

A NEW CYCLE PATH FOR HOTOPS RISE

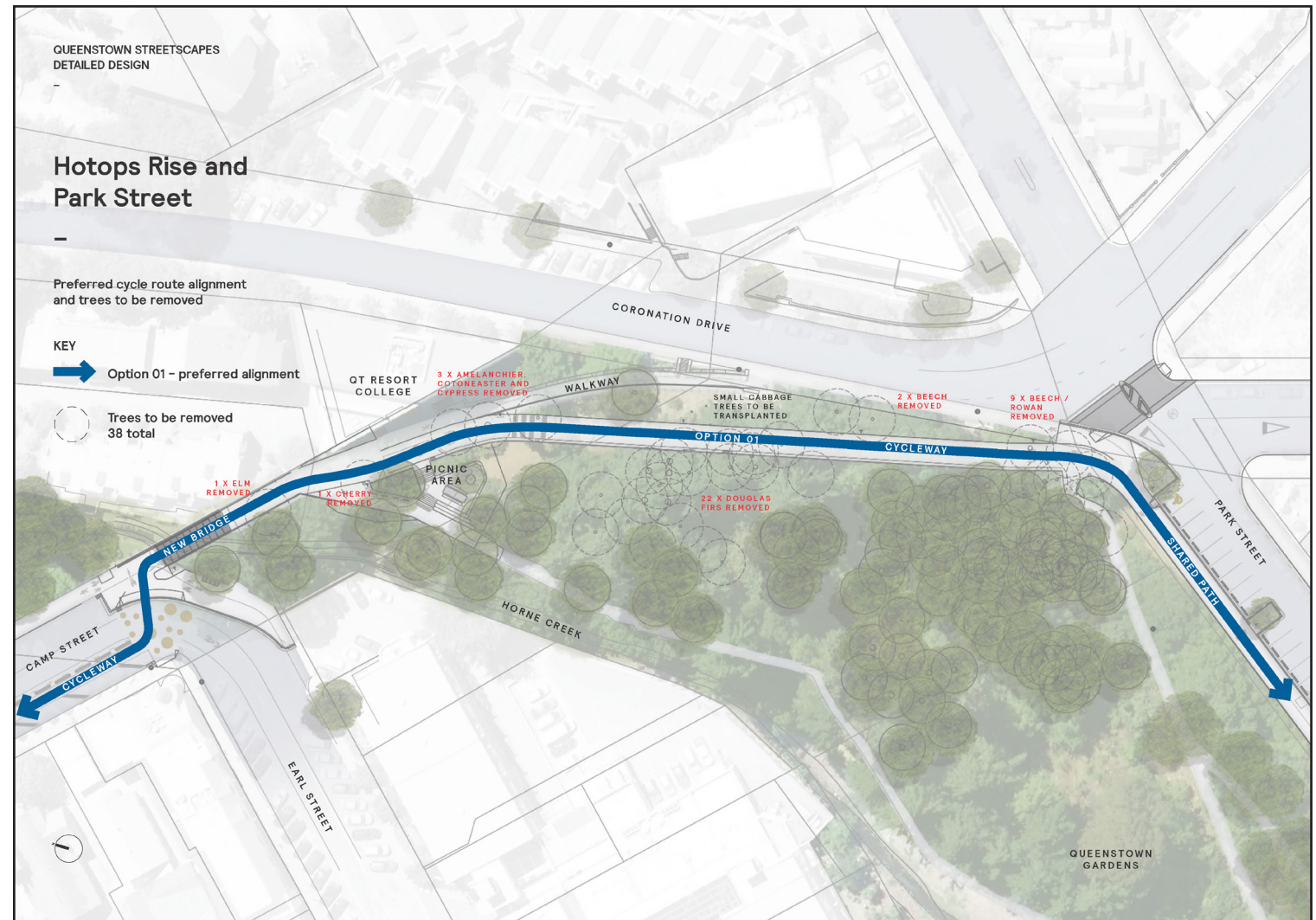
**FREQUENTLY
ASKED QUESTIONS**

WHAT'S PROPOSED AT HOTOPS RISE?

A four metre wide dedicated cycle path is proposed along Hotops Rise to form a direct connection between the Frankton Track and the Queenstown town centre. The cycle path complements the existing Hotops Rise footpath, and extends from the intersection of Park Street and Coronation Drive down to a new bridge over Horne Creek.

The new cycle path is part of the wider street upgrade programme underway and will make it far safer and more enjoyable to cycle and use other non-motorised transport options, supporting a more sustainable transport network for Wakatipu. The new path does require the removal of some trees in the area.

The preferred path alignment is shown here:



WHY WAS THIS PATH ALIGNMENT CHOSEN?

A number of options have been considered for the alignment of the path. The preferred option has been chosen as it meets many of the project objectives:

- | It provides safer gradients, particularly important for less confident cyclists and on those icy winter days.
- | It is a direct route that will connect the new shared path on Park Street with the town centre, reducing travel time for commuting cyclists.
- | The alignment doesn't impact rare and important specimen trees in the reserve.
- | It is the least 'engineered' option, with lower retaining walls and fewer guard rails than other options considered (more on these below).
- | It is the most affordable option.

WHAT OTHER OPTIONS WERE CONSIDERED AND WHY WERE THEY DISCARDED?

Two other options were considered and are shown on the plan on the next page.

OPTION 2 (shown in yellow)

A similar design to option 1. The key difference is that it would be constructed closer to the existing Hotops Rise path. This option would still see up to 20 trees removed, would require a steeper gradient and result in retaining walls of up to 2m on both sides of the path.

OPTION 3 (shown in red)

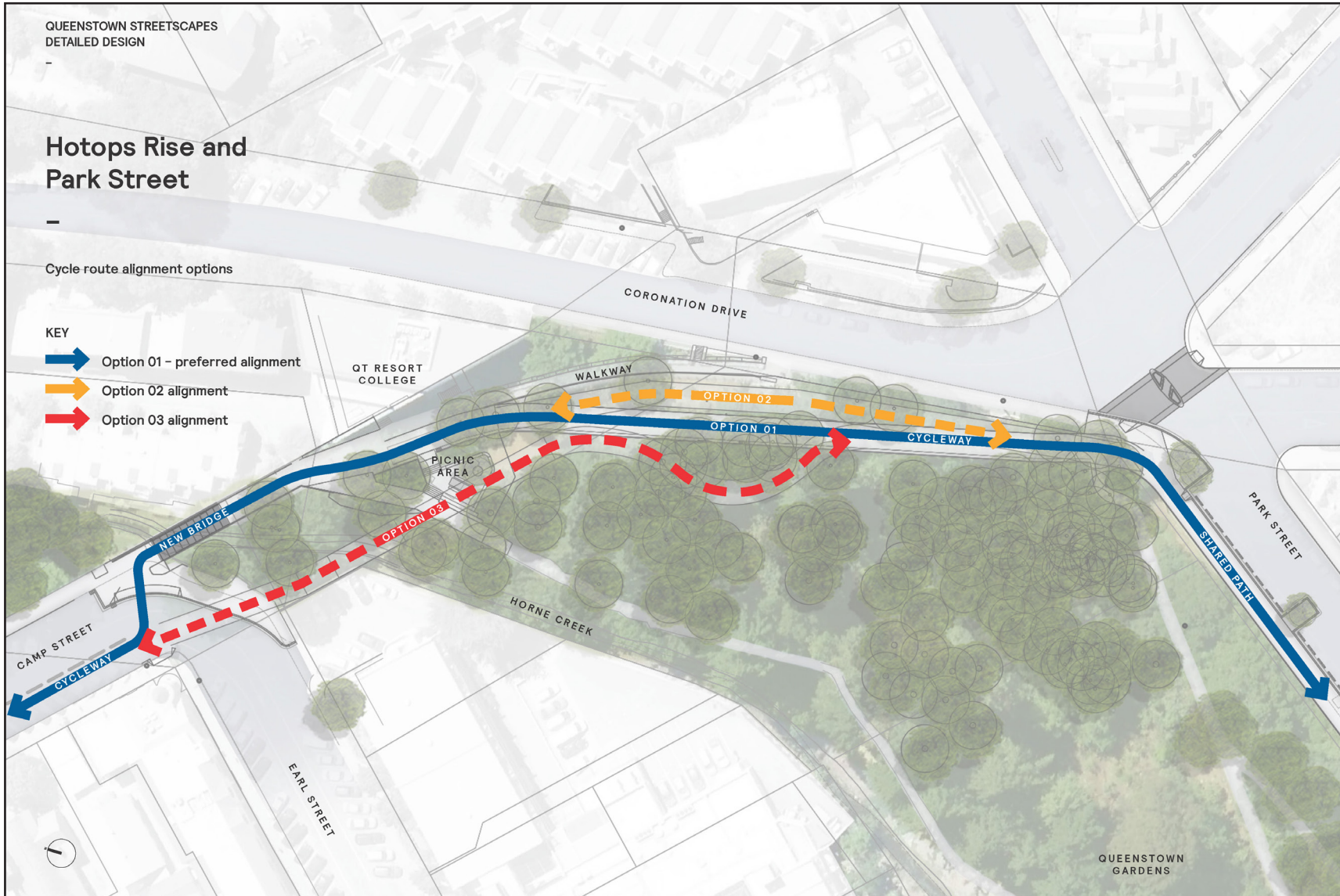
A more meandering path. It would result in the removal of 14 trees. There are some safety concerns with this option including a steeper gradient, crossing existing paths and blind corners, increasing the chance of collision. This option would have costed significantly more to construct.



Hotops Rise and Park Street

Cycle route alignment options

- KEY
- Option 01 – preferred alignment
 - Option 02 alignment
 - Option 03 alignment



WHY CAN'T WE JUST DIRECT THE CYCLE PATH DOWN CORONATION DRIVE?

This option has been considered in the past and discarded because it does not align with the Queenstown Town Centre Masterplan strategy for Public Transport and Active Travel.

While it would be considerably cheaper to build, it would result in a number of safety concerns, including conflicts with public transport and private vehicles and lacks a direct connection to the town centre.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO IMPROVE ACCESS INTO TOWN IN THIS WAY?

Providing more genuine alternatives to getting around by car is a win for everyone. It will improve the safety and aesthetics in the town centre, help to reduce congestion and support a more sustainable transport network.

Directing cyclists along the new path will also help to remove high speed cycle commuters from the Marine Parade recreation area at Queenstown Bay, vastly improving safety in the area. The path along Hotops Rise is part of the approved Wakatipu Active Travel Network.

WHAT TREES WILL BE REMOVED TO CONSTRUCT THE PREFERRED OPTION?

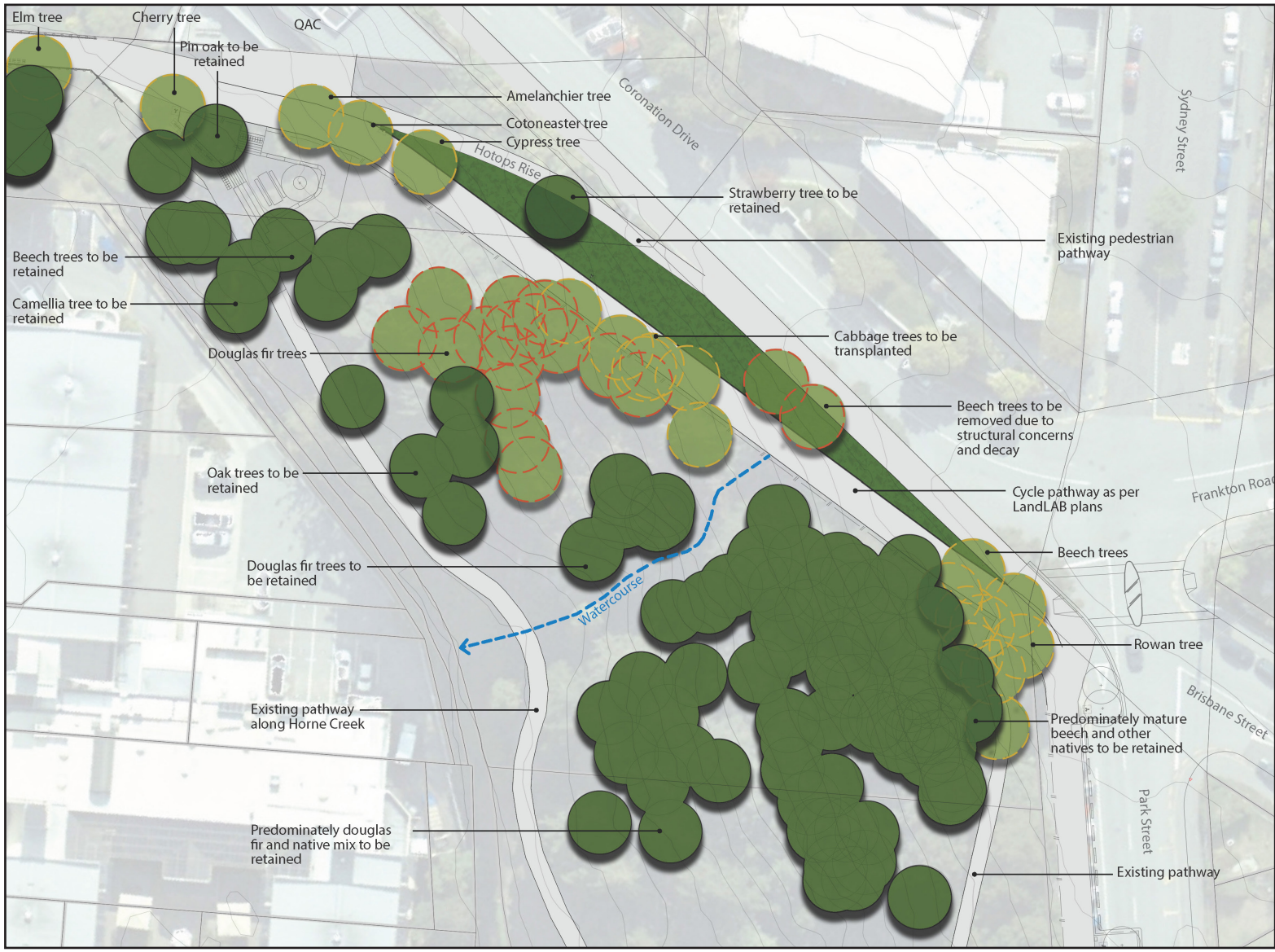
Approximately 40 trees are proposed for removal as shown on the plan below. These are predominantly mature Douglas fir trees that were originally planted as a wind break and timber resource for the local community.

The original intention of Guardians of the Reserve group (a group established to protect the area from development in the 1980s) was for these to be succeeded with other plantings after the timber was harvested.

Not all of the trees earmarked for removal are Douglas fir, there is also an amelanchier, cotoneaster, cypress, cherry, elm and several beech trees that must also be removed.

Amongst the Beech trees there are some that were already earmarked for future removal due to their structural form. A number of shrubs will also be removed.






Legend

Trees to be Retained

 Existing trees including beech, strawberry tree, douglas fir and others

Trees to be Removed

 Trees to be removed for the creation of the cycle pathway (approximately 20)

 Trees to be removed for safety and exposure to elements / survival success (approximately 18)

Notes: Numbers and Canopy are indicative only

ARE THERE ANY TREES YOU'RE LOOKING TO PROTECT?

The intention is for the path alignment to retain mature specimens where possible, prioritising native or uncommon non-wilding species over Douglas fir species. A large pin oak and strawberry tree will be retained along with beech trees.

WHY ARE THERE SO MANY TO BE REMOVED?

Based on the recommendation of a Tree Risk Assessment, a number of Douglas fir trees that are not directly in the cycleway alignment will also be removed due to their exposure to increased wind load, posing a safety risk. You can read the Tree Risk Assessment in full here.



WHAT IS THE HEALTH OF THE TREES EARMARKED FOR REMOVAL?

Most of the trees, including all the Douglas fir specimens, are in good health and do not present health or structural reasons for removal.

There are two mature Beech trees, in proximity to the existing Hotops pedestrian pathway that are not good specimens and may pose a future safety risk.

But this will completely change how this area looks and feels...



WHAT PLANS ARE IN PLACE TO REPLANT IN THIS AREA?

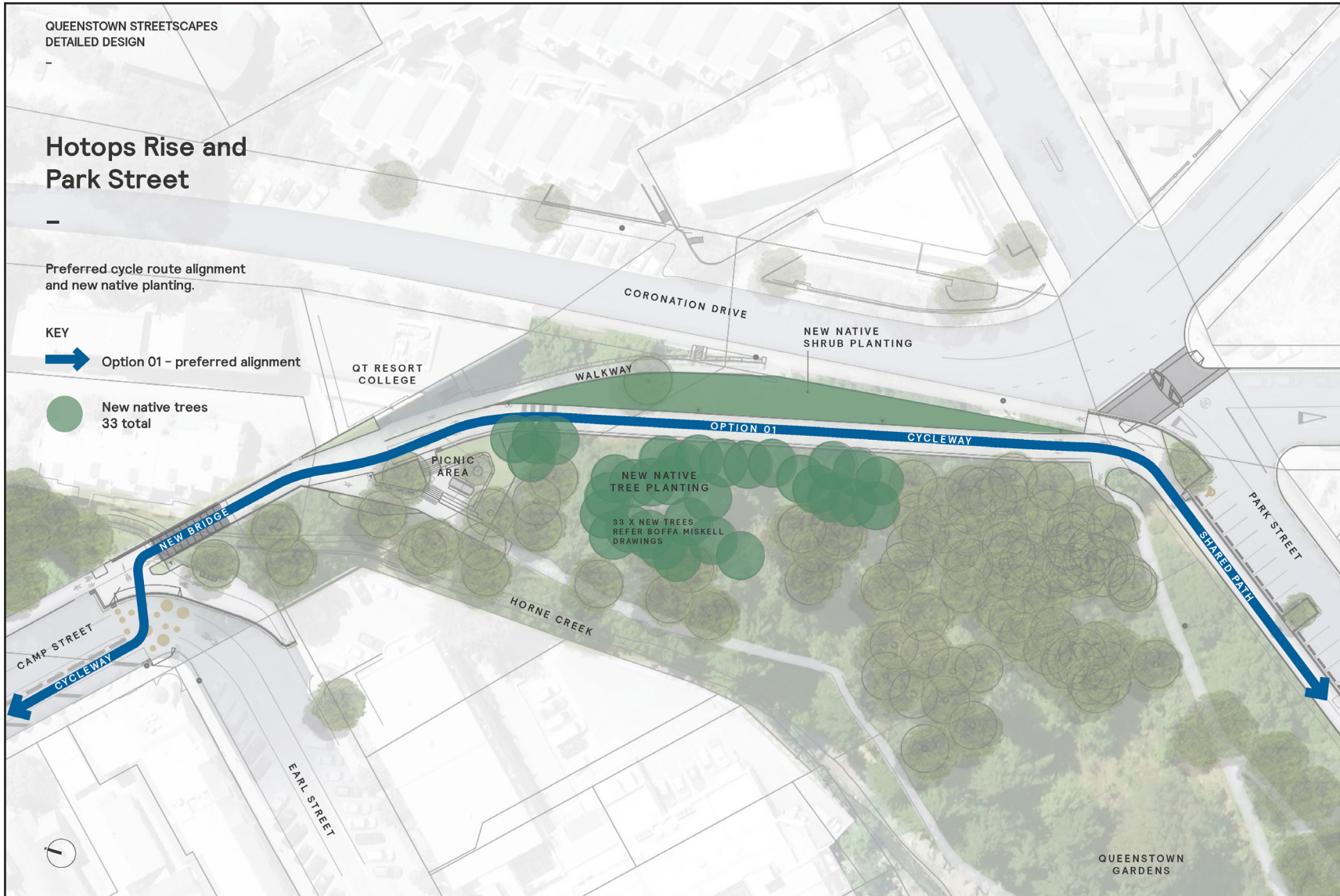
A native planting mitigation plan has been prepared which aims to replace trees at a rate greater than the number being removed.

The species selected are predominantly Northofagus species (Mountain/Silver Beech), Podocarpus cunninghamii (Halls's Totara), Plagianthus regius (Manatu / Ribbonwood). These species are also within the wider Street Upgrades tree palate.

Hotops Rise and Park Street

Preferred cycle route alignment
and new native planting.

- KEY
-  Option 01 - preferred alignment
 -  New native trees
33 total







More specific details of the native planting mitigation plan are shown on the plan below.



Legend

Proposed Replacement Trees

-  *Dacrydium cupressinum* (Rimu) x 7
-  *Nothofagus* species (Mountain / Silver Beech) x 17
-  *Podocarpus cunninghamii* (Hall's Totara) x 4
-  *Plagianthus regius* (Manatu Ribbonwood) x 5

Total no. of replacement trees 33

Notes: Canopy is indicative only

Large grade trees will be sought for replanting

Native Shrub and Tree Mix (390m²)

Botanical Name	Common Name	Mix	Spacing	Quantities
<i>Astelia</i> 'Silver Shadow'	Silver Shadow Astelia	20%	1.2	54
<i>Coprosma acerosa</i> 'Red rocks'	Tawapou	15%	0.8	91
<i>Podocarpus nivalis</i>	Alpine Totara	15%	0.8	91
<i>Phormium cookianum</i> 'Emerald gem'	Wharariki	20%	0.8	122
<i>Sophora molloyi</i> 'Dragon's Gold'	Kowhai	10%	1.5	17
<i>Pseudopanax ferox</i>	Lancewood	10%	1.0	39
<i>Cordyline australis</i>	Cabbage Tree	10%	2.0	10
Total number of plants				424

Numbers are indicative only and subject to location and size of retaining walls along outer edge of garden bed

Council recently asked for feedback on a development plan for the Queenstown Gardens.

HOW DOES THIS WORK FIT IN TO THE WIDER PLAN FOR THE GARDENS?

The Queenstown Gardens Development Plan 2020 proposed additional informal walking pathways through this area and native planting to succeed the Douglas fir. This was proposed as a future development stage, however, these works provide an opportunity to start the native succession planting earlier.

HOW WILL YOU REMOVE THE TREES SAFELY?

Tree removal will be undertaken by a professional tree felling company under the supervision of an arborist. A large exclusion zone will be established to keep members of the public safe during the tree felling. The trees will be removed by sectional felling (dismantling) as it is unsafe to fell them with cuts to the base of the tree and let them fall.

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH ALL THE WOOD FROM THE TREES THAT HAVE BEEN REMOVED?

Douglas fir timber will be cut into rounds and donated to a local charity to split and distribute as firewood. This is in line with the original vision of these plantings.

Valuable timbers from trees felled in the past have been donated to the Wakatipu Woodworkers Guild. We are open to these opportunities again, or selling the timber if it is for private/commercial uses. If this is something you are interested in, please contact the QLDC Parks team.

Remaining off cuts will be mulched and left on site for replanting the natives and excess taken to the Council depot to use on other local reserves.

HOW MUCH WILL THIS WORK COST AND WHO'S PAYING?

The Hotops Cycle Path is part of the wider Town Centre Street Upgrade programme which is jointly funded by QLDC (\$25m) and the Crown Infrastructure Partners Shovel Ready Fund (\$35m).

IS THE WAKATIPU REFORESTATION TRUST INVOLVED IN REPLANTING AND MAKING THE PLAN FOR WHAT'S INCLUDED?

The Wakatipu Reforestation Trust (WRT) has been made aware of the plans and have shown support for the intention to plant natives in this area. The WRT's reference garden at Kelvin Heights has been a good reference for local native species.

WHAT CONSULTATION HAS HAPPENED ON THIS PROPOSAL? WHEN WAS THE DECISION MADE TO DO THIS?

The location of this path has been on the cards for some time. It formed part of the community engagement on the Queenstown Town Centre Masterplan in 2017 in relation to creating better connections between the Gardens and Ben Lomond Reserve. The Masterplan was endorsed by QLDC in 2018. Since then, there has been informal conversations with the Friends of the Queenstown Gardens group.

We'll consult with a range of interested parties to finalise the native mitigation planting plan, including the Friends of the Gardens Group, Queenstown Resort College, operators within the Gardens and our own experts.

WHEN WILL THE WORK HAPPEN?

The completion of the cycle path will happen as part of the Town Centre Street Upgrades. Construction of the path is likely to begin in early August 2021.



