running beside the lower Shotover River left bank) (daily average of 39), and
- 12,783 journeys at Billies Bridge (Hayes Creek) (daily average of 16).

4.4 Fishing

The 1979/81, 1994/96, 2000/01 2007/08 national angler surveys report the following use levels, in angler days, for the Kawarau River (Table 1). No activity was recorded for the Rastus Burn.

	Oct – Nov	Dec – Jan	Feb – Mar	Apr – May	Jun - Jul	Aug – Sep	Total
1979/81¹⁰							1300
1994/96¹¹	1248 ± 529	1145 ± 681	283 ± 130	679 ± 490	149 ± 99	0	3505 ± 1005
2000/01¹²	750 ± 640	170 ± 110	310 ± 150	390 ± 390	<10	70 ± 70	3500 ± 1000
2007/08¹³	70 ± 70	1350 ± 670	510 ± 330				1930 ± 750

In the Richardson *et al* (1986) study, the Kawarau River was rated as a relatively lowly valued fishery (2 on a 5 point scale with 5 'very highly valued'). Too few respondents fished the Shotover to offer any additional data on that river. The authors noted in reference to the Kawarau:

The Kawarau drains Lake Wakatipu and begins as a deep, gin-clear, swiftly flowing river. The Shotover River, which joins the Kawarau 4 km downstream, carries a large sediment load and for the remainder of its 59 km course, the Kawarau is turbid, deeply entrenched in its gorge, often inaccessible, and little used for angling. By far the majority of respondents (64%) fished in the first 4 km of river.

Although the Kawarau was one of the closest rivers to anglers' homes in the SLWC (Southern Lakes Wildlife Conservancy), access was more on a par with fairly remote rivers such as the Timaru or Hollyford, and the area of fishable water was quite restricted. Scenery was considered to be uninspiring which, with the very low catch rate and small fish reported by respondents, contributed to the below average importance grade that was given to the Kawarau. The river was fished almost exclusively by SLWC anglers; only two respondents from outside the district were recorded.

Kent (2009) refers to the study area as a secondary fishery:

Other spots to explore in the Queenstown area include the Kawarau River from the outlet down to the Shotover confluence. This is best fished from a drifting boat, and most trout are caught on spinners.

Turner (2003) offers similar information:

Most of the fishing in the Kawarau is done in the short stretch – about 5 km – between the outlet of Wakatipu and the confluence of the frequently silty Shotover River. This wide, slow-flowing reach of the river is glorious to look at and usually superlatively clear, even when surrounding rivers are in flood. The backdrop of rock ribs, turrets and towers

¹⁰ Richardson et al 1986

¹¹ Unwin & Brown 1998

¹² Unwin & Image 2003

¹³ Unwin 2009

on the Remarkables Range is impressive and much photographed. Brown trout are numerous, and there are enough rainbows to make fishing that much more unpredictable. Willows line the river; so access is difficult from the banks, and most anglers drift fish from a variety of small craft. At certain times this can be hazardous as commercial jet boat operators use the river all day – so remain alert! The Kawarau is open for spin, natural bait, and fly-fishing, so there's plenty of scope for imaginative angling. Fly anglers sometimes experience first class Caddis fishing in the evening. The river below the Shotover speeds up narrows and flows for much of its course in a rugged gorge. Access is difficult. A popular spot is at the confluence of the Arrow River. But generally the river downstream of the Shotover is not heavily fished due to its rugged nature, its turbulence, and the fact that it is often murky.

Unreel Queenstown offers the only guided fishing operation on the upper Kawarau River, promoting the opportunity online with the text:¹⁴

Explore the magnificent rivers of Queenstown. unReel Fishing is the only fishing charter permitted to operate down the crystal clear fresh waters of the Kawarau River.

Travel down the river on a custom-made jet boat specially designed for river fishing. Here you will experience a mixture of casting off the jet boat and river banks using soft baits or hard body lures.

Your local guide will give a demonstration for first timers – you'll be reeling in the big ones in no time!...

Once down the river you will be doing a mixture of spin fishing from the Jet boat as well as from the beach – there may also be times where you are casting while drifting down the river from the Jet boat. You will mainly be catching Brown and Rainbow Trout. We are lucky enough that the River is open all year for Fishing and we are the only Fishing charter able to operate down the Kawarau River.

The Kawarau River has a high volume water flow with slow moving surface, shallow braded sections with deep pools which hold good numbers and trophy sized trout....

Trips are minimum 3 hours and leave from the Frankton Marina. Private charters are available upon request.

The main guide for unReel is Mike Johnson. The operation can run as many as four trips per day, and depending on water clarity uses the stretch from the Kawarau Falls to Smiths Fall (just downriver of the Arrow confluence) (pers comm). Johnson reports this section of the River has very little casual fishing pressure as it relies largely on jet boat access. The introduction of the cycleway has increased the number of people using the setting but it is otherwise relatively

Figure 14: unreel promotional image on upper Kawarau River



¹⁴ <http://www.unreelfishing.co.nz/fishing-trips/>

unpopulated. High flows in the Shotover occasionally discolour the River below its confluence and limits fishing activity to the Kawarau upstream.

4.5 Tramping

There are no tramping tracks in the vicinity of the gondola route, but, as identified in Section 2, access from the south to the Remarkables Ski Field is via the Lower Wye Creek Track, an 'advanced' tramping track for "People with moderate to high level backcountry (remote areas) skills and experience, navigation and survival skills required." (Figure 3 page 7). DoC describes the 4hr route as a return trip on the same track, and states, "This is a high altitude walk and suitable for summer only, when snow may still be present. Be prepared for sudden weather changes."

4.6 Climbing

Online climbing information resources show climbing routes on the Rastus Burn Boulders (Figure 15¹⁵) and around the Remarkables Ski Area (Figure 16¹⁶).

The Rastus Burn Boulders are to the west of the proposed gondola corridor (Figure 17).

Figure 15: Rastus Burn Rocks climb

The screenshot shows the website interface for rockclimbing.com. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for Home, Forums, Routes, Gear, Classifieds, Photos, Videos, Partners, and Articles. Below the menu, there is a breadcrumb trail: Routes : Australasia : New Zealand : Central Otago : Rastus Burn Boulders. The main heading is 'Rastus Burn Boulders' with a sub-heading 'Climbing Sections:'. Below this, there is an 'About Rastus Burn Boulders:' section with a description: 'Very neat little spot off the Remarkables Road. 5 min walk from the car and 3 - 4 kms before the remarkables ski lodge.' This is followed by a table of details: Nearest town or city: Queenstown; Directions: Drive 11 - 12kms up the road to the Remarkables Ski Field... somewhat tough to see on way up but can't miss them on the way back down if you pass them. ON the downslope side of the road.; Latitude, Longitude: -45.03399, 168.80201; Access Issues: Update; Camping: Update; When to Climb: Autumn Spring Summer; Quantity of Climbs: Day. At the bottom, there is a 'Routes' section with a table listing several routes.


Sequence	Rating	Route	Difficulty	Ascents
0	☆☆☆☆☆	A Mystery to Me - 16	5.8	0
0	☆☆☆☆☆	Apres Ski - 22	5.11b	0
0	☆☆☆☆☆	Booty Juice - 17	5.9	0
0	☆☆☆☆☆	No Name - 21	5.10d	0
0	☆☆☆☆☆	Pass Me the Snake - 18	5.10a	0

¹⁵ http://www.rockclimbing.com/routes/Australasia/New_Zealand/Central_Otago/Rastus_Burn_Boulders/ May 2017

¹⁶ <https://www.thecrag.com/climbing/new-zealand/queenstown/remarkables> May 2017

Figure 16: The Crag Remarkables climbs

Figure 16: The Crag Remarkables climbs



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New Zealand > South Island > Otago > Queenstown > **Remarkables**

Remarkables

Rock climbing 75 routes in region
Favorite 2
Start a discussion

Grades: AU Photos: 8 Circuits: 2 Ascents: 70

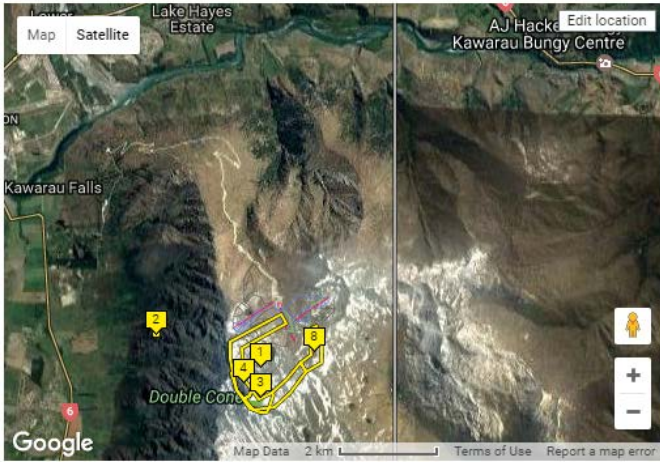
CE 38%
UNKNOWN 36%

Classic crags


- Single Cone
- The Sundial
- Double Cone

Queenstown

- Wye Creek
- South Branch Wye Creek
- Remarkables**
 - The Grand Traverse
 - The Sundial
 - Single Cone
 - Double Cone
 - West Face
 - Red Wall
 - Telecom Tower
 - Anzac trail area



Grade / ascent band



Seasonality

Grade search

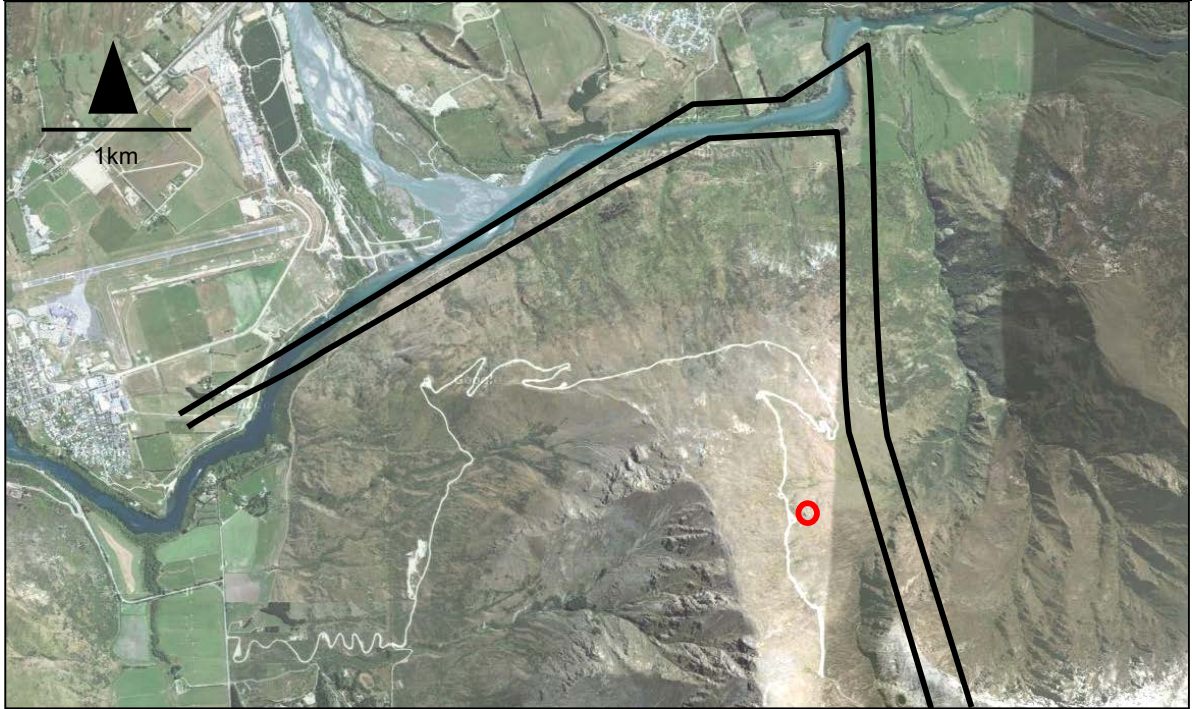
Leaderboard

Download PDF

Areas

Name	Style	Routes	Ticks	Height	Grades
1 The Grand Traverse Crag	All Alpine climbing	1	13 / 210m	1	
2 The Sundial Crag	All Sport climbing	4	8 / 21m	1	
3 Single Cone Crag	Rock climbing, Ice climbing and other styles	28	23 / 430m		
4 Double Cone Crag	Rock climbing, Ice climbing and Trad climbing	14	20 / 200m	1	
5 West Face Cliff	All Rock climbing	3	0 /		
6 Red Wall Cliff	All Rock climbing	5	0 /		
7 Telecom Tower Area	Mostly Ice climbing	19	5 / 89m		
8 Anzac trail area Area	All Ice climbing	1	1 / 35m		

Figure 17: Gondola corridor (black) and Rustus Burn Rocks (red)



Appendix 1: Queenstown Trails Trust current and proposed trails

