

Mount Iron Reserve Management Plan



Early Community Engagement Summary
October-November 2023

Community engagement – early insights summary

Mount Iron is an iconic and significant geological landmark in the Wānaka landscape, providing breathtaking 360° views of the surrounding mountains, flats and lakes. It is a popular recreation location with over 180,000 residents and visitors exploring its trails each year.

Following the acquisition of Mount Iron and Little Mount Iron by Queenstown Lakes District Council in May 2023, the community was asked to share their ideas to help develop a Reserve Management Plan for this site during October and November 2023.

A reserve management plan provides a set of policies for how council will manage, protect, maintain, and preserve public land on Mount Iron and Little Mount Iron Recreation Reserve.

To jump start the reserve management plan process we invited stakeholders and the community to several workshops to ask what they love about Mount Iron, what they are not keen to see on the site, and what they think will continue to make it great for future generations. We also had an interactive map tool on our Let's Talk project page for the community to share their ideas and ask questions over an eight week period.

Thanks for being part of the conversation

We'd like to say a big thank you to all those who took the time to share their ideas and insights both online and at community workshops and drop in sessions. The feedback you shared will help form a vision and shape the objectives and policies of the draft Reserve Management Plan. We hope you will continue to be involved as we progress through creating the draft and the final plan and encourage others to take part too.

Next steps

The early engagement feedback will guide the development a draft Reserve Management Plan which will be drafted in the coming months. There will be further opportunities to get involved through formal submissions, when we share the draft Reserve Management Plan for public consultation in June 2024.

Over the eight week engagement period we had:

WORKSHOPS AND DROP
IN SESSIONS WITH
STAKEHOLDERS AND
COMMUNITY MEMBERS

5



870
ONLINE PINS AND
COMMENTS ON AN
INTERACTIVE MAP FROM
639 CONTRIBUTORS



f 11,177
FACEBOOK VIEWS

60+ PARTICIPANTS ATTENDED THE
MOUNT IRON WORKSHOPS

581
POST IT NOTE
COMMENTS
FROM
ENGAGEMENT
EVENTS

3.5k
VISITS TO LET'S
TALK PROJECT
PAGE

WE HAD THE PLEASURE OF SPEAKING WITH MANY RESIDENTS AND VISITORS AT THE POP-UP SESSION WE HELD ON MOUNT IRON TRACK AND DURING THE WORKSHOP SESSIONS. WE ALSO RECEIVED SEVERAL LETTERS WITH FEEDBACK FROM INDIVIDUALS AND STAKEHOLDERS.

Workshop results summary

We asked: What is your favourite thing about Mount Iron?

Here's a snapshot of what you said:

Take a look at all the community feedback received as raw data at letstalk.qldc.govt.nz/mount-iron-recreation-reserve-management-plan



We asked: What would make Mount Iron Recreation Reserve great for generations to come?

Here's a snapshot of what you said:

Predator free Mount Iron	Develop good mountain bike tracks for all abilities	Open space for kids to free range, places to roam, make huts and explore	Links to active travel network	Greater biodiversity	Create safe access to the summit for people with mobility challenges
An inviting place that welcomes a range of users	18 hole championship disc golf course	To be actively engaged with mana whenua to uphold Ngāi Tahu values	Storytelling and educating through signage	Family friendly rock climbing with top roping zone	Winter ice skating rink in permafrost zone
Place of peace – meditation, yoga, mindful sitting	Paragliding take off access	Removing invasive plant species	Reduced wildfire risk	Stargazing platform	Outdoor education hub

We asked: What do you not want to see on Mount Iron?



Excessive safety signage and rules



A gondola



A cafe on the mountain



Loss of natural quiet solitude



Naked flames and smoking



Unsafe mingling of bikes, pedestrians and dogs off lead



Canopies and pergolas



Campsites, carparks, cell phone towers



Pests



Dog waste



Bikers encroaching on walkers



Dogs banned or restricted to onlead only



Prohibition of mountain biking



Motorbikes



Immaculate tracks



Too many tracks that are highly visible and impair the landscape



Too much construction, earthworks, fences



Lack of good oversight on the reserve management plan once it's implemented



Absence of Māori history, language, values - this is an opportunity to bring our cultural narrative of place to life



Commercial activity or concessions that exploit the natural values of the place

We asked: What are your top three priorities for Mount Iron Recreation Reserve?

Here's the key themes that came through the discussions across the four workshops:



To read through priority areas in detail go to tab 4 on the 'All summary feedback' spreadsheet at:

letstalk.qldc.govt.nz/mount-iron-recreation-reserve-management-plan

Workshops – a snapshot of comments

Birdlife opportunities for enhancement

An inclusive place with multiple access points

Develop good mountain biking tracks for all abilities

Respect for a fragile environment and other user groups, it's a shared space

No more tracks taking out vegetation and bird habitats

Remove as much fencing from the boundary as rabbit control allows

Cautious approach to bike tracks that are separate to walking tracks. Bike tracks erosion could be an issue

Protection and development of climbing crags

Keep it natural and retain open space

Only walking and cycling access from Hidden Hills (no parking facilities)

Working in with Department of Conservation to share information

Fitness stations at the top

Opportunity to predator fence the perimeter and regenerate the whole site with community involvement

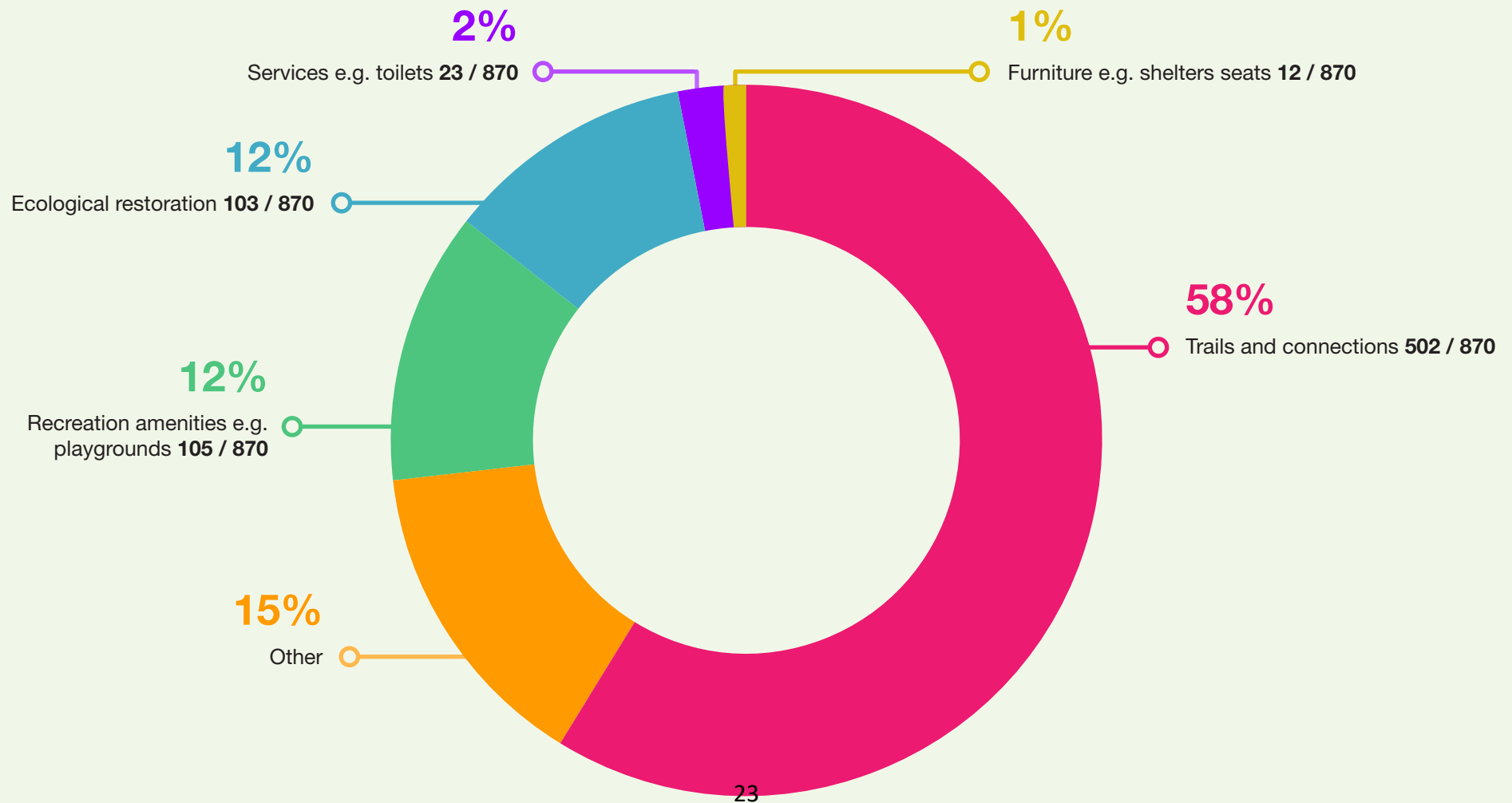
Wildfire risk management

It is a space overwhelmingly for nature

Coordinate community groups for ecological enhancement / volunteering

Let's Talk Online Interactive Map Summary

We had 639 contributors pin 870 comments on a map of Mount Iron. Ideas you pinned on online map were on the following topics:



Online Conversation – a snapshot of comments

“Reinstate all the mountain bike tracks on this face of Mount Iron.”

“Create a network of new uphill, downhill and cross country trails.”

“I strongly feel that mountain bikes should not be allowed on Mt Iron, even on the existing trails. The mountain biking community is adequately served by existing trails elsewhere in Wanaka. Mountain bike trails will contribute to erosion and damage to, and unnecessary removal of, the existing vegetation.”

“Walking and running tracks that are 100% separate from any bike tracks so walkers can enjoy the space and walk dogs without having to worry about bikes whizzing past.”

“Turn Little Mount Iron and or Mount Iron into another Zealandia (in Wellington) by erecting set free fencing, eliminate pests, and reintroduce native birds which will then repopulate the whole of Wānaka. Would also be a tourist attraction.”

“Protect small native plants such as myosotis and protect their habitat.”

“Create an information site under shelter at the summit that includes local history, geography, mana whenua stories etc.”

“Have a dedicated paragliding launch site and landing zone.”

“Restrict dog access to Mount Iron. The lack of proper waste disposal by dog owners has become increasingly evident.”

“Restore the old Woolshed as an info centre and cafe with a kids play area.”

“Frisbee golf course on top of Mount Iron and the last hole you shoot from the summit down to the bottom.”

“Work with organisations like Te Kakano to restore vegetation but still maintain viewing points and view shafts along trails.”

“Wheelchair accessible trail that connects Mount Iron to a Mount Iron loop.”

Online Conversation – a snapshot of comments continued...

“Horse friendly trails and some access to water at the top.”

“Development of rock climbing areas.”

“Picnic area, outdoor yoga area, quiet space in saddle between big and little Mount Iron.”

“Commuter track connecting Wānaka-Luggate Highway with Aubrey road.”

“Mount Iron and Little Mount Iron, are beautiful examples of wild natural landscape. They are best left in their current state to allow the freedom to explore the bush.”

“Outdoor basketball court.”

“Trapping to control pests such as rats.”

“Create several large “lizard gardens” along Mount Iron Loop Track in an area that receives sufficient sunlight and is viewable to public. In addition to this, undertake lizard monitoring in combination with predator-control and predator-monitoring to see how (if) lizard populations change over time.”

“Allow orienteering events. There are awesome orienteering opportunities for the area including Little Mount Iron.”

“Big slides, dual flying fox.”

“Additional safe parking spots to access Little Mt Iron and clearer signage for visitors.”

“Consider ecological corridor connections to the Cardrona River, Albert Town Lagoon and Hikuwai/Clutha Mata-Au.”

“No commercial operations including cafes, gondolas, quad bike tours.”

To read letters sharing feedback from residents and stakeholders please go to letstalk.qldc.govt.nz/mount-iron-recreation-reserve-management-plan

For more detailed comments on topics such as commercial activity, infrastructure improvements, dogs, and ecology check out the all summary spreadsheet at letstalk.qldc.govt.nz/mount-iron-recreation-reserve-management-plan

Promoting awareness and engaging with the community



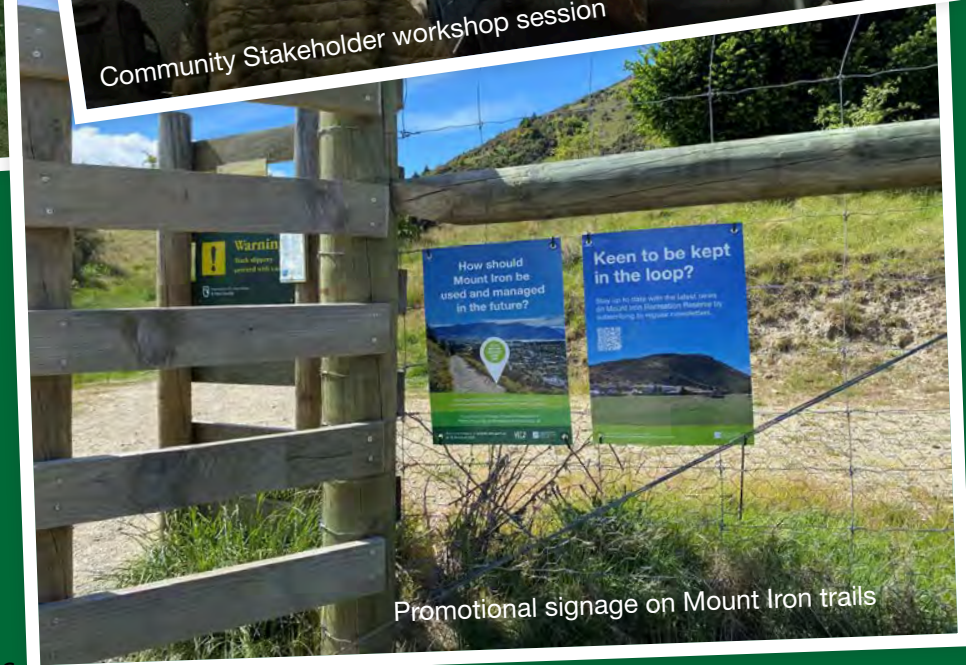
Community drop in session on Mount Iron Track



Community Stakeholder workshop session



Community Stakeholder workshop session



Promotional signage on Mount Iron trails