

6 November 2025

██████████
C/- ██████████
Sent via email to ██████████

LG25-0299 - QLDC Development Contributions

Dear ██████████,

REQUEST FOR OFFICIAL INFORMATION – RELEASE OF INFORMATION

Thank you for your request for information held by the Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC). On 10 October 2025 you requested the following information under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (LGOIMA):

1. What guidelines, rules or principles are used to determine QLDC development contributions?
2. How are this development contributions aligned with the actual and forecast cost of infrastructure?
3. Have these contributions historically met QLDCs expectations and the associated infrastructure costs? If not, please help us understand why?
4. What is the estimated deficit between actual development contributions received and the actual cost of district wide infrastructure that was supposed to be covered by development contributions?
5. Is there a measure or KPI [key performance indicator] of this development contributions income/cost deficit or success used by local government? If so - what have been QLDC's scores.
6. Are development contributions charged for direct costs per development or across the entire district?
7. What legal challenges has QLDC received relating to development contributions?
8. What was the outcome of these legal challenges?
9. What development contributions have been adjusted as a result of legal challenges. Details please.
10. QLDC makes financial feasibility assessments of developer's plans before they approve them i.e., that a proposal will be viable for the developer. Does this process suffer from developers overstating their costs and understating profit? What safeguards does QLDC have in this respect? Is any audit carried out - and at what stage?
11. What's the relationship between market prices for property and development contributions? What safeguards are built into this process?
12. Please list infrastructure projects which have been delayed, deferred or cancelled because QLDC believes the capital cost is too high?
13. Please provide a map, or maps, of all rezoned land in the Queenstown Lakes District.
14. What changes in the current development contributions system would QLDC like to see and how much are those changes within your Council's control?
15. Should the costs of growth be covered by income from growth? Please comment.

QLDC RESPONSE

Release of information

In response to your request, we consulted with the QLDC Finance Team.

1. What guidelines, rules or principles are used to determine QLDC development contributions?

Development Contributions (DCs) are determined in accordance with the [Local Government Act 2002](#) (LGA) and guided by QLDC's Development Contributions Policy (DCP).

In addition, QLDC's Revenue and Financing Policy and Long Term Plan (LTP) directly influence how DCs are calculated and applied.

Copies of these documents are available online:

- The *Development Contributions Policy* and *Revenue and Financing Policy* can be found on the [QLDC Policies](#) webpage under the Finance section.
- The *LTP* is available separately on the [QLDC Long Term Plan](#) webpage.

2. How are this development contributions aligned with the actual and forecast cost of infrastructure?

DCs are calculated using a combination of historical and forecast growth-related capital costs identified within the LTP. The detailed calculation methodology is set out in the DCP.

3. Have these contributions historically met QLDCs expectations and the associated infrastructure costs? If not, please help us understand why?

4. What is the estimated deficit between actual development contributions received and the actual cost of district wide infrastructure that was supposed to be covered by development contributions?

These two questions are addressed together.

Since the introduction of DCs in 2004, QLDC has received approximately \$255 million in DC income compared with a budgeted \$275 million, representing a 7% variance (approximately \$20 million) over a 22-year period.

5. Is there a measure or KPI [key performance indicator] of this development contributions income/cost deficit or success used by local government? If so - what have been QLDC's scores.

QLDC tracks and reports on DC income (actual versus budgeted) and related expenditure through its financial reporting rather than by using a specific KPI to measure the income–cost deficit or overall success of DCs. Reporting on DCs is included in [QLDC's Annual Reports](#).

6. Are development contributions charged for direct costs per development or across the entire district?

DCs are assessed and applied either on a ward basis or through specific scheme areas. Further detail, including the relevant tables, is provided in the DCP (see page 373).

7. What legal challenges has QLDC received relating to development contributions?

8. What was the outcome of these legal challenges?

9. What development contributions have been adjusted as a result of legal challenges. Details please.

These three questions are addressed together.

QLDC has not received any legal challenges relating to its DCP.

There has been one formal objection—from Foodstuffs (Pak’nSave)—which was considered by Development Contributions Commissioners and successfully defended by QLDC. The objection outcome supported and validated QLDC’s approach. The DCP is reviewed and consulted on as part of the LTP process.

QLDC also operates a reconsideration request process in accordance with the LGA, through which developers can raise concerns.

10. QLDC makes financial feasibility assessments of developer's plans before they approve them i.e., that a proposal will be viable for the developer. Does this process suffer from developers overstating their costs and understating profit? What safeguards does QLDC have in this respect? Is any audit carried out - and at what stage?

Development contributions are based solely on the cost of providing growth-related infrastructure, not on the value or profitability of developments. QLDC’s DCP operates as a cost recovery tool to ensure those who create demand contribute fairly to infrastructure funding.

QLDC does not assess or audit developers’ financial models, as this sits outside its statutory role under the [Resource Management Act 1991](#) and the LGA. Financial viability is the responsibility of the developer, while Council’s oversight is limited to ensuring compliance with relevant planning, engineering, and infrastructure standards.

11. What’s the relationship between market prices for property and development contributions? What safeguards are built into this process?

Market property prices do not directly influence the calculation of DCs.

Where reserve land is vested or acquired by QLDC, unit rates (\$/m²) are updated in the DCP to reflect current costs. The DCP remains a cost recovery mechanism only.

12. Please list infrastructure projects which have been delayed, deferred or cancelled because QLDC believes the capital cost is too high?

QLDC prioritises infrastructure projects based on overall affordability and deliverability through the LTP process, which includes public consultation.

13. Please provide a map, or maps, of all rezoned land in the Queenstown Lakes District.

All rezoned land within the Queenstown Lakes District can be viewed in the [QLDC District Plan Maps](#).

14. What changes in the current development contributions system would QLDC like to see and how much are those changes within your Council's control?

QLDC considers that introducing development levies could be a positive change. The Council would prefer to receive contribution payments upfront and to have the ability to apply inflation adjustments to staged consent payments.

15. Should the costs of growth be covered by income from growth? Please comment.

QLDC supports the principle that "growth pays for growth." The DCP (paragraph 1.1.2) states:

"The purpose of the policy is to ensure that a fair, equitable and proportionate share of the total cost of capital expenditure necessary to service growth over the long term is funded by development. Council may achieve this by using Development Contributions under the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA 2002)."

Right to review the above decision

Note that you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about this process is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please contact Naell.Crosby-Roe@qldc.govt.nz (Director Democracy Services).

We trust that the above information satisfactorily answers your request.

Kind regards,



Democracy Services Team
Corporate Services | Queenstown Lakes District Council
P: +64 3 441 0499
E: informationrequest@qldc.govt.nz