

Wānaka-Upper Clutha Community Board

27 March 2025

Report for Agenda Item | Rīpoata moto e Rāraki take [1]

Department: Community Services

Title | Taitara: Recommendation to adopt the final Mount Iron Reserve Management Plan

Purpose of the Report | Te Take mō te Pūroko

The purpose of this report is to consider recommending to Council that the Mount Iron Reserve Management Plan be adopted in accordance with the Reserves Act 1977 (the Act).

Recommendation | Kā Tūtohu

That the Wānaka-Upper Clutha Community Board:

1. **Note** the contents of this report; and
2. **Recommend to Council** to adopt the Mount Iron Reserve Management Plan.

Prepared by:



Name: Christine Skipworth
Title: Acting Parks and Open
Spaces Manager
3 March 2025

Prepared by:



Name: Kat Banyard
Title: Senior Parks Advisor
3 March 2025

Reviewed and Authorised by:



Name: Ken Bailey
Title: General Manager,
Community Services
6 March 2025

Context | Horopaki

1. Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) purchased part of Mount Iron and Little Mount Iron in May 2023. The area has been gazetted as a Recreation Reserve under the Act, and the Mount Iron Recreation Reserve (the Reserve) comprises two parcels of land totalling 94 hectares.
2. Under Section 41(1) of the Act all recreation reserves under Council's administration are required to have reserve management plans, prepared in accordance with the Act.
3. The Mount Iron Reserve Management Plan (RMP) sets out the direction for the use, maintenance, protection, preservation and enhancement of the Reserve, through a vision and a series of objectives and policies. These will be a guide for Council officers in making both day-to-day and long-term decisions about how the reserve will be used, managed or developed.
4. The RMP has been in development since June 2023. A summary of key milestones is set out in the table below.

Date	Milestone
22 June 2023	Wānaka-Upper Clutha Community Board (WUCCB) approved the intention to notify the preparation of the Mount Iron RMP.
25 September to 20 November 2023	Early community and stakeholder engagement on the draft RMP: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Four in-person workshops• One drop-in session on Mount Iron• Let's Talk online campaign for two months 870 'pins' and comments on an online map received. 581 post-it comments from in-person engagement events received.
8 February 2024, 21 March 2024, 28 May 2024	Three public workshops with the WUCCB to narrow the reasonably practicable options to include in the RMP.
22 August 2024	WUCCB recommended Council approve the draft RMP for public consultation.
19 September 2024	Council approved the draft RMP for public consultation.
23 September to 29 November 2024	Formal consultation period. 446 submissions received. 2 drop-in sessions held on Mount Iron in October.
10 December 2024	Public hearing. 20 submitters spoke to their submission.
11 December 2024	Public deliberations by the Hearing Panel.

Management of Department of Conservation (DOC) land at Mount Iron

5. DOC administers 54.3 hectares of land on Mount Iron, adjacent to the Reserve. QLDC has applied to DOC to become the administering body of this land under the Act. This is to enable a single management and maintenance approach to all the land at Mount Iron to achieve better community outcomes.

6. QLDC and DOC entered into a management agreement on 1 May 2024 for the DOC land until the outcome of QLDC's application to become the administering body is known. As agreed, QLDC now undertakes the day-to-day management of the Public Conservation Land (PCL) while DOC continues to undertake statutory responsibilities.

Analysis and Advice | Tatāritaka me kā Tohutohu

7. The Mount Iron RMP (Attachment A) sets out the vision, values and intended uses of the reserve through objectives and policies.
8. The direction in the RMP has been informed by extensive community and stakeholder engagement, and engagement with Kāi Tahu rūnaka consultancies Aukaha and Te Ao Marama. Early community engagement was undertaken in 2023 followed by a formal submissions process on the draft RMP in 2024 (in line with the Act). The draft RMP was open for submissions between 23 September and 29 November 2024 and was supported by two drop-in sessions held on Mount Iron in October 2024. 446 submissions were received. A summary of submissions received was developed and shared back with the community (Attachment B).
9. The Hearing Panel, made up of three members of the WUCCB, directed changes be made to the draft RMP at public deliberations on 11 December 2024. This followed the Hearing Panel's consideration of the written submissions and comments from the 20 submitters who spoke at the public hearing on 10 December 2024.
10. A version of the draft RMP showing tracked changes made is at Attachment C. The main changes after public submissions and deliberations include:
 - The vision was amended to include thriving indigenous ecosystems and outdoor recreation rather than natural recreation.
 - 'Objective 5.10 To enable mountain bike trail network within the Reserve' was removed. While there was support for this objective, it was highlighted that no other recreation activities were specified as an objective. The other existing objectives and policies do allow for mountain biking on Mount Iron. Policy 6.7.2 regarding a well-designed trail plan was amended to enable the design and implementation of a trail plan.
 - Commercial activity policies were removed and replaced with policy 6.1.1 which does not permit new commercial activity. This aligns with the status quo, as there are currently no commercial activities permitted on the Recreation Reserve, except for DOC concessions on the Mount Iron 5km loop trail easement.
 - An additional ecology policy 6.4.8 was added to require ecological assessments prior to development or planting, in most instances.

- The Reserve map was modified to identify only two main access points, which are supported by parking and in proximity to services. All other access points are active but no longer identified on the map.
11. The Mount Iron RMP will only apply to the QLDC reserve land at Mount Iron, with the DOC land being administered through the QLDC & DOC management agreement. If QLDC is successful in becoming the administering body of the DOC land, then the Mount Iron RMP will also apply to the DOC land from that time.
12. This report identifies and assesses the following reasonably practicable options for assessing the matter as required by section 77 of the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA).
13. Option 1 Recommend to Council to adopt the Mount Iron Reserve Management Plan.

Advantages:

- Ensures there is a clear plan for the future of Mount Iron that provides a clear management framework for the use and development of the reserve.
- Ensures community expectations to produce an RMP are met. It also acknowledges the significant community and stakeholder engagement through the submissions and hearings process.
- Supports Council's obligation under the Act to prepare reserve management plans for recreation reserves.

Disadvantages:

- Some of the direction in the RMP may not be supported by all community members.
- Potential for amendments to the RMP to be needed if the application for Council to become the administering body of the DOC land is successful and includes unforeseen requirements which aren't supported by the RMP.

14. Option 2 Do not recommend to Council to adopt the Mount Iron Reserve Management Plan.

Advantages:

- Would allow time for the outcome of the application to become the administering body of the DOC land to be understood prior to the finalisation of the RMP.

Disadvantages:

- There will be no plan for how the Mount Iron Reserve is managed and developed in the future. This means there will no clear direction for how activities are managed e.g. commercial activities or requests to park on the reserve.
- Council will not meet the community's expectations that an RMP for the reserve will be developed.
- Council will not be acting in accordance with the Act.

15. This report recommends **Option 1** for addressing the matter because this will ensure a clear plan is in place to direct future use and development, it will meet community expectations for a plan to be in place and will meet Council's obligations under the Act.

Consultation Process | Hātepe Matapaki

Significance and Engagement | Te Whakamahi i kā Whakaaro Hiraka

16. This matter is of medium significance, as determined by reference to the Council's Significance and Engagement Policy 2024 because of the high community interest in the development and use of this new reserve which is highly valued by the community.

- The persons who are affected by or interested in this matter are users of the reserve, residents/ratepayers of the Wānaka-Upper Clutha community, Kāi Tahu, visitors to Wānaka, immediately adjoining neighbours and local recreation and conservation groups.

17. The Council undertook early engagement with community and stakeholders between September and November 2023 to inform development of the draft RMP.

18. The draft RMP was formally consulted on through a two-month submission period between September and November 2024, and subsequent hearings in December 2024.

19. Council officers have been working closely with DOC staff in relation to the management of the DOC land at Mount Iron.

Māori Consultation | Iwi Rūnaka

20. Council has worked closely with Aukaha and Te Ao Marama on both the draft and final Mount Iron RMP.

Risk and Mitigations | Kā Raru Tūpono me kā Whakamaurutaka

21. This matter relates to the Workforce risk category. It is associated with RISK10005 Ineffective planning for community services or facilities within the QLDC Risk Register. This risk has been assessed as having a high residual risk rating.
22. The approval of the recommended option will allow Council to avoid the risk. This will be achieved by creating a clear plan for how Council intends to provide for and ensure the use, enjoyment, maintenance, protection, preservation and enhancement of the reserve.

Financial Implications | Kā Riteka ā-Pūtea

23. Finalising the Mount Iron RMP is planned for within existing operational budgets.
24. The QLDC Long Term Plan 2024-2034 includes a capital improvement budget of \$184,000 in 2026/27 to support future actions enabled and directed by the RMP once completed.

Council Effects and Views | Kā Whakaaweawe me kā Tirohaka a te Kaunihera

25. The following Council policies, strategies and bylaws were considered:
- Vision beyond 2050
 - Reserves Act 1977
 - Local Government Act 2002
 - Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2021
 - Significance and Engagement Policy 2024
 - QLDC Disability Policy
 - QLDC Dog Control Bylaw
 - Proposed and Operative District Plan
26. The recommended option is consistent with the principles set out in the named policies. It aligns with the Act which requires reserve management plans to be in place for recreation reserves.
27. This matter is not included in the Long Term Plan. However, funding to support future actions enabled and directed by the development of the RMP is included in 2026/27.

Local Government Act 2002 Purpose Provisions | Te Whakatureture 2002 o te Kāwanataka ā-Kiaka

28. Section 10 of the LGA states the purpose of local government is (a) to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities; and (b) to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities in the present and for the future. Approval of the report’s recommendation will support these outcomes by having an approved plan that directs future decision making for the Reserve. As such, the recommendation in this report is appropriate and within the ambit of Section 10 of the LGA.

29. The recommended option:

- Can be implemented through current funding under the Long Term Plan and Annual Plan;
- Is consistent with the Council's plans and policies; and
- Would not significantly alter the intended level of service provision for any significant activity undertaken by or on behalf of the Council or transfer the ownership or control of a strategic asset to or from the Council.

Attachments | Kā Tāpirihaka

A	Final Mount Iron Reserve Management Plan
B	Mount Iron Summary of Consultation September-November 2024
C	Draft Mount Iron Reserve Management Plan (showing tracked changes)
D	Mount Iron RMP Hearing 10 December 2024 Minutes



MOUNT IRON RESERVE MANAGEMENT PLAN – 2025

Wānaka

Note: Currently, QLDC does not have a mana whenua endorsed Te Reo name for Mount Iron

QLDC

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	3
<hr/>	
2. Reserve Description	3
<hr/>	
3. Description of Primary Users and Activities	4
<hr/>	
4. Vision	7
<hr/>	
5. Objectives	
<hr/>	
6. Policies	8
6.1 Commercial Activities	8
6.2 Community Partnering, Guardianship & Volunteering	9
6.3 Community Events	10
6.4 Ecology	11
6.5 Landscape & Geology	12
6.6 Development, Infrastructure & Amenity	14
6.7 Recreation & Enjoyment	15
6.8 Natural Hazard Risks	17
<hr/>	
7. Appendix 1 – Mount Iron Reserve Map	18
<hr/>	

Other related documents:

Conservation Act 1987
Health and Safety Act 2015
Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998
Reserves Act 1977
Resource Management Act 1991
Te Runanga o Ngāi Tahu Act 1996
Te Tiriti o Waitangi
Wildlife Act 1953
QLDC Activity Controls to Manage Wildfire Risk within Reserves
QLDC Activity in Public Places Bylaw
QLDC Alcohol Bylaw
QLDC Art in Public Places Policy
QLDC Climate and Biodiversity Plan
QLDC Creativity, Culture and Heritage Strategy
QLDC Disability Policy
QLDC District Plan
QLDC Dog Bylaw
QLDC Event Enquiry Form
QLDC Events Strategy
QLDC Film Permit - for drone use
QLDC Open Spaces Strategy
QLDC Plaques, Memorials & Monuments Policy
QLDC Public Art Policy
QLDC Smoking Policy
QLDC Traffic and Parking Bylaw
QLDC Tree Policy
QLDC Wildfire Reserve Closure Plan
QLDC-NZTA Active Travel Strategy
DOC and QLDC Community / Volunteer Agreements (various)
DOC-QLDC Management Agreement 2024
FENZ 'Flammability of indigenous plant species' guide
Kāi Tahu ki Otago Natural Resource Management Plan 2005
Te Tangi a Tauira – The Cry of the People 2008

PISA RAP1 MOUNT IRON - Survey Report for the Lindis/Pisa/Dunstan Ecological Districts - Protected Natural Areas Programme 19xx
Otago Geopreservation Inventory GNS see also www.naturemaps.nz
Significant Natural Area Assessment Mt Iron SNA E18H – Glenn Davis Nov 2011; Significant Natural Area Assessment Sheets for SNA E18C, 18D and 18D_2
Evaluation of a Proposed Significant Natural Area at Mt Iron, Wanaka Wildlands Contract Report No. 3762 March 2017
Ecological Assessment of Fence Construction Effects at Mt Iron Wanaka Wildlands Contract Report no. 6366 June 2022
Schedule 21.22.11 Mount Iron ONF Queenstown Lakes District Plan Ch. 21 Rural

Other relevant parameters for management and decision making:

QLDC Delegations Register:
- Wanaka Upper Clutha Community Board (WUCCB)
- QLDC Full Council

Process for preparing a reserve management plan in accordance with the Reserves Act 1977:

24 May 2023 Board approved creating plan
25 Sep 2023 Notice invited suggestions for the plan
20 Nov 2023 Suggestions closed
23 Sep 2024 Notice invited submissions on the draft plan
29 Nov 2024 Submissions close
10 Dec 2024 Hearing held
TBC 27 Mar 2024 Wanaka Upper Clutha Community Board recommends adopting plan
TBC 13 Apr 2024 Full Council adopts plan

Review:

Generally, reserve management plans should be reviewed at a minimum of 10-year intervals by Parks Officers. This does not necessarily require a rewrite.

1. INTRODUCTION

Reserve Management Plan Purpose

This Reserve Management Plan (RMP) provides a vision for how Mount Iron Reserve is experienced and valued, now and into the future.

Objectives and policies outline the use, maintenance, protection, preservation, and development of Mount Iron Reserve. These assist with all decision making. Their purpose is to support achieving the community's vision for the Reserve.

Mount Iron Reserve Formation

Mount Iron comprises multiple adjoining parcels of QLDC and DOC administered land, known as Mount Iron and Little Mount Iron, which in this document will be referred to as Mount Iron Reserve, or the Reserve, see **Appendix One**.

Mount Iron Recreation Reserve

Northern and western portions of Mount Iron and Little Mount Iron were purchased from private ownership to create a Recreation Reserve by Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) in May 2023.

Mount Iron Scenic Reserve (under application)

The eastern steep side of Mount Iron remains under Department of Conservation (DOC) administration. QLDC has applied to DOC to have the land vested to QLDC as Scenic Reserve to manage the landform in a unified, consistent and complete

manner. Based on a successful application, QLDC would take over management and the policies within this RMP would apply.

From 1 May 2024, until the time of vesting to QLDC, the DOC administered land is managed jointly under a DOC-QLDC Management Agreement 2024 (MA). The MA defines DOC as undertaking *statutory* obligations and QLDC as undertaking *operational* management.

Note: In principle, it is recommended in the first instance to seek guidance about all areas of Mount Iron Reserve from this RMP, or the QLDC Parks Department.

1.1 Primary Purpose

Recreation Reserve Primary Purpose

The primary purpose of the recreation reserve is to provide for recreation and physical welfare and enjoyment of the public, while protecting, restoring and enhancing the natural environment, cultural landscape and retaining open space.

Scenic Reserve Primary Purpose

The primary purpose of the scenic reserve is to protect and preserve scenic interest, beauty, natural features, and cultural landscape for the enjoyment of the public.

Note: the primary purpose is based on community input from the early engagement on suggestions for the plan.

2. RESERVE DESCRIPTION

Legal Description

Mount Iron Reserve is situated on a combined area of approximately 100 hectares, plus approximately 55 hectares of DOC land.

It comprises land legally described as:

- Section 3 SO 573783
- Lot 4 DP 471320

And DOC administered land (under application to transfer to QLDC):

- Lot 1 DP 302955
- Lot 2 DP 21892
- Section 40 Block IV Lower Wānaka SD
- Section 58 Block XIV Lower Wānaka SD
- Part Closed Road Block IV Lower Wānaka Survey District
- Section 56 Block IV Lower Wānaka SD

Mount Iron Reserve is zoned Rural and is an Outstanding Natural Feature (ONF) under the QLDC District Plan. It is bounded by State Highway 84 (SH84), State Highway 6 (SH6) and otherwise surrounded by Large Lot Residential and Lower Density Suburban Residential zoned land uses. Wānaka Town Centre and Three Parks Commercial zones are nearby, as well as Allenby Park Informal Recreation and several Community Purpose zones which include Wānaka Golf Course and the Wānaka Recreation Centre.

Access

Mount Iron Reserve is located within 2km of Wānaka's central business area and the Lake Wānaka lakefront. The proximity of these locations and surrounding residential areas to Mount Iron Reserve make it a popular site to experience open space, particularly *elevated* open space, from within an urban area.

Primary vehicle, cycle and pedestrian access is at various locations around the base of Mount Iron Reserve.

A shared path passes along the southern boundary from Anderson Road roundabout to Mount Iron Reserve SH6 car park, linking residential, commercial and recreation areas. It provides a safe off-road active travel route, especially for commuters and school students attending Mount Aspiring College.

There is a shared use track around the base of Mount Iron Reserve that links the SH6 car park to Old Racecourse Road, towards Albert Town. This also forms part of the Mount Iron 5km walking loop track.

Physical Characteristics & Landscape Significance

Mount Iron is an iconic and significant geological landmark in the Wānaka landscape and significant to mana whenua. Rising to 250m elevation (553m above sea level), it provides breathtaking 360° views of the surrounding mountains, flats and lakes.

Geologically, Mount Iron is a classic example of a roche moutonnée landform. It has been carved by glacial action flowing from north to south, which smoothed the north-western slopes of bedrock and left steep crags on the southern side.

There are wet features such as springs, seepage areas, a running stream at times on the north flank, wet areas on the saddle and a stream course running down to Hidden Hills.

Its classification as an ONF in the District Plan means that its protection from inappropriate subdivision, use and development is a matter of national importance under the Resource Management Act 1991, and therefore has the highest level of landscape protection.

The portion of Mount Iron that is now Recreation Reserve was grazed by the Cleugh family. It was called Allenby Farms, which still operates on the north-west boundary of Mount Iron Recreation Reserve.

Little Mount Iron

Little Mount Iron is a smaller summit with views to the north, east and west, linked to Mount Iron by a saddle.

Kāi Tahu values

Significant values that have been identified by Kāi Tahu through the Spatial Plan and Development Plans for QLDC Reserves include:

Spatial Plan Values:

- Hauora Wellbeing - ensuring the four wellbeings are recognised in decisions.
- Aumangea Resilience - ensuring communities and visitors are resilient and adaptive to future shocks and climate change.
- Whakauku Sustainability - ensuring the use of sustainable development principles and zero emissions.

Development Plan Values:

- Ara Tawhito – acknowledging traditional trails and networks.
- Whakapapa – Recognising genealogy or Lineage.
- Manaakitaka - Acknowledging others and raising up of the mana of visitors.
- Whanaukataka – Supporting community and Whanau connections and relationships.

Note: Currently, QLDC does not have a mana whenua endorsed name to use for Mount Iron

Ecology

Due to its large open space and elevation, Mount Iron Reserve hosts a variety of indigenous species, including alpine and cushion plants, reptiles, and invertebrates.

It contains three Significant Natural Areas of kānuka dominant scrub, listed within the QLDC Proposed District Plan:

1. SNA E18C
2. SNA18D

3. SNA18D_2

Note: Currently, the SNAs do not continue into DOC land, as that land was considered already held for conservation purposes.

Indigenous species examples include:

- Blue tussock pātītī taranu *Poa colonsoi*
- Pillow pimelea *Pimelea scericeovillosa*
- Scented tree daisy *Olearia odorata*
- Kowarau gecko *Woodworthia 'Cromwell'*
- Noctuid moth *Meterana exquisita*
- NZ falcon kārearea
Falcon novaeseelandiae
- McCann's skink *Oligosoma maccanni*

Current main planting areas include:

- Indigenous species near the base of the southern slopes.
- Semi-mature and new deciduous and exotic trees along the shared path and SH84.
- Semi-mature indigenous and fruit trees near Allenby Place.

There are pest plants and animals, primarily found on the northern and western slopes. There is an active trapline to trap pest animals.

Pest species examples include:

- Douglas fir *Pseudotsuga mensiesii*
- Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*
- Mayten tree *Maytenus boaria*
- St Lucia cherry *Prunus mahaleb*
- possums
- rabbits

- rats
- stoats and ferrets

Recreation

Recreation has coexisted with conservation and farming for several decades, predominantly in the form of a publicly accessible 5km loop walking track to the Mount Iron summit (historically managed under an easement in favour of DOC). Other informal walking and running occurs on the Reserve.

Informal biking trails were previously allowed on Mount Iron by the land owner, but permission was subsequently withdrawn in the years prior to the land purchase by QLDC.

Horse trekking tours have previously operated from Mount Iron and Little Mount Iron to the Lake Wanaka outlet.

The reserve is also used for climbing, horse-riding, orienteering, paragliding, sheep dog trials, informal recreational skiing or walking through snow, exploring and viewing flora and fauna, and quiet, tranquil, peaceful pursuits, such as contemplation and enjoying time in the outdoors. See more detail in Description of Primary Users and Activities, section 3.

Infrastructure & Services

Mount Iron Reserve contains structures, including:

- Bench seats
- Cell towers
- Dog trials statue
- Environmental monitoring sensor

- Farm-related fences and gates
- Parking
- Signage
- Wastewater pump station

Woolshed

Mount Iron Reserve contains services, including:

- Toilets and drinking water are available at the adjoining QLDC Allenby Place car park.
- Electricity to the environmental monitoring pole, wastewater pump station, woolshed and to the toilets.

There are several easements at the base of Mount Iron in favour of QLDC and other service providers to manage underground infrastructure.

3. DESCRIPTION OF PRIMARY USERS AND ACTIVITIES

Mount Iron Reserve, including both the previously farmed and the Public Conservation DOC land, have long been valued by mana whenua and for open space recreation and particularly the scenic views over the district.

The following descriptions are a general overview and not exhaustive.

Informal recreation

Mount Iron Reserve has a 5km walking loop to the summit that is regularly and frequently used by residents and visitors for casual recreation,

including walking, exercising, dog exercising and enjoying views.

Existing managed and maintained trails include:

- Mount Iron Trail [*easeement portion*]
- Mount Iron Loop Trail [*5km*]
- Hidden Hills Trail
- Mount Iron – Albert Town Link Trail
- Little Mount Iron Trail

Mountain biking was allowed on Mount Iron in the past and there are informal trails on the north-west slopes of Mount Iron.

Horse riding was carried out on Little Mount Iron and the northern slopes of Mount Iron where there were fewer other users.

Paragliders use an established launch towards the western side of Mount Iron.

Rock climbers use five established climbing crags with multiple lines, ranging from beginner to advanced, near the Old Racecourse Road entrance to the Reserve.

Informal skiing has been carried out on Mount Iron Reserve and the ability to walk through snow is a valued experience.

Community / Volunteer Agreements

Several community and volunteer agreements are in place with DOC and with QLDC.

The Upper Clutha Wilding Tree Group have an agreement with QLDC for carrying out removal of some small wilding pines.

Wānaka Backyard Trapping set up a Mount Iron Trapping Group in 2019 on DOC land. Since 2023 they have expanded their trap lines across Mount Iron Reserve, including Little Mount Iron.

Wānaka Rock Climbing Club have an agreement with DOC for the climbing lines located on DOC land.

DOC Concessions & leases

The current limited number of active DOC concessions are under DOC's statutory management. Based on a successful future land transfer to QLDC, they would then be subject to Reserves Act and QLDC processes, which include leases, licenses, permits and community / volunteer agreements.

There is a St John's lease with DOC for the defibrillator located at the summit of Mount Iron currently on DOC land.

Events

In the past, there have been sheep dog trials and orienteering competitions.

4. VISION

The following vision is the community's overarching long-term outlook for Mount Iron Reserve:

Mount Iron Reserve is a revered Wānaka landmark where indigenous ecosystems thrive, providing outdoor recreation in the heart of an urban environment. It unites residents and visitors, bringing the community together to protect its recreation, scenic, cultural, ecological and geological values.

5. OBJECTIVES

The following objectives are provided to manage the Reserve and support the vision. They are overarching goals; succinct statements on the principal aims of this RMP.

Objectives

- 5.1 To preserve and prioritise the natural, open and informal recreation and scenic experience of the Reserve.
- 5.2 To enable active and passive recreation use, access, and enjoyment of the Reserve.
- 5.3 To retain the Reserve as a large natural 'slice of the outdoors' within a busy town, providing respite from the surrounding urban area.
- 5.4 To protect and enhance the Reserve's unique, special, and significant ecological values, (including SNAs).
- 5.5 To acknowledge the distinctive Mount Iron geology and geomorphology, recognising it is an Outstanding Natural Feature (ONF), which makes it a key landmark at the gateway to Wānaka.
- 5.6 To retain and encourage readily accessible connections to the Reserve.
- 5.7 To empower the community to participate in protection, preservation, and guardianship, to protect and enhance the Reserve.
- 5.8 To facilitate mana whenua participation to ensure Kāi Tahu whanui values are embedded in decision making in relation to the management of the reserve.
- 5.9 To provide for community non-profit events that align with the primary purpose (section 1.1) of the Reserve.
- 5.10 .
- 5.11 To protect the Reserve from cumulative adverse effects of use and development.
- 5.12 To endeavor to provide a safe and resilient reserve.
- 5.13 To recognise the Reserve's heritage values.
- 5.14 To 'tell the story' of Mount Iron.

6. POLICIES

The following policies are the actions that support the objectives. They outline how to achieve the goals. They are clear, informed, inclusive and achievable.

6.1 Commercial Activities

Commercial activities may include any for-profit or non-charitable activity, event or other use, including recreation related activities.

Note: For community events see section 6.3

Policies

- 6.1.1 Prohibit new commercial activity within the Reserve, except where required by policy 6.5.12.

6.2 Community Partnering, Guardianship & Volunteering

Community may include a local incorporated society, schools, not-for-profit sports, Kāi Tahu whanui, small community business providers, art or cultural groups operating for charitable purposes.

Note: Definition from QLDC Community Services Fees and Charges Policy.

Policies

- 6.2.1 Encourage the community's active participation in planning, maintaining and enhancing the Reserve.
- 6.2.2 Enable community engagement and involvement in planting and caring for the ecological values of the Reserve.
- 6.2.3 Support establishment of a community guardianship group for the Reserve.
- 6.2.4 Support outdoor education on the Reserve, where it does not adversely affect public use of the Reserve.
- 6.2.5 Consider the use of temporary signage in conjunction with carrying out a community activity, where it is also in accordance with the District Plan.

6.3 Community Events

Community events refer to not-for-profit events, activities or gatherings for the community or organised by the community.

Note: For commercial events see section 6.1.

Note: Events (short-term or one off) on reserve land require a QLDC Events Permit whether commercial community related. Lodging a QLDC Events Enquiry Form starts this process.

Activities (longer duration, continuous or regular frequency) may require a lease or licence under the Reserves Act, which may also involve public notification.

Policies

- 6.3.1 Ensure community events align with the primary purpose (section 1.1) and objectives (section 5) of the Reserve.
- 6.3.2 Require mitigation of event effects to minimise disruption to, and displacement of, other users of the Reserve.
- 6.3.3 Require activities and events to be organised in a manner that ensures ecological values, Kāi Tahu values and SNAs are protected, maintained or enhanced.
- 6.3.4 Consider the use of the Reserve for community, cultural, sporting and recreational activities and events.
- 6.3.5 Assess community event applications based on duration, frequency, scale and cumulative effects.
- 6.3.6 Consider temporary overflow parking on the Reserve for community events in limited areas under circumstances that are specific, infrequent and when conditions allow.
- 6.3.7 Consider the use of temporary signage in conjunction with community events, where it is also in accordance with the District Plan.

6.4 Ecology

Ecology refers to thriving indigenous ecosystems of indigenous living organisms in their physical environment.

- 6.4.1 Encourage the community to work in partnership with council to restore and enhance ecological values and manage pest species.
- 6.4.2 Ensure planting, and other activities, do not have adverse effects on the SNA and Kāi Tahu values.
- 6.4.3 Encourage and support regenerative practices.
- 6.4.4 Control pest plant and animal species.
- 6.4.5 Protect habitat for indigenous animals including lizards, moths and other invertebrates.
- 6.4.6 Protect and enhance waterways within the Reserve.
- 6.4.7 Identify and protect view shafts when planting areas near viewpoints.
- 6.4.8 Require ecological assessments prior to development or planting when appropriate, which will be in most instances.
- 6.4.9 Ensure planting avoids high and moderately high flammability species, where it is outside the SNAs and close to residential areas.

Note: Fire and Emergency New Zealand provides a 'Flammability of indigenous plant species' guide.

Policies

6.5 Development, Infrastructure & Amenity

Infrastructure refers to development such as buildings, parking, fences, signage and services.

Amenity refers to items or services that help to provide comfort, convenience and enjoyment of the Reserve. This may refer to planting, landscaping or recreation improvements.

Policies

Access

- 6.5.1 Maintain the convenience of accessing the Reserve from the adjoining urban areas.
- 6.5.2 Provide paths and recreation infrastructure close to arrival areas that cater to people with limited mobility.
- 6.5.3 Identify and establish a main arrival area for visitors
- 6.5.4 Provide strong connections to active transport and public transport networks to reduce the need for parking.
- 6.5.5 Allow parking only for use and enjoyment of reserve.
- 6.5.6 Limit parking to main arrival areas.
- 6.5.7 Support the gateway experience into Wānaka, such as by minimising or screening parking areas.
- 6.5.8 Allow for the establishment of regional trailheads and promotion, if appropriate.
- 6.5.9 Allow for campervan specific parking spaces to improve safety of car parks where there is space.
- 6.5.10 Allow for bus specific parking spaces where there is space if needed.

- 6.5.11 Maintain established informal vehicle access farm trails for emergency service response and maintenance of the Reserve.

Public Services/Utilities

- 6.5.12 Discourage new commercial and public infrastructure, such as cell towers, transformers and underground infrastructure unless there is significant benefit to public health and safety, and when all other options have been considered and found unsuitable.
- 6.5.13 Consider amenity lighting only where necessary at the base of the Reserve.
- 6.5.14 Consider temporary and permanent accessible public toilets, shelters and storage where necessary at the base of the Reserve to meet the needs of Reserve users.

Fencing, Routing & Signage

- 6.5.15 Allow for removal of unnecessary fences, gates and signage.
- 6.5.16 Allow for signage on the Reserve to identify the Reserve, facilities, interpretive information, wayfinding and natural hazard risks, such as fire.

- 6.5.17 Establish environmental and cultural interpretive signage and seek opportunities to partner with mana whenua to do so.
- 6.5.18 Allow structures or signage only where they enhance the ecological, educational, landscape and recreation experience of the Reserve.
- 6.5.19 Allow pest control fencing for strategic pest control where it aligns with the primary purpose (see section 1.1) of the Reserve.

Reserve and where it sits within its landscape context.

Note: QLDC Plaques and Memorials Policy applies to all QLDC land including Mount Iron Reserve. Due to the significance and visibility of Mount Iron to many people the application process will be subject to elevated requirements. (These elevated requirements are under review through the QLDC Plaques and Memorials Policy review).

Amenity Planting

- 6.5.20 Establish amenity trees to provide shelter and shade where appropriate, such as along shared active travel paths and for parking. This may include appropriate indigenous or exotic planting.

Heritage

- 6.5.21 Consider opportunity for adaptive reuse of woolshed building, prioritising community, education and recreation uses

Kāi Tahu Values

- 6.5.22 Allow, Kai Tahu cultural representation, interpretation and expression, such as sculptures and art, where it is relevant to the

6.6 Landscape & Geology

Landscape and Geology refers to the natural landform and all its features and natural processes over time and currently. This includes landscape character, ephemeral, physical, visible and non-visible elements and cultural landscape. Also refers to geomorphology and other earth-related disciplines.

Policies

- 6.6.1 Promote the significance of Mount Iron as an example of a roche moutonnée (sheep back) landform.
- 6.6.2 Locate and construct trails in a manner to avoid adverse effects on the landform and cultural landscape.
- 6.6.3 Maintain and enhance the landscape values of the ONF and the cultural values identified by Kāi Tahu in the District Plan.

6.7 Recreation & Enjoyment

Recreation refers to activities carried out for enjoyment.

Active recreation refers to organised, formal uses, such as activities that require gear/kit/tools or specific-use facilities, such as courts, fields and spaces.

Passive recreation refers to informal uses that require none, or limited, supporting infrastructure.

Policies

Trails

- 6.7.1 Maintain and upgrade the current walking trails for the continued use and enjoyment of the Reserve by the community and visitors as a natural walking trail.
- 6.7.2 Enable the implementation of new well-designed walking, biking and active commuter trails that meet the needs of a range of trail users and skill levels., Ensure trail design considers effects on other reserve stakeholders and users, Kai Tahu values, and ongoing maintenance and safety requirements.
- 6.7.3 Provide for separated walking and biking trails, unless shared use is deemed appropriate and safe in some areas.
- 6.7.4 Ensure the impact of any trail planning, building and maintenance in the SNAs is appropriately assessed and mitigated, and leads to enhancement in the SNA.
- 6.7.5 Encourage viewing areas within new trail development.
- 6.7.6 Consider suitably qualified peer review of proposed trail development if appropriate.
- 6.7.7 Maintain trails to provide a natural experience.

- 6.7.8 Actively discourage unauthorised trail building and use.

- 6.7.9 Remove and rehabilitate unauthorised trails.

- 6.7.10 Ensure trail planning, building and maintenance identifies and considers Kai Tahu values Allow urban-grade trails only around the base of the Reserve.

- 6.7.11 Prohibit motorised and throttle-only bikes, including E-moto bikes, other than approved mobility devices, where they assist people with disabilities.

Note: e-bikes or 'power assisted cycles' are defined by Waka Kotahi | NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) as, "a power assisted cycle that has an auxiliary electric motor with a maximum power output not exceeding 300W and is designed to be primarily propelled by the muscular energy of the rider".

Other Recreation

- 6.7.12 Enable active and passive open space recreation in defined areas for access, use and enjoyment of the Reserve.
- 6.7.13 Consider new recreation opportunities where they do not conflict with existing uses

and are consistent with the character of the Reserve.

6.7.14 Facilitate reasonable access to as many areas of the Reserve as possible for persons with restricted mobility, balanced with maintaining and enhancing the naturalness and values of the Reserve and the cultural values identified by Kāi Tahu.

6.7.15 Support the use and extension of the existing and future climbing crags within appropriate areas, mitigating risk for other users of the Reserve.

6.7.16 Support the use and improvement of the existing paraglider launch.

6.7.17 Support use of the Reserve for non-motorised recreational paraglider and parapent takeoff and landings.

6.7.18 Prohibit a formal playground. However, can allow for some informal or temporary nature play.

6.7.19 Prohibit the operation and take off/landing of UAV/Drones and model aircraft on, or from, the Reserve, unless otherwise specifically enabled by relevant Council policies and permissions.

6.7.20 Consider helicopter landings for emergency, civil defence or park management purposes only.

6.7.21 Support an efficient planning framework by updating the district plan zone to Open Space & Recreation, with sub zone informal recreation and, or nature conservation.

6.8 Natural Hazard Risks

Policies

Natural hazard risks on Mount Iron Reserve include fall from heights, rock fall and wildfire.

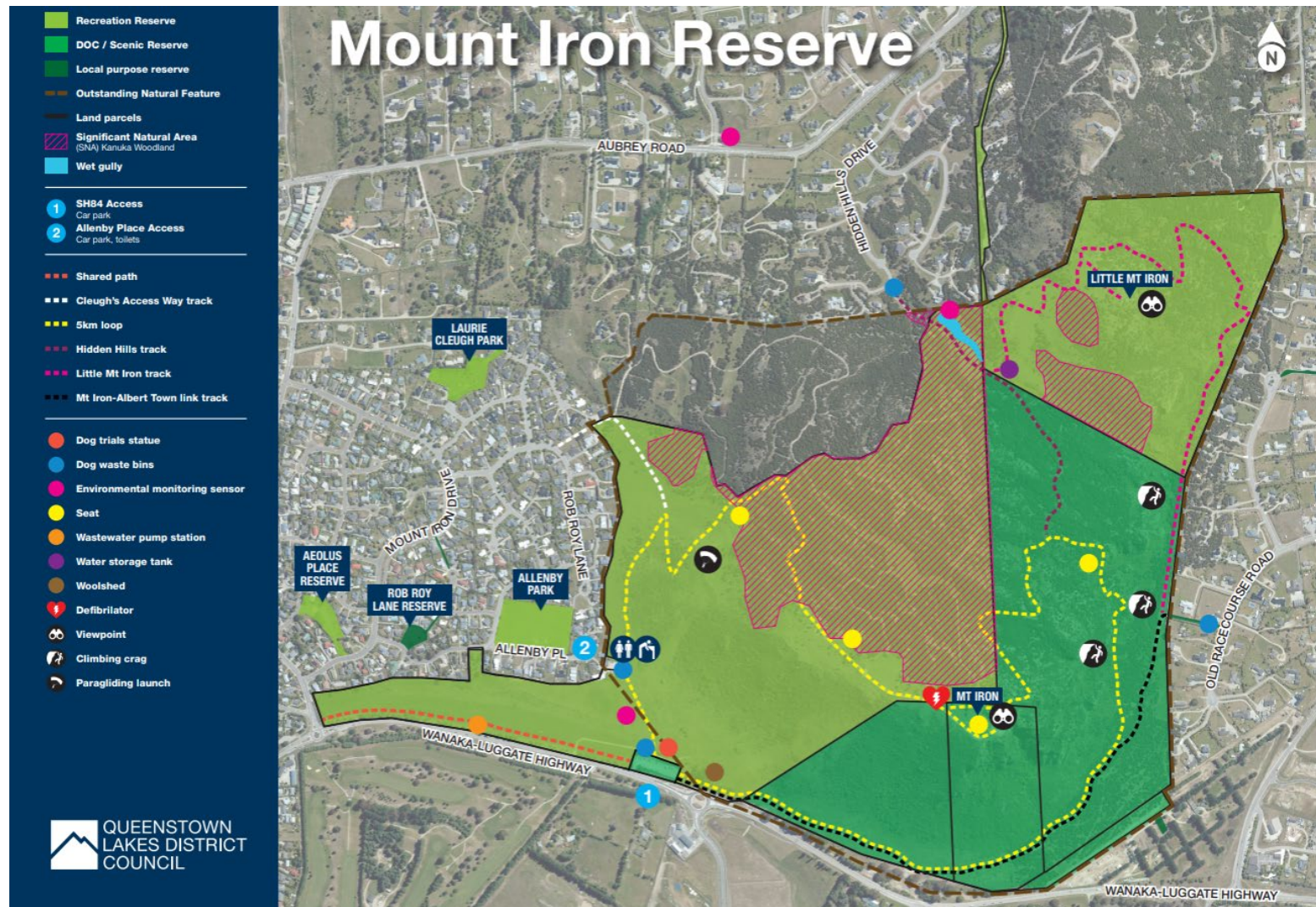
Risks to people, property and the environment can be exacerbated by human actions.

Individuals are responsible for looking after their own welfare and use reserves at their own risk.

[Hazard risk mitigation aims to be consistent with regional and central government].

- 6.8.1 Actively implement and regularly review the QLDC 'Activity controls to manage wildfire risk within reserves'.
- 6.8.2 Allow for reserve closures to mitigate risk for reserve users.
- 6.8.3 Identify risks when QLDC becomes aware of them and mitigate them in a non-invasive way and communicate them to Reserve users.
- 6.8.4 Encourage resilience to withstand and recover in a timely and efficient manner from adverse conditions.
- 6.8.5 Mitigate risk to, and from, organised events.
- 6.8.6 Mitigate hazard risks, such as rock fall and fall from heights, in a minimal and visually sensitive way to protect the landform and landscape.

APPENDIX ONE – MOUNT IRON RESERVE MAP



Mount Iron Reserve – Access, land parcels, services, structures, trails and viewpoints.

Mount Iron Reserve Management Plan



Summary of Consultation
September-November 2024

Community consultation 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 reserve, easily accessed from the town centre, with over 180,000 residents and visitors exploring its trail 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 for how they would like to use and enjoy Mount Iron to help develop a Reserve Management Plan (RMP) for this site during October and November 2023.

These early insights helped the Parks team draft an RMP for Mount Iron which was shared with the community for formal submissions between September and November 2024.

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.

Thanks for being part of the conversation

A big thank you to all that shared their views on this much loved-landmark - we received over 400 submissions!

Following the public consultation closing on 29 November 2024, we had 20 submitters speak to their submissions at a public hearing on 10 December with deliberations being held on 11 December.

All submissions are considered by the hearing panel and used to make final changes to the Reserve Management Plan for Mount Iron Recreation Reserve. This plan will then be presented to the Wānaka-Upper Clutha Community Board for recommendation in March and to Full Council for adoption in April 2025.



Over the eight week engagement period we had:



2
**ONSITE
COMMUNITY
DROP IN
SESSIONS**



2,457
**PROJECT PAGE
VISITS**



446
**SUBMISSIONS
RECEIVED**



6,746
FACEBOOK POST VIEWS



13,245
FACEBOOK VIDEO VIEWS



20
**SUBMITTERS SPEAK
TO THEIR SUBMISSION
AT PUBLIC HEARING**

A snapshot summary

We asked:

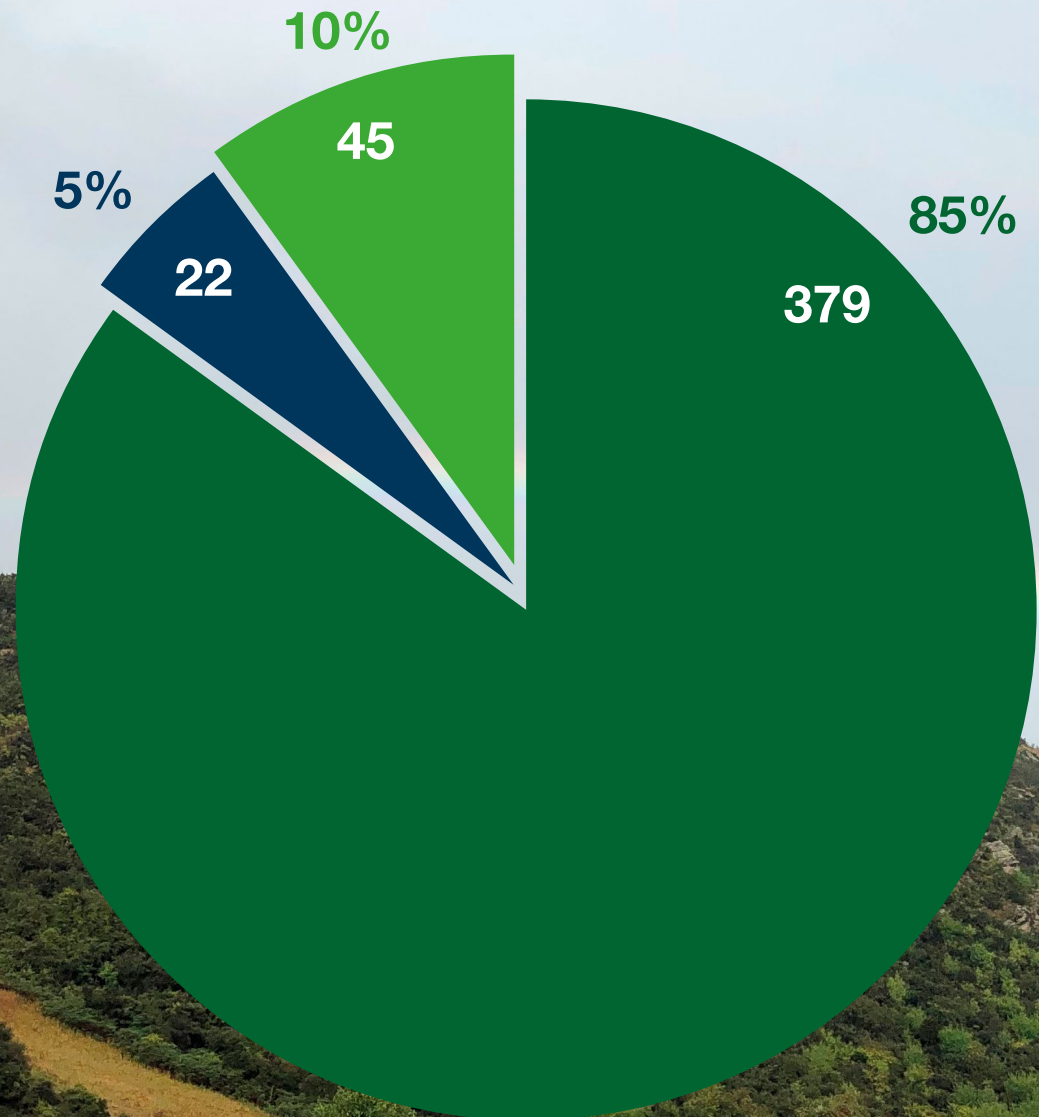
What is your
position on the draft
Mount Iron RMP?

Here's what you said:

379 supported

22 neutral

45 opposed



A snapshot summary

Take a look at
all the submissions
received in
more detail here:



Key themes that came through the submissions included:

Biking

Both support and opposition. There was support for a network of well-designed biking tracks separated from walkers. As well as concern that allowing bike tracks will disturb the tranquillity and ecology of Mount Iron and create a management challenge. There was also concern that biking was singled out in an objective, when other recreation types were not.

Commercial activities

This had a broad range of responses from supporting community and sporting events, to objecting to private events such as weddings, to opposing any commercial or community organised event use entirely.

Ecology

There was generally strong support for ecological enhancement of Mount Iron.

Climbing

Support for current and future expansion of the climbing routes on Mount Iron.

Vision

Support for the long-term aspiration set out for Mount Iron Reserve.

Access

Both support and opposition. There was support for maximising access to Mount Iron, including the access point located on Aubrey Road. As well as concern that public access will cause safety issues near Aubrey Road (referred to as Access No 9 Mount Iron Heights in the draft RMP).

A snapshot summary

Selection of comments received from the community

“No commercial activity should be permitted on Mount Iron. This should be a free space devoid of any commercialism.”

“I want Mount Iron kept the way it is. No bikes or anything. I know you are sad about sticky forest but still, preserve it.”

“The inclusion of events of any description, will compromise the tranquillity of the mountain. It can't be everything for everyone.”

“There is a long history of climbing and mountaineering in Wānaka and the surrounding area. The activity of rock climbing itself and the people it attracts lends itself to the vision and objectives of this plan.”

“Supportive of more planting of fire-resistant plants.”

“I also support Policy 6.7 which allows for a sustainable and well-designed trail network in the Reserve which includes the separation of biking and walking trails.”

“Mt. Iron has a high fire risk (mostly because of the large amount of manuka and kanuka). Increasing access and use of Mt. Iron clearly increases the risk. More signage indicating the risks, and making it a no smoking area are vital.”

“I support the professional development of trails for all users. Those with very high skill sets, as well as beginner bikers, hikers and climbers, young children, older people, and those with limited mobility such as people who use a wheelchair. I also support the use and extension of climbing crags, paraglider take offs, and bike trails.”

“I particularly support Objective 5.12 which enables a mountain bike trail network within the Reserve and Objective 5.3 which empowers the community to protect, preserve and have guardianship over the Reserve.”

“There is no need for extensive landscaping & excessive planting it just needs to be left as is. Being left as a natural resource with minimal development is all that is required. Rate payers can't afford more wasteful spending.”

“A world class bike park. Wanaka needs to compete with Queenstown and draw bike tourists.”

“I recommend that climate mitigation and adaptation be considered with the ecology of the Mt Iron reserve.”

“I am opposed to Accessway No 9 Mount Iron Heights driveway being made a public access for walkers, bikers, children and dogs.”

“Any community base event has to only have a positive effect on the community at large.”



To read all online and written submissions from residents and stakeholders please go to www.letstalk.qldc.govt.nz/mount-iron-recreation-reserve-management-plan/



MOUNT IRON

RESERVE MANAGEMENT PLAN – 2025 DRAFT ~~Sept 2024~~

Wānaka

QLDC

Note: Currently, QLDC does not have a mana whenua endorsed Te Reo name for Mount Iron

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	3
<hr/>	
2. Reserve Description	3
<hr/>	
3. Description of Primary Users and Activities	4
<hr/>	
4. Vision	7
<hr/>	
5. Objectives	
<hr/>	
6. Policies	8
6.1 Commercial Activities	8
6.2 Community Partnering, Guardianship & Volunteering	9
6.3 Community Events	10
6.4 Ecology	11
6.5 Landscape & Geology	12
6.6 Development, Infrastructure & Amenity	14
6.7 Recreation & Enjoyment	15
6.8 Natural Hazard Risks	17
<hr/>	
7. Appendix 1 – Mount Iron Reserve Map	18
<hr/>	

Other related documents:

Conservation Act 1987
Health and Safety Act 2015
Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998
Reserves Act 1977
Resource Management Act 1991
Te Runanga o Ngāi Tahu Act 1996
Te Tiriti o Waitangi
Wildlife Act 1953
QLDC Activity Controls to Manage Wildfire Risk within Reserves
[QLDC Activity in Public Places Bylaw](#)
QLDC Alcohol Bylaw
QLDC Art in Public Places Policy
[QLDC Climate and Biodiversity Plan](#)
QLDC Creativity, Culture and Heritage Strategy
QLDC Disability Policy
QLDC District Plan
QLDC Dog Bylaw
QLDC Event Enquiry Form
QLDC Events Strategy
QLDC Film Permit - for drone use
QLDC Open Spaces Strategy
QLDC Plaques, Memorials & Monuments Policy
QLDC Public Art Policy
QLDC Smoking Policy
QLDC Traffic and Parking Bylaw
QLDC Tree Policy
QLDC Wildfire Reserve Closure Plan
QLDC-NZTA Active Travel Strategy
DOC and QLDC Community / Volunteer Agreements (various)
DOC-QLDC Management Agreement 2024
FENZ 'Flammability of indigenous plant species' guide
Kāi Tahu ki Otago Natural Resource Management Plan 2005
Te Tangi a Tauira – The Cry of the People 2008

[PISA RAP1 MOUNT IRON - Survey Report for the Lindis/Pisa/Dunstan Ecological Districts - Protected Natural Areas Programme 19xx](#)
[Otago Geopreservation Inventory GNS see also \[www.naturemaps.nz\]\(http://www.naturemaps.nz\)](#)
[Significant Natural Area Assessment Mt Iron SNA E18H – Glenn Davis Nov 2011; Significant Natural Area Assessment Sheets for SNA E18C, 18D and 18D 2](#)
[Evaluation of a Proposed Significant Natural Area at Mt Iron, Wanaka Wildlands Contract Report No. 3762 March 2017](#)
[Ecological Assessment of Fence Construction Effects at Mt Iron Wanaka Wildlands Contract Report no. 6366 June 2022](#)
[Schedule 21.22.11 Mount Iron ONF Queenstown Lakes District Plan Ch. 21 Rural](#)

Other relevant parameters for management and decision making:

QLDC Delegations Register:

- Wanaka Upper Clutha Community Board (WUCCB)
- QLDC Full Council

Process for preparing a reserve management plan in accordance with the Reserves Act 1977:

24 May 2023 Board approved creating plan
25 Sep 2023 Notice invited suggestions for the plan
20 Nov 2023 Suggestions closed
[23 Sep 2024](#) Notice invited submissions on the draft plan
[29 Nov 2024](#) Submissions close
[10 Dec 2024](#) Hearing held *(if required)*
[TBC ~~xx~~ 27 Mar 2024](#) [Wanaka Upper Clutha Community](#) Board recommends adopting plan
[TBC ~~xx~~ 13 Apr 2024](#) Full Council adopts plan

Review:

Generally, reserve management plans should be reviewed at a minimum of 10-year intervals by Parks Officers. This does not necessarily require a rewrite.

1. INTRODUCTION

Reserve Management Plan Purpose

This Reserve Management Plan (RMP) provides a vision for how Mount Iron Reserve is experienced and valued, now and into the future.

Objectives and policies outline the use, maintenance, protection, preservation, and development of Mount Iron Reserve. These assist with all decision making. Their purpose is to support achieving the community's vision for the Reserve.

Mount Iron Reserve Formation

Mount Iron comprises multiple adjoining parcels of QLDC and DOC administered land, known as Mount Iron and Little Mount Iron, which in this document will be referred to as Mount Iron Reserve, or the Reserve, see **Appendix One**.

Mount Iron Recreation Reserve

Northern and western portions of Mount Iron and Little Mount Iron were purchased from private ownership to create a Recreation Reserve by Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) in May 2023.

Mount Iron Scenic Reserve (under application)

The eastern steep side of Mount Iron remains under Department of Conservation (DOC) administration. QLDC has applied to DOC to have the land vested to QLDC as Scenic Reserve to manage the landform in a unified, consistent and complete

manner. Based on a successful application, QLDC would take over management and the policies within this RMP would apply.

From 1 May 2024, until the time of vesting to QLDC, the DOC owned administered land is managed jointly under a DOC-QLDC Management Agreement 2024 (MA). The MA defines DOC as undertaking *statutory* obligations and QLDC as undertaking *operational* management.

Note: In principle, it is recommended in the first instance to seek guidance about all areas of Mount Iron Reserve from this RMP, or the QLDC Parks Department.

1.1 Primary Purpose

Recreation Reserve Primary Purpose

The primary purpose of the recreation reserve is to provide for recreation and physical welfare and enjoyment of the public, while protecting, restoring and enhancing the natural environment, cultural landscape and retaining open space.

Scenic Reserve Primary Purpose

The primary purpose of the scenic reserve is to protect and preserve scenic interest, beauty, natural features, and cultural landscape for the enjoyment of the public.

Note: the primary purpose is based on community input from the early engagement on suggestions for the plan.

2. RESERVE DESCRIPTION

Legal Description

Mount Iron Reserve is situated on a combined area of approximately 100 hectares, plus approximately 55 hectares of DOC land.

It comprises land legally described as:

- Section 3 SO 573783
- Lot 4 DP 471320

And DOC administered land (under application to transfer to QLDC):

- Lot 1 DP 302955
- Lot 2 DP 21892
- Section 40 Block IV Lower Wānaka SD
- Section 58 Block XIV Lower Wānaka SD
- Part Closed Road Block IV Lower Wānaka Survey District
- Section 56 Block IV Lower Wānaka SD

Mount Iron Reserve is zoned Rural and is an Outstanding Natural Feature (ONF) under the QLDC District Plan. It is bounded by State Highway 84 (SH84), State Highway 6 (SH6) and otherwise surrounded by Large Lot Residential and Lower Density Suburban Residential zoned land uses. Wānaka Town Centre and Three Parks Commercial zones are nearby, as well as Allenby Park Informal Recreation and several Community Purpose zones which include Wānaka Golf Course and the Wānaka Recreation Centre.

Access

Mount Iron Reserve is located within 2km of Wānaka's central business area and the Lake Wānaka ~~shorefront~~ lakefront. The proximity of these locations and surrounding residential areas to Mount Iron Reserve make it a popular site to experience open space, particularly *elevated* open space, from within an urban area.

Primary vehicle, cycle and pedestrian access is at various locations around the base of Mount Iron Reserve.

A shared path passes along the southern boundary from Anderson Road roundabout to Mount Iron Reserve SH6 car park, linking residential, commercial and recreation areas. It provides a safe off-road active travel route, especially for commuters and school students attending Mount Aspiring College.

There is a shared use track around the base of Mount Iron Reserve that links the SH6 car park to Old Racecourse Road, towards Albert Town. This also forms part of the Mount Iron 5km walking loop track.

Physical Characteristics & Landscape Significance

Mount Iron is an iconic and significant geological landmark in the Wānaka landscape and significant to mana whenua. Rising to 250m elevation (553m above sea level), it provides breathtaking 360° views of the surrounding mountains, flats and lakes.

Geologically, Mount Iron is a classic example of a ~~R~~roche ~~M~~moutonnée landform. It has been carved by glacial action flowing from north to south, which smoothed the north-western slopes of bedrock and left steep crags on the southern side.

There are wet features such as springs, seepage areas, a running stream at times on the north flank, wet areas on the saddle and a stream course running down to Hidden Hills.

Its classification as an ONF in the District Plan ~~is a means that its protection from inappropriate subdivision, use and development is a~~ –matter of national importance under the Resource Management Act 1991, and therefore has the highest level of landscape protection.

The portion of Mount Iron that is now Recreation Reserve was grazed by the Cleugh family. It was called Allenby Farms, which still operates on the north-west boundary of Mount Iron Recreation Reserve.

Little Mount Iron

Little Mount Iron is a smaller summit with views to the north, east and west, linked to Mount Iron by a saddle.

Kāi Tahu values

Significant values that have been identified by Kāi Tahu through the Spatial Plan and Development Plans for QLDC Reserves include:

Spatial Plan Values:

- Hauora Wellbeing - ensuring the four wellbeings are recognised in decisions.
- Aumangea Resilience - ensuring communities and visitors are resilient and adaptive to future shocks and climate change.
- Whakauku Sustainability - ensuring the use of sustainable development principles and zero emissions.

Development Plan Values:

- Ara Tawhito – acknowledging traditional trails and networks.
- Whakapapa – Recognising genealogy or Lineage.
- Manaakitaka - Acknowledging others and raising up of the mana of visitors.
- Whanaukataka – Supporting community and Whanau connections and relationships.

Note: Currently, QLDC does not have a mana whenua endorsed name to use for Mount Iron

Ecology

Due to its large open space and elevation, Mount Iron Reserve hosts a variety of indigenous species, including alpine and cushion plants, reptiles, and invertebrates.

It contains three Significant Natural Areas of kānuka dominant scrub, listed within the QLDC Proposed District Plan:

1. SNA E18C

2. SNA18D
3. SNA18D_2

Note: Currently, the SNAs do not continue into DOC land, as that land was considered already held for conservation purposes.

Indigenous species examples include:

- Blue tussock pātītī taranu *Poa colonsoi*
- Pillow pimelea *Pimelea scericeovillosa*
- Scented tree daisy *Olearia odorata*
- Kawarau gecko *Woodworthia 'Cromwell'*
- Noctuid moth *Meterana exquisita*
- NZ falcon kārearea
Falcon novaeseelandiae
- McCann's skink *Oligosoma maccanni*

Current main planting areas include:

- Indigenous species near the base of the southern slopes.
- Semi-mature and new deciduous and exotic trees along the shared path and SH84.
- Semi-mature indigenous and fruit trees near Allenby Place.

There are pest plants and animals, primarily found on the northern and western slopes. There is an active trapline to trap pest animals.

Pest species examples include:

- Douglas fir *Pseudotsuga mensiesii*
- Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*
- Mayten tree *Maytenus boaria*
- St Lucia cherry *Prunus mahaleb*
- possums

- rabbits
- rats
- stoats and ferrets

Recreation

Recreation has coexisted with conservation and farming for several decades, predominantly in the form of a publicly accessible 5km loop walking track to the Mount Iron summit (historically managed under an easement in favour of DOC). Other informal walking and running occurs on the Reserve.

and Informal biking trails tracks have been were previously allowed on Mount Iron by the land owner, but permission was subsequently withdrawn in the years prior to the land purchase by QLDC, used on the Reserve.

Horse trekking tours have previously operated from Mount Iron and Little Mount Iron to the Lake Wanaka outlet.

The reserve ~~has is~~ also ~~been~~ used for climbing, horse-riding, orienteering, paragliding, sheep dog trials, ~~and~~ informal recreational skiing or walking through snow, exploring and viewing flora and fauna, and quiet, tranquil, peaceful pursuits, such as contemplation and enjoying time in the outdoors. See more detail in Description of Primary Users and Activities, section 3.

Infrastructure & Services

Mount Iron Reserve contains structures, including:

- Bench seats

- Cell towers
- ~~Car parks~~
- Dog trials statue
- Environmental monitoring sensor
- ~~Farm-related fences and gates~~
- Parking
- Signage
- Wastewater pump station
- ~~Woolshed~~

Mount Iron Reserve contains services, including:

- Toilets and drinking water are available at the adjoining QLDC Allenby Place car park.
- ~~There is e~~Electricity to the environmental monitoring pole, wastewater pump station, woolshed and to the toilets.

There are several easements at the base of Mount Iron in favour of QLDC and other service providers to manage underground infrastructure.

3. DESCRIPTION OF PRIMARY USERS AND ACTIVITIES

Mount Iron Reserve, including both the previously farmed and the Public Conservation DOC land, have long been valued by mana whenua and for open space recreation and particularly the scenic views over the district.

The following descriptions are a general overview and not exhaustive.

Informal recreation

Mount Iron Reserve has a 5km walking loop to the summit that is regularly and frequently used by residents and visitors for casual recreation, including walking, exercising, dog exercising and enjoying views.

Existing managed and maintained—~~trails~~
~~include: tracks:~~

- Mount Iron ~~Trail Track~~ [easement portion]
- Mount Iron Loop ~~Trail Track~~ [5km]
- Hidden Hills ~~Trail Track~~
- Mount Iron – Albert Town Link ~~Trail Track~~
- Little Mount Iron ~~Trail Track~~

Mountain biking was allowed on Mount Iron in the past and there are informal trails on the north-west slopes of Mount Iron.

Horse riding was carried out on Little Mount Iron and the northern slopes of Mount Iron where there were fewer other users.

Paragliders use an established launch towards the western side of Mount Iron.

Rock climbers use five established climbing crags with multiple lines, ranging from beginner to advanced, near the Old Racecourse Road entrance to the Reserve.

Informal skiing has been carried out on Mount Iron Reserve and the ability to walk through snow is a valued experience.

Community / Volunteer Agreements

Several community and volunteer agreements are in place with DOC and with QLDC.

The Upper Clutha Wilding Tree Group have an agreement with QLDC for carrying out removal of some small wilding pines.

Wānaka Backyard Trapping set up a Mount Iron Trapping Group in 2019 on DOC land. Since 2023 they have expanded their trap lines across Mount Iron Reserve, including Little Mount Iron.

Wānaka Rock Climbing Club have an agreement with DOC for the climbing lines located on DOC land.

DOC Concessions & leases

The current limited number of active DOC concessions are under DOC's statutory management. Based on a successful future land transfer to QLDC, they would then be subject to Reserves Act and QLDC processes, which include leases, licenses, permits and community / volunteer agreements.

There is a St John's lease with DOC for the defibrillator located at the summit of Mount Iron currently on DOC land.

Events

In the past, there have been sheep dog trials and orienteering competitions.

4. VISION

The following vision is the community's overarching long-term outlook for Mount Iron Reserve:

Mount Iron Reserve is a revered Wānaka landmark where indigenous ecosystems thrive, providing natural outdoor recreation in the heart of an urban environment. It unites residents and visitors, bringing the community together to protect its recreation, scenic, cultural, ecological, and geological ~~and recreational~~ values.

5. OBJECTIVES

The following objectives are provided to manage the Reserve and support the vision. They are overarching goals; succinct statements on the principal aims of this RMP.

Objectives

- 5.1 To preserve and prioritise the natural, open and informal recreation and scenic experience of the Reserve.
- 5.2 To enable active and passive recreation use, access, and enjoyment of the Reserve.
- 5.3 To retain the Reserve as a an undeveloped large natural 'slice of the outdoors' within a busy town, providing respite from the surrounding urban area.
- 5.4 To protect and enhance the Reserve's unique, special, and significant ecological values, (including SNAs).
- 5.5 To acknowledge the distinctive Mount Iron geology and geomorphology, recognising it is an Outstanding Natural Feature (ONF), which makes it a key landmark at the gateway to Wānaka.
- 5.6 To retain and encourage the readily accessible connections to the Reserve.
- 5.7 To empower the community to participate in protection, preservation, and guardianship, to protect and enhance the Reserve.
- 5.8 To facilitate mana whenua participation to ensure Kāi Tahu whanui values are embedded in decision making in relation to the management of the reserve.
- 5.9 To provide for community non-profit events and ensure commercial activities and events that align with the primary purpose (section 1.1) of the Reserve.
- 5.10 To enable a mountain bike trail network within the Reserve.
- 5.11 To protect the Reserve from cumulative adverse effects of use and development.
- 5.12 To endeavor to provide a safe and resilient reserve.
- 5.13 To recognise the Reserve's heritage values.
- 5.14 To 'tell the story' of Mount Iron.

6. POLICIES

The following policies are the actions that support the objectives. They outline how to achieve the goals. They are clear, informed, inclusive and achievable.

6.1 Commercial Activities

Commercial activities may include any for-profit or non-charitable activity, event or other use, including recreation related activities.

Note: For community events see section 6.3

Note: Events (short-term or one-off) on reserve land require a QLDC Events Permit. Lodging a QLDC Events Enquiry Form starts this process.

Activities (longer duration, continuous or regular frequency) may require a lease or licence under the Reserves Act, which may also involve public notification.

Policies

- 6.1.1 ~~Assess commercial activity applications based on duration, frequency, scale, cumulative effects.~~
- 6.1.2 ~~Prohibit new commercial activity within the Reserve, except where required by policy 6.5.12.~~
- ~~6.1.26.1.3 Require activities and events to be organised in a manner that ensures ecological values, Kāi Tahu values and SNAs are protected, maintained or enhanced and public use of the reserve is not adversely affected.~~
- 6.1.3 Consider use of the Reserve for weddings and other private functions, sporting, art and cultural events or activities.
- 6.1.4 Consider overflow parking on the Reserve for events on the Reserve under circumstances that are temporary, specific, infrequent and when conditions allow, in limited areas.
- 6.1.5 Consider the use of temporary signage in conjunction with commercial activities, where it is also in accordance with the District Plan.

6.2 Community Partnering, Guardianship & Volunteering

Community may include a local incorporated society, schools, not-for-profit sports, Kāi Tahu whanui, small community business providers, art or cultural groups operating for charitable purposes.

Note: Definition from QLDC Community Services Fees and Charges Policy.

Policies

- 6.2.1 Encourage the community's active participation in planning, maintaining and enhancing the Reserve.
- 6.2.2 Enable community engagement and involvement in planting and caring for the ecological values of the Reserve.
- 6.2.3 Support establishment of a community guardianship group for the Reserve.
- 6.2.4 Support outdoor education on the Reserve, where it does not adversely affect public use of the Reserve.
- 6.2.5 Consider the use of temporary signage in conjunction with carrying out a community activity, where it is also in accordance with the District Plan.

6.3 Community Events

Community events refers to not-for-profit events, activities or gatherings for the community or organised by the community.

Note: For commercial events see section 6.1.

Note: Events (short-term or one off) on reserve land require a QLDC Events Permit whether commercial community related. Lodging a QLDC Events Enquiry Form starts this process.

Activities (longer duration, continuous or regular frequency) may require a lease or licence under the Reserves Act, which may also involve public notification.

Policies

- 6.3.1 Ensure community events align with the primary purpose (section 1.1) and objectives (section 5) of the Reserve.
- 6.3.2 Require mitigation of event effects to minimise disruption to, and displacement of, other users of the Reserve.
- 6.3.3 Require activities and events to be organised in a manner that ensures ecological values, Kāi Tahu values and SNAs are protected, maintained or enhanced.
- 6.3.4 Consider the use of the Reserve for community, cultural, sporting and recreational activities and events.
- 6.3.5 Assess community event applications based on duration, frequency, scale and cumulative effects.
- 6.3.6 Consider temporary overflow parking on the Reserve for community events in limited areas on the Reserve under circumstances that are temporary, specific, infrequent and when conditions allow, in limited areas.
- 6.3.7 Consider the use of temporary signage in conjunction with community events, where it is also in accordance with the District Plan.

6.4 Ecology

Ecology refers to [thriving indigenous ecosystems of indigenous](#) living organisms ~~and in~~ their physical environment.

Policies

- 6.4.1 Encourage the community to work in partnership with council to restore and enhance ecological values and manage pest species.
- 6.4.2 Ensure planting, and other activities, do not have adverse effects on the SNA and Kāi Tahu values.
- 6.4.3 Encourage and support regenerative practices.
- 6.4.4 Control pest plant and animal species.
- 6.4.5 Protect habitat for indigenous animals including lizards, moths and other invertebrates.
- 6.4.6 Protect and enhance waterways within the Reserve.
- 6.4.7 Identify and protect view shafts when planting areas near view points.
- [6.4.8 Require ecological assessments prior to development or planting when appropriate, which will be in most instances.](#)
- ~~6.4.8~~[6.4.9](#) Ensure planting avoids high and moderately high flammability species, where it is outside the SNAs and close to residential areas.

Note: Fire and Emergency New Zealand provides a 'Flammability of indigenous plant species' guide.

6.5 Development, Infrastructure & Amenity

Infrastructure refers to development such as buildings, ~~car~~parking, fences, signage and services.

Amenity refers to items or services that help to provide comfort, convenience and enjoyment of the Reserve. This may refer to planting, landscaping or recreation improvements.

Policies

Access

- 6.5.1 Maintain the convenience of accessing the Reserve from the adjoining urban areas.
- 6.5.2 Provide paths and recreation infrastructure close to arrival areas that cater to people with limited mobility.
- 6.5.3 ~~Identify and encourage~~ Identify and establishment of a main arrival area for visitors and secondary arrival areas and nodes.
- 6.5.4 Provide strong connections to active transport and public transport networks to reduce the need for ~~car~~ parking.
- 6.5.5 Allow ~~car~~ parking only for use and enjoyment of reserve.
- 6.5.6 Limit ~~car~~ parking to main and secondary arrival areas, and treat stormwater runoff in line with the Land Development and Subdivision Code of Practice.
- 6.5.7 Support the gateway experience into Wānaka, such as by minimising or screening ~~car~~ parking areas.
- 6.5.8 Allow for the establishment of regional trailheads and promotion, if appropriate.

- 6.5.9 Allow for campervan specific ~~car~~parking spaces to improve safety of car parks where there is space.
- 6.5.10 Allow for bus specific parking spaces where there is space if needed.
- 6.5.11 Maintain established informal vehicle access farm ~~trail~~tracks for emergency service response and maintenance of the Reserve.

Public Services/Utilities

- 6.5.12 Discourage new commercial and public infrastructure, such as cell towers, transformers and underground infrastructure unless ~~critical~~ there is significant benefit to public health and safety, and when all other options have been considered and found unsuitable.
- 6.5.13 Consider amenity lighting only where necessary at the base of the Reserve.
- 6.5.14 Consider temporary and permanent ~~accessible~~ public toilets, shelters and storage where necessary at the base of the Reserve to meet the needs of Reserve users.

Fencing, Routing & Signage

- 6.5.15 Allow for removal of unnecessary fences, gates and signage.
- 6.5.16 Allow for signage on the Reserve to identify the Reserve, facilities, interpretive information, ~~and wayfinding~~ and natural hazard risks, such as fire.
- 6.5.17 Establish environmental and cultural interpretive signage and seek opportunities to partner with mana whenua to do so.
- 6.5.18 Allow structures or signage only where they enhance the ecological, educational, landscape and recreation experience of the Reserve.
- 6.5.19 Allow pest control fencing for strategic pest control where it aligns with the primary purpose (see section 1.1) of the Reserve.

Amenity Planting

- 6.5.20 Establish amenity trees to provide shelter and shade where appropriate, such as along shared active travel paths and ~~for car~~ parkings. This may include appropriate indigenous or exotic planting.

Heritage

- 6.5.21 Consider opportunity for adaptive reuse of woolshed building, prioritising community, education and recreation uses ~~over commercial ones~~.

Kāi Tahu Values

- 6.5.22 ~~Consider~~ Allow sculptures, Kai Tahu cultural representation, interpretation and expression, such as sculptures and art, where it is relevant to the Reserve and where it sits within its landscape context.

Note: QLDC Plaques and Memorials Policy applies to all QLDC land including Mount Iron Reserve. Due to the significance and visibility of Mount Iron to many people the application process will be subject to elevated requirements. (These elevated requirements are under review through the QLDC Plaques and Memorials Policy review).

6.6 Landscape & Geology

Landscape and Geology refers to the natural landform and all its features and natural processes over time and currently. This includes landscape character, ephemeral, physical, visible and non-visible elements and cultural landscape. Also refers to geomorphology and other earth-related disciplines.

Policies

- 6.6.1 Promote the significance of Mount Iron as an example of a roche moutonnée (sheep back) landform.
- 6.6.2 Locate and construct ~~tracks and~~ trails in a manner to avoid adverse effects on the landform and cultural landscape.
- 6.6.3 Maintain and enhance the landscape values of the ONF and the cultural values identified by Kāi Tahu in the District Plan.

6.7 Recreation & Enjoyment

Recreation refers to activities carried out for enjoyment.

Active recreation refers to organised, formal uses, such as activities that require gear/kit/tools or specific-use facilities, such as courts, fields and spaces.

Passive recreation refers to informal uses that require none, or limited, supporting infrastructure.

Policies

~~Tracks & Trails~~

6.7.1 Maintain and upgrade the current walking trails ~~network~~ for the continued use and enjoyment of the Reserve by the community and visitors as a natural walking trail.

~~——— Allow for Enable the implementation of a sustainable, new well designed walking, biking and active commuter trails network within the Reserve that meets the needs of a range of trail users and skill levels, provides a legible track system and considers , , ongoing maintenance and safety requirements, including separated w~~

~~6.7.2~~ Ensure trail design considers effects on other reserve stakeholders and users, Kai Tahu values, and ongoing maintenance and safety requirements.

~~6.7.26.7.3~~ Provide for separated wWalking and biking trails, unless shared use is deemed appropriate and safe in some areas.

~~6.7.36.7.4~~ Ensure the impact of any trail planning, building and maintenance in the SNAs is appropriately assessed and mitigated, and leads to enhancement in the SNA.

~~6.7.46.7.5~~ Encourage viewing areas within new trail development.

~~6.7.5~~ ~~Require~~ Consider suitably qualified peer review of proposed trail development if appropriate.

6.7.6 Maintain ~~trails~~ tracks to provide a natural experience.

6.7.7 Actively discourage unauthorised trail building and use.

6.7.8 Remove and rehabilitate unauthorised ~~tracks and~~ trails.

6.7.9 ~~Create arrival area nodes for activity specific areas.~~

~~6.7.10~~ Ensure trail planning, building and maintenance ~~avoids areas identified by Kai Tahu whanui as having cultural value~~ identifies and considers Kai Tahu values.

~~6.7.116.7.10~~ Allow ~~formalized~~ urban-grade trails only around the base of the Reserve.

~~6.7.126.7.11~~ Prohibit motorised and throttle-only bikes, including E-moto bikes, other than approved mobility devices, where they assist people with disabilities.

Note: e-bikes or 'power assisted cycles' are defined by Waka Kotahi | NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) as, "a power assisted cycle that has an auxiliary electric motor with a maximum power output not exceeding 300W and is designed to be primarily

propelled by the muscular energy of the rider”.

Other Recreation

~~6.7.13~~6.7.12 Enable active and passive open space recreation in defined areas for access, use and enjoyment of the Reserve.

~~6.7.14~~6.7.13 Consider new recreation opportunities where they do not conflict with existing uses and are consistent with the character of the Reserve.

~~6.7.15~~6.7.14 Facilitate reasonable access to as many areas of the Reserve as possible for persons with restricted mobility, balanced with maintaining and enhancing the naturalness and values of the Reserve and the cultural values identified by Kāi Tahu.

~~6.7.16~~6.7.15 Support the use and extension of the existing and future climbing crags within appropriate areas, mitigating risk for other users of the Reserve.

~~6.7.17~~6.7.16 Support the use and improvement of the existing paraglider launch.

~~6.7.18~~6.7.17 ~~Consider~~ Support the use of the Reserve for non-motorised recreational paraglider and parapent takeoff and landings.

~~6.7.19~~6.7.18 Prohibit a formal playground. However, can allow for some informal or temporary nature play.

~~6.7.20~~6.7.19 Prohibit the operation and take off/landing of UAV/Drones and model aircraft on, or from, the Reserve, unless otherwise specifically enabled by relevant Council policies and permissions.

~~6.7.21~~6.7.20 Consider helicopter landings for emergency, civil defence or park management purposes only.

~~6.7.22~~6.7.21 Support an efficient planning framework by updating the district plan zone to Open Space & Recreation, with sub zone informal recreation and, or nature conservation.

6.8 Natural Hazard Risks

Policies

Natural hazard risks on Mount Iron Reserve include fall from heights, rock fall and wildfire.

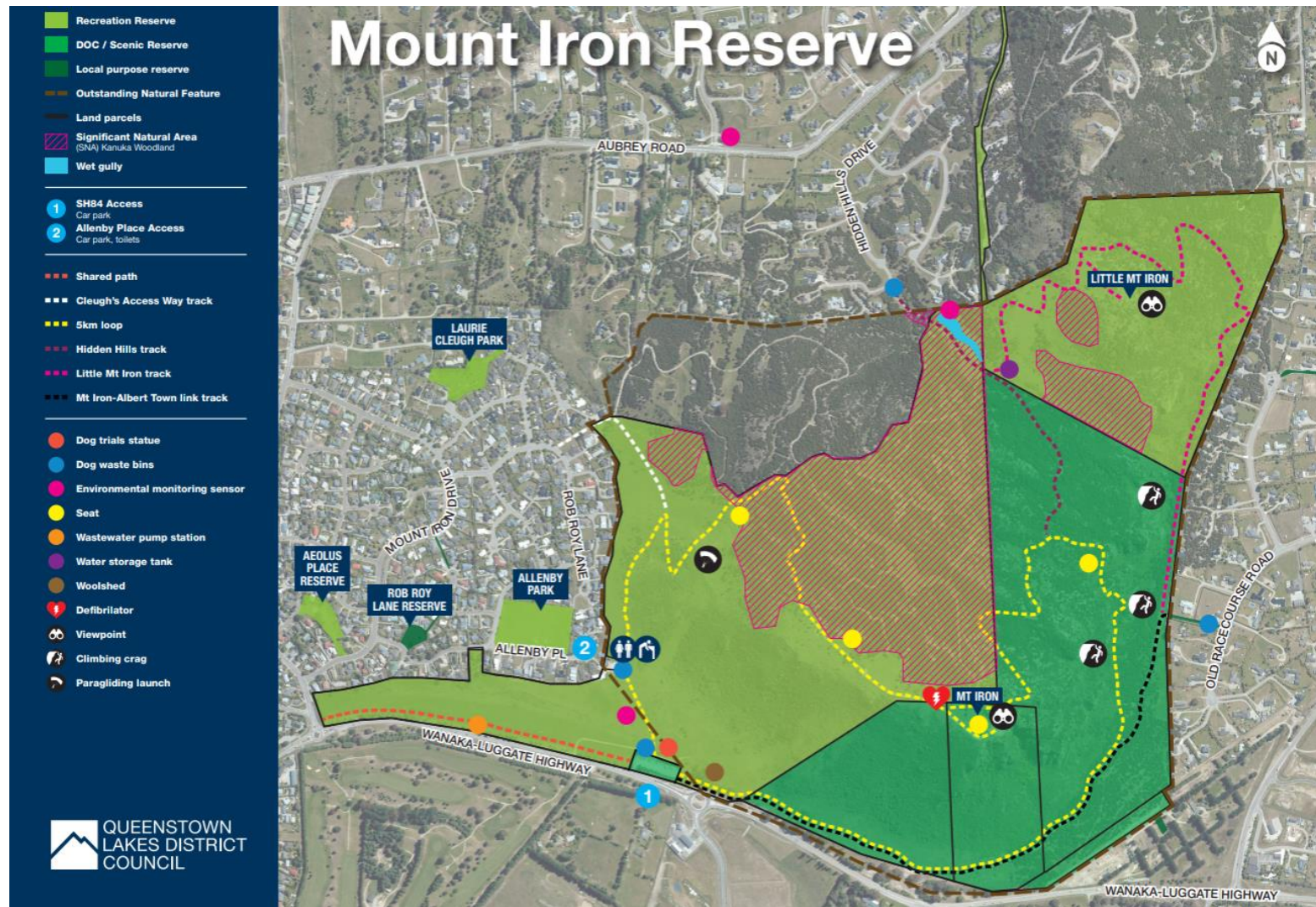
Risks to people, property and the environment can be exacerbated by human actions.

Individuals are responsible for looking after their own welfare and use reserves at their own risk.

[Hazard risk mitigation aims to be consistent with regional and central government].

- 6.8.1 Actively implement and regularly review the QLDC 'Activity controls to manage wildfire risk within reserves'.
- 6.8.2 Allow for reserve closures to mitigate risk for reserve users.
- 6.8.3 Identify risks when QLDC becomes aware of them and mitigate them in a non-invasive way and communicate them to Reserve users.
- 6.8.4 Encourage resilience to withstand and recover in a timely and efficient manner from adverse conditions.
- 6.8.5 Mitigate risk to, and from, organised events.
- 6.8.6 Mitigate hazard risks, such as rock fall and fall from heights, in a minimal and visually sensitive way to protect the landform and landscape.

APPENDIX ONE – MOUNT IRON RESERVE MAP



Mount Iron Reserve – Access, land parcels, services, structures, trails and view points. (Map updated to retain access points 1 and 2 as they are the main access points with parking and proximity to services, removed all other access points from map and key. Confirmed rock climbing locations, they are retained as per draft).

Minutes of a hearing of submissions to the (draft) Mount Iron Reserve Management Plan held in the Armstrong Room, Lake Wānaka Centre, Wānaka on Tuesday 10 December 2024 commencing at 10.00am

Present:

Councillor Lyal Cocks (Chairperson), Councillor Barry Bruce and Mr Chris Hadfield.

In attendance:

Ms Christine Skipworth (Parks and Reserves Planner), Ms Kat Banyard (Senior Parks Advisor), Mr Dom Harrison (Parks and Reserves Planner), Ms Jane Robertson (Senior Democracy Services Advisor), Mr Jon Winterbottom (Democracy Services Team Leader), Ms Sophie Millar (Democracy Services Advisor), Mr Matthew Hulscher (Democracy Services Advisor), two members of the media and members of the public as detailed below.

Election of Chair

It was moved (Councillor Bruce/Mr Hadfield):

That the hearing panel agree to appoint Councillor Cocks to chair the hearing.

Motion carried unanimously.

Declarations of Conflict of Interest

No declarations were made.

Confirmation of Agenda

It was moved (Councillor Cocks/Councillor Bruce):

That the agenda be confirmed without addition or alteration.

Motion carried unanimously.

Summary by Reporting Officer

Ms Skipworth spoke to the officer report on the submissions, and it was noted that:

- Consultation had shown strong engagement, demonstrating that Mount Iron (Mt Iron) was greatly valued by the community.
- Submissions showed strong support for ecological enhancement and pest control and general support for the vision, objectives and community participation.

- The main areas where submissions showed widely diverging views were (a) biking, (b) the extent of commercial and community activity on Mt Iron and (c) access points.
- A small number of submissions were out of scope and raised operational matters that staff would pursue.

Hearing of submissions

1. Mark Buckingham

Mr and Mrs Buckingham lived adjacent to Little Mt Iron and were opposed to mountain biking on Mt Iron because bikers used their private accessway (driveway) to access the reserve. Mr Buckingham felt that mountain biking had taken priority over all other activities on Mt Iron but ironically this was contrary to Mt Iron's highly valued characteristics of an unmodified landscape with high aesthetic attributes. Bike tracks left scars on the landscape and the tracks would need to be closed in periods of high rainfall.

More tracks were needed for people with restricted mobility as they did not currently have easy access to these sorts of facilities and cyclists already had Sticky Forest to use. It was immaterial that Bike Wānaka had made a commitment to build and maintain bike tracks on Mt Iron at no cost to the ratepayer because it was not appropriate to prioritise the needs of one small user group over others.

2. Karen Buckingham

Mrs Buckingham was also opposed to her and her husband's residential driveway being used as an access to Mt Iron. She asked for 'Access point 9 Mt Iron Heights' to be removed from the Mt Iron Reserve Management Plan (RMP) map as an access way to Mt Iron because their private driveway had become a downhill racecourse. 800m of their driveway was steep and narrow with insufficient room over much of its length for two vehicles to pass. Further, in the area were 10 residential properties of which five were visitor accommodation and there was therefore a high likelihood of meeting other traffic. It was unsafe to permit access on such a dangerous access way.

Bike Wānaka had encouraged its members to make submissions and had prepared a form submission for members to use. However, she considered that this access point was a private driveway for residents and their visitors only.

She noted that wildfire on Mt Iron was a huge concern and more visitors accessing Mt Iron via multiple access points increased the risk of fire danger. There were already plenty of other access points available, meaning that this particular access was not necessary.

She supported the objective in the draft RMP to protect the biodiversity of the reserve and she was keen for a full study to be undertaken to determine the values and species to be protected.

3. Ian Graves, Bike Wānaka

Bike Wānaka had more than a thousand members and many had made submissions and had asked for him to speak as their representative. Generally, Bike Wānaka was in support of the RMP and there was overwhelming support amongst members to reinvigorate

mountain biking on Mt Iron. Residential development was planned for Sticky Forest meaning that it would eventually be lost as an area for mountain biking. High ecological values and mountain biking did not need to be mutually exclusive and although Bike Wānaka wanted to reestablish biking on Mt Iron, it also wanted to ensure that sensitive areas were acknowledged and that cycling tracks remained separate from walking tracks.

Mountain biking was an appropriate activity on Mt Iron as the purpose of a recreation reserve was to provide an area for recreation and sporting activities as well as protecting the natural countryside. The Reserves Act 1977 clearly placed an emphasis on activities on reserves, tracks especially.

It was an exaggeration to describe what Bike Wānaka wanted to establish on Mt Iron as a 'bike park', as the group just wanted to re-establish some trails. They would develop trails sensitively and would have to obtain resource consent for which an ecologist had already been engaged.

4. Edwin Sheppard, Wānaka Climbing Club

Mr Sheppard noted that climbers were the second largest user group on Mt Iron after walkers and climbing had been happening on Mt Iron for several decades. In the Upper Clutha area there were limited opportunities to access good quality cliffs and an area as good and as safe as Mt Iron was rare.

The club supported policies in the RMP around community guardianship and was already involved in work on the reserve to manage the climbing areas. The group had an exemplary safety history but sought some minor changes to the RMP to ensure climbing was not limited, including 'existing and future climbing' and also an assurance that walking tracks would be separated from climbing.

5. Tom Anderson, Spark and Connexa (Telecommunications providers)

The telecommunications industry sought consistency between the RMP and the District Plan to ensure that there was future provision for communications infrastructure to be developed on Mt Iron. An elevated position (such as on Mt Iron) was strategically a good location for telecommunications infrastructure.

6. Jill Gardner

Ms Gardener considered there were plenty of bike trails elsewhere in the Upper Clutha and she felt that Mt Iron should be kept for walkers only. She was prepared to accept one bike trail, but not a network of trails because this would impact negatively on the beauty and serenity of Mt Iron. She was also concerned about the proximity of bike trails to walking trails because of bicycles' speed. 380 people supporting a bike trail did not (in her view) represent 'overwhelming support' and she considered that developing bike trails on Mt Iron would be its ruination and ultimately cost ratepayers.

Use of the walking tracks on Mt Iron by those with mobility challenges would require the tracks to be changed and many were too steep to be attempted by those with limited mobility.

7. Guy Steven

Mr Steven advised that he was an athlete who used Mt Iron regularly to exercise, sometimes training as much as three times daily. He did find using the same trail day after day a little boring and he welcomed the opportunity of using more parts of Mt Iron. Notwithstanding this, he felt that establishing mountain bike tracks should not be an overarching goal of the RMP and all users should be treated equally. The inclusion of more trails was also inconsistent with protecting Mt Iron's ecological values and he felt that the RMP was inclined in favour of mountain bikers. He suggested that policy 6.7.1. *Maintain and upgrade the walking network* should be amended to 'extend', noting that the Upper Clutha Tracks Trust had only suggested one additional trail on Mt Iron.

Numerous mountain bikers would also be noisy (as occurred at present at Sticky Forest) and was contrary to the qualities of peace and quiet that many valued on Mt Iron. He also recommended removing 5.2 *To enable active and passive recreation use, access, and enjoyment of the Reserve* as the only way of managing biking and walking trails in the same area was for them to be completely separate.

The meeting adjourned at 11.07am and reconvened at 11.16am.

8. Arne Cleland, Upper Clutha Wilding Tree Group

The project to remove wilding pines from Mt Iron was almost complete but was only part of the job because the group was concerned about all wilding species, many of which were in the scenic reserve. He was keen to see wilding species removed to enable natural regeneration to continue. This work was not a quick fix and would take many years to achieve but without an active programme to remove wilding species, all of Mt Iron would eventually be covered with wildings. The group also supported adding to the RMP an appropriate revegetation programme.

9. Pete Jamieson

Mr Jamieson noted that his home was also close to the legal access and he did not support adding mountain bikes into the mix as they travelled downhill faster than cars. Mt Iron attracted about 180,000 walkers every year so there needed to be parking available for which a traffic management plan could be put in place.

If the panel did not agree to stop access via 'Access 9 Mt Iron Heights', the Council would have to upgrade the road and put retaining walls in which would have cost implications. It was noted that there had always been access from this location but it should not be advertised as being public.

10. Ben Thomson

Mr Thomson advised that he was an active mountain biker and a member of Bike Wānaka but the views expressed in his submission were his own. He believed that the Upper Clutha was not well served by good quality bike trails that catered for a wide range of abilities. Although Sticky Forest was currently available, it would eventually be lost as an area for biking and he was concerned about illegal trails being built by non-riders. Generally, local riders were more skilful because of their particular demographic but they needed somewhere to go and he supported developing bike trails on Mt Iron. He was not opposed to shared use trails and did not agree that it would cause issues with parking.

Councillor Cocks asked how practical it was to separate walkers and bikers in a limited area. Mr Thomson noted that over the district there were multiple examples of where these parties operated in harmony.

11. Andrew Bartholomew

Mr Bartholomew expressed support for objective 5.3 *retain the reserve as an undeveloped slice of the outdoors* and noted that if this objective was adopted then it made sense not to allow too much extra activity in an unencumbered space. The draft RMP suggested events and increased car parking but there were plenty of other places where commercial events could take place so Mt Iron did not need to be a location.

Mr Bartholomew questioned policy 6.5.1 *Maintain the convenience of accessing the Reserve from the adjoining urban areas* and asked whether this meant parking for buses or campervans, both of which were large vehicles. He was a resident of Hidden Hills and it was a quiet residential area that was well connected by footpaths and cycleways but there were no formed parking spaces.

He had walked up Mt Iron the previous day and had asked walkers if they were concerned about their personal safety whilst walking there. He noted that there was no signage in place warning of potential wildfire as would occur in California and Australia. He believed there should be a risk website as the current notices about fire were feeble. Signage needed to be much larger, contain words and images and ban any fire related issues such as smoking or barbeques.

12. Becky McCormack and Andrew (son), Te Kakano

They were generally supportive of the RMP and excited about the new planting opportunities suggested in it. Ms McCormack suggested that the RMP needed to reinforce the importance of people volunteering to work on reserves. A lot more planting could be undertaken as a community event which helped the community to care for its environment. If someone planted a tree, they were more invested in looking after the planting and in this way, caring for nature would help with socialising the plan.

13. Anne Steven, Central Otago Lakes Branch Forest and Bird

Trapping predators and weed control were a priority as this helped to protect Mt Iron's biodiversity. Most of the area was identified as a regional area in need of protection. Ms Steven highlighted four rare native plant species at the top of Mt Iron that only grew in spring. Thirteen types of plants were at risk and the diversity of species on Mt Iron was declining. She suggested that the RMP be connected to the Otago Biodiversity Plan.

14. Meg Taylor

Ms Taylor stated she was divided about giving mountain bikers access to Mt Iron as it was a small piece of wilderness that she felt should be kept for walkers. She asked the panel to press pause on developing bike trails but supported installing new seats and signage.

15. John Wellington Upper Clutha Tracks Trust

Mr Wellington praised officers for a well drafted RMP that sought to meet competing uses and desires. He believed that the newly enlarged area of Mt Iron could balance existing

uses alongside new activities, including the careful addition of some new walking tracks. However, he was a little hesitant about shared pathways, noting that there was increasing conflict between walkers and cyclists on the cycling route between Cromwell and Wānaka and on this trail in particular, he favoured separating walkers and cyclists because of bad sight lines.

16. Amanda McHolm

Ms McHolm felt that Mt Iron should be a place of peace and she had used it for meditation. She considered it a sacred place of learning and had sought more information about its te reo name with mana whenua. Whilst she could understand the desire to build mountain bike tracks, she favoured keeping the space clear for the mental and physical health benefits it provided.

17. Andrew Tomes, Chair, Hidden Hills Community Association

Mr Tomes stated that he both supported and opposed aspects of the RMP. He supported recreational use of Mt Iron Reserve but he was also opposed because the RMP failed to address adequately the risk of wildfire. The area already had an extreme fire risk and increasing the number of visitors served to double the risk. Further, the area would be difficult to access by ordinary fire appliances so any fire would have to be fought by helicopters which would take time to arrive. There were no fire mitigation strategies contained in the draft RMP such as improved signage, establishment of fire breaks, green belts or clearings around vegetation. In his view, such information should be embedded in the RMP.

He believed that pest control objectives and policies needed to be stronger as there were already lots of rabbits in the area and there needed to be realistic levels of population control. He suggested introducing rabbit proof fences.

He considered that the RMP made too much provision for commercial activities which contradicted some of the stated goals in the RMP. If commercial activities were allowed at all, they should not detract from Mt Iron's natural features. He suggested they should only be allowed at the base of the reserve on the southern side and events with food or alcohol should not be permitted.

The meeting adjourned at 1.05pm and reconvened at 1.35pm.

18. Ewan Mackie

Mr Mackie supported establishing a small bike trail on Mt Iron, noting that many submissions had supported this. He was a keen walker, biker, climber and environmentalist and he wanted the RMP to reflect fully the views of the community. Too often the community was in conflict but enjoyment of being in nature helped to bring people together. Bike trails need not be ecologically damaging and could be low impact and visually sympathetic to the landscape. He believed that the community would like to see ecological improvement of the reserve and he was excited at the creation of a great community space. He had not observed such a level of community engagement previously.

19. Doug Patterson, Southern Hang-Gliding

Mr Patterson showed a hang-gliding safety plan that he wanted to develop. Mt Iron was a popular site for hang-gliding when sufficiently windy although drones were always a potential issue and the reserve area was near the flight path of Wānaka Airport.

The hearing of submissions concluded at 1.55pm.

Initial deliberations

A question was raised about legality of access from 'Access 9 Mt Iron Heights' (as it was not a public road). A suggestion was made to add signage at permitted access points so that people did not try to gain access from non-permitted areas.

The meeting adjourned at 2.05pm.

Minutes of deliberations on submissions to the (draft) Mount Iron Reserve Management Plan held in the Armstrong Room, Lake Wānaka Centre, Wānaka on Wednesday 11 December 2024 commencing at 9.00am

Present: Councillor Lyal Cocks (Chair), Councillor Barry Bruce and Mr Chris Hadfield.

In attendance: Mr Simon Telfer (Chair, Wanaka-Upper Clutha Community Board), Ms Christine Skipworth (Parks and Reserves Planner), Ms Kat Banyard (Senior Parks Advisor), Mr Dave Winterburn (Parks Manager), Ms Jane Robertson (Senior Democracy Services Advisor); one member of the media and no members of the public.

Deliberations

Initial comments from the panel:

The panel asked officers to follow up on the following questions:

- Clarify with Aukaha and TAMI what 'cultural landscape' means;
- Clarify what is meant by 'primary purpose' and ensure that it is different from definition contained in the Reserves Act 1977;
- Is the word '**informal**' needed in the following phrase: "*informal walking and biking tracks*";
- Officers to try to edit out the frequent use of the words 'natural/nature';
- Officers to clarify meaning of *geomorphology*;
- The panel noted that many submitters supported objective 5.3: *'To empower the community to participate in protection, preservation, and guardianship, to protect and enhance the Reserve'*;
- Officers to explore use of '*commercial*' in objective 5.4 : *'To provide for community non-profit events and ensure commercial activities and events align with the primary purpose (section 1.1) of the Reserve'*;
- The Panel noted the many comments about safety in submissions (especially fire).

Discussion of policies

- 6.1 Commercial Activities: There was discussion about the implications of not permitting commercial activities and note that 6.1.4 allows for overflow parking to be considered on the reserve for '*temporary*' or '*infrequent*' events;
- 6.4 Ecology: The panel suggested that officers add 'biodiversity';

- Discussion about pest plants and animals, with the panel agreeing that Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) and the local community could not be solely responsible for rabbit control;
- Pest plants: Ensure that the plan makes it clear that pest plants will be removed before new plantings take place;
- The panel asked officers to review the many suggestions about biodiversity contained in the Forest and Bird Society submission and consider adding them;
- 6.5.12: Discussion about whether the panel should accept the Connexa submission and agree to add 'public service utilities'. Members questioned whether '*discourage*' was a sufficiently strong word but noted that the policy contained a high threshold requiring it to be '*critical for public health and safety*' and implemented only when '*all other options have been considered and found unsuitable*';
- 6.5.12: There is reference to '*commercial and public infrastructure*' but officers need to clarify what is meant by the term '*commercial infrastructure*';
- 6.5.14: The panel considered whether accessible toilets needed to be added, noting that a number of submissions had commented on ensuring enabling and encouraging disabled access to Mt Iron Reserve;
- 6.5.3: Access Point 9 is not a good access point and not suitable for vehicles although it would be fine for walking access. Officers noted that policy 6.5.3 promoted establishing a main arrival area and would try to discourage anyone using Access Point 9;
- 6.7.1: Tracks and Trails – The panel discussed the addition of 'extend' to the following phrase: *Maintain, upgrade and extend the current walking trail network* (that is, more trails). Members agreed that mountain biking would have to be addressed at some point but did not support describing any biking tracks as a 'park' or 'network'. The panel agreed that walking trails and biking trails should be kept separate in principle. Suggested text: '*Provide for well designed for biking, walking and commuting trails that meet the needs of users, ensuring that walkers are separate from cyclists, unless shared use is deemed appropriate*';
- 6.7.4: Officers to check for a consistent use of the words 'trails' and 'tracks' throughout the RMP;
- 6.7.2: There was discussion about the need for trails need to be peer reviewed if they were well-constructed;
- 6.7.22: Officers were asked to redraft this policy as it was unclear what it was seeking to achieve.

General comments and questions

- Officers to check that the content runs in a logical order;
- Officers to consider whether 'mountain biking' should be added as a specific activity; whether 'and future' climbing crags should be added and whether the 'Natural Hazards' section was strong enough;
- The panel discussed whether specific cycling trails could be added in certain areas of the reserve. It was agreed that if added, these should be contained in an appendix as this would avoid having to change the RMP to accommodate any updates;
- Officers to elevate 'serenity' and 'tranquillity' comments;
- Officers to add a policy re stakeholders;
- Officers to bolster the requirements for ecology assessments;
- RMP will identify a main arrival area to the reserve.

It was moved (Councillor Cocks/Councillor Bruce):

That the hearing panel:

- 1. Note the contents of this report;**
- 2. Receive all submissions to the draft Mount Iron Reserve Management Plan, hears the submitters who wish to be heard; and**
- 3. Recommend to Wānaka-Upper Clutha Community Board the final form of the Draft Mount Iron Reserve Management Plan to be adopted, with changes as an outcome of the consultation process subject to agreement on the final form of the Reserve Management Plan by the hearing panel.**

Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting closed at 11.23am.