

QLDC STATEMENT FOR HEARING – 26 August 2025

Before the Fast-Track Approvals Panel

In the Matter of: Mount Iron Junction Housing Scheme (FTAA-2602-1173)

Topic: Active Transport, Pedestrian, and Cycle Linkages

For QLDC: Jeff Fuller, Senior Planner, QLDC

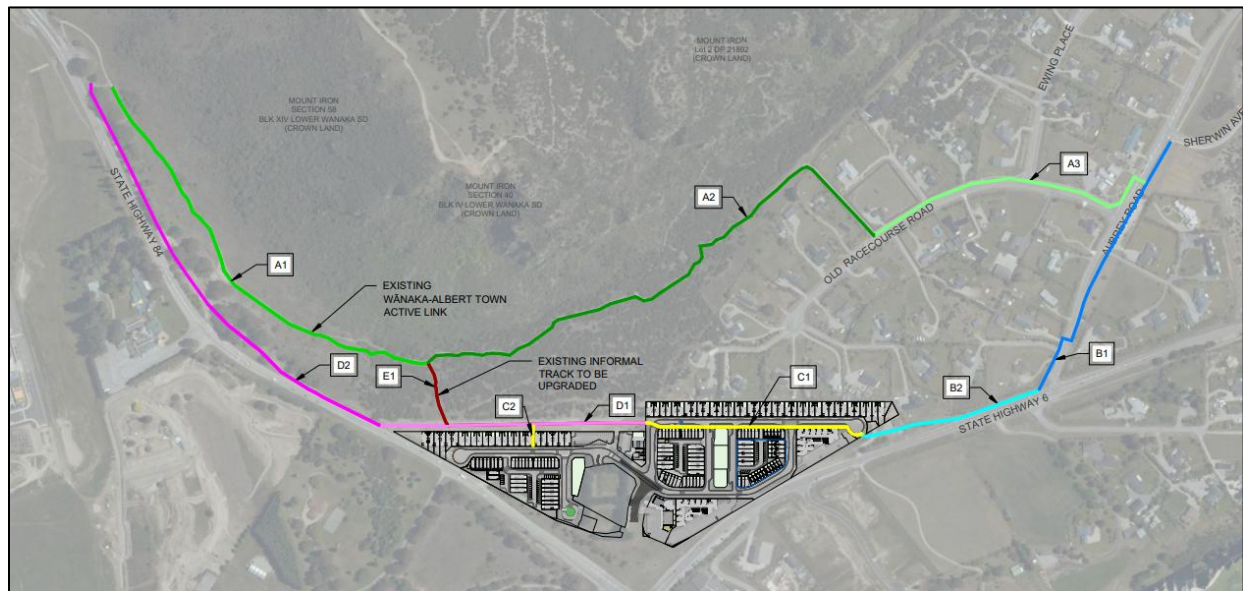


Figure 1: Active Transport Links Plan

1. Introduction

Good afternoon Panel members, my name is Jeff Fuller, and I am a senior planner at Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC). I have been closely involved with preparing our formal comments through the Section 53 process in response to this fast-track application, and I have served as the Council representative within communications between the applicant; Mount Iron Junction Limited (MIJ), and QLDC post-submission of their substantive application.

I am here today to respond directly to the matters raised by the Panel regarding the active travel links for the development. I am supported today by our independent technical expert, Mr Chris Rossiter, and key members of the QLDC team — Ms Monique Barnes, Senior Engineer, and Mr Dom Harrison, Parks and Reserves Planner, both from the Property and Infrastructure team — who will be available to advise and assist with any detailed technical questions, as they authored the technical reports attached to QLDC's Section 53 comments.

2. Matter (a) Provision and funding of all-weather linkages

To provide context, the proposed Mount Iron Junction development represents a substantial increase in development intensity compared with previously approved consents, introducing approximately 250 residential units. This level of development will generate an immediate and significant demand for safe and effective active transport infrastructure.

QLDC is encouraged that, in its memorandum dated 14 August, the applicant has offered to fund and construct Sections D1, D2, C1, C2 and E1 of the proposed path network (identified in pink, red and yellow on the applicant's plan). Upon completion, ownership of these paths will vest with QLDC, which will assume responsibility for their ongoing maintenance. This funding and delivery approach is supported by both QLDC and NZTA.

However, QLDC remains concerned that several critical components of the proposed active travel network do not yet achieve the outcomes necessary to effectively facilitate and encourage a meaningful shift away from private vehicle use. To support the desired mode shift and help mitigate increasing congestion at the adjoining roundabout, which I understand is also a matter before this hearing, QLDC considers that a safe, all-weather, commuter-grade active travel network is required.

The need for this is generated by the development itself, creating a significant volume of infill residential development, as well as commercial, outside of the urban zone and disconnected from appropriate pedestrian infrastructure.

The principal matters on which QLDC and the applicant remain in disagreement concerning the provision of all-weather linkages are:

- path widths,
- lighting, or
- additional connectivity to the north and east of the site via B1 and B2 (shown in blue) which should be provided and funded by the applicant.

We note that active travel paths extending across both SH84 and SH6 frontages are also sought by QLDC, despite the Panel's indications on those matters to date (Minute 7, at [10]).

As part of this response, we have provided a revised set of conditions for the panel to consider at the bottom of this statement.

For reference our previous comments on why the paths are needed:

"Overall, the development site has poor connection to the existing wider pedestrian network with the only connection being via the Mt Iron Track which is not suitable or use in all weather conditions."

— Stantec Transport Peer Review, Executive Summary

"The Mount Iron Track is a recreational trail rather than a commuter active travel route. Its narrow width, informal nature, and lack of all-weather surfacing make it unsuitable for the level of demand generated by this development and its proximity to Three Parks. Reliance on this route does not provide safe, inclusive, or integrated access to the existing active travel network..."

4. Matter (b): Rationale for Proposed Design, Width, and Location

Path Width (Section D2)

While the applicant has proposed a 3m wide path for Section D1, they have offered a reduced width of 2.5m for Section D2, which is the westernmost and longest link in the path network, connecting to Three Parks. QLDC's preference is that Section D2 is also formed to a full 3m width.

Appropriate path width advice is provided by QLDC's transport expert, Mr Chris Rossiter, in his memo attached to this statement. Alongside Mr Rossiter's advice, this requirement is justified by several operational needs:

- **Two-Way Flow and Safety:** To accommodate safe, high-volume, two-way movement of pedestrians, runners, cyclists, and micro-mobility users, a 3m width is the appropriate standard. Narrower paths increase user conflict, forcing cyclists or scooter riders onto the path shoulders or off the path entirely.
- **Consistency with the adjoining network and Austroads guidance:** Link D2 will tie into an existing 3m-wide active path to the northwest. Austroads notes that for a Regional Path, such as D2 -which will provide a key link to Wānaka town centre for the Site and beyond- the desirable minimum width is 3.0m. Austroads further notes that a lesser width (2.5m) should only be adopted where cyclist volumes and operational speeds will remain low. Considering the likely path gradients and the increasing uptake of e-bikes, it is unlikely that cycling operating speeds will remain low. Further, given the key regional link that D2 will provide in the long term, high cycling demand is also anticipated along D2. Considering the above, a minimum 3.0m width would be more appropriate.
- **Best practice guidance on shared paths:** Best practice in New Zealand, as outlined in the *NZTA Pedestrian Network Guidance*, notes that the use of shared paths should be limited, with separated facilities for pedestrians and cyclists preferred where possible. This is because some pedestrians avoid using shared paths due to anxiety about interactions with faster-moving cyclists and/or micromobility devices. A wider shared path will enable safer interaction between shared path users.

Lighting of the Path Network

QLDC's stance remains that the entirety of the shared use path network must be lit – that being all of D1, D2, C1, and C2. The applicant's current proposal does not demonstrate adequate lighting, stating that paths will be unlit apart from areas where lighting exists or is required for the new roading network. The justification for all paths to be lit is:

- **Commuter Usability and Winter Conditions:** To achieve a true modal shift and encourage residents to walk and cycle instead of relying on private vehicles, paths must be a viable option year-round. In Wānaka's winter, daylight hours are short, meaning peak commute times in the morning and evening

occur in low light or complete darkness. The presence of Mt Iron immediately north of the site and paths will further reduce natural lighting,

- Safety and Crime Prevention: Standard lighting significantly reduces the risk of accidents, increases user confidence, and directly aligns with Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles. While QLDC has no strict design preference, low-height bollard lighting or standard path lighting would be considered appropriate.

"The establishment of residential development can also be expected to increase the demand for path use in low light or dark conditions which creates safety concerns because of the lack of lighting."

— Stantec Transport Peer Review, Section 4.1

5. Matter (c): Need for Connection to Aubrey Road and Further North

With respect to Links B1 and B2, QLDC maintains that these should be provided, and agrees with NZTA on this point.

The applicant has proposed installing a physical barrier at the northeastern corner of the site (where Junction Road ends in a cul-de-sac adjacent to SH6). The stated intent is to prevent residents from exiting the site onto SH6 and to discourage active travelers from entering from the north and east, directing them instead to the recreation track.

QLDC strongly objects to this barrier and the lack of northern connectivity. Rather than improving connectivity, this approach actively eliminates active travel opportunities and will mean pedestrians and cyclists heading south from Albert Town are forced to ride adjacent the highway for a longer distance. We maintain that the active travel link must extend eastwards and northwards from the site (shown as B1 and B2) to establish a safe connection to Aubrey Road. The rationale for this connection includes:

- The proposal includes commercial facilities (childcare centre, cafe, market), that may attract walking and cycling from the wider area, including the nearest residential neighbourhood of Albert Town to the north. Consideration of users from this direction is a relevant consideration for the formation of a path in this area.
- Currently there is a risk that pedestrians and cyclists traveling north or east toward Albert Town from the south or potentially within the development (and vice versa) must travel dangerously close to or within the high-volume, high-speed SH6 carriageway. A dedicated path beside SH6 to Aubrey Road is vital to remove active modes from the live highway lanes. The proposed barrier at the end of Junction Road precluding any meaningful path towards the north may result in users simply jumping over, or continuing further along SH6.

"Ideally, a path would be formed beside SH6 between the Project and the Aubrey Road intersection so that pedestrians and cyclists can avoid travelling in or close to the SH6 carriageway in this high volume, high speed section of the network. Again, there is a need to ensure that any path includes appropriate lighting."

— Stantec Transport Peer Review, Section 4.1

Other matters

Frontage Paths (SH84 and SH6)

We note that active travel paths extending across both SH84 and SH6 frontages are also sought by QLDC, despite the Panel's indications on those matters to date (Minute 7, at [10]). We briefly touch on this point which was covered in our s 53 comments and is relevant to the location of the paths.

QLDC acknowledges the physical constraints associated with future roundabout widening along the frontage, but we consider that active travel paths should extend across both SH84 and SH6 frontages for the following reasons:

- Extending the primary link internally through the site results in four instances where crossing a road is necessary and therefore four conflict points between vehicles and shared path users. Should the link extend along the site frontage, a single crossing point at the roundabout will be needed. The concept plans for the roundabout widening demonstrate the ability to provide safe islands for crossing.
- The lack of links along the frontage of the site limit the ability for the site to respond positively to future development within the vicinity of the area, to the south and east. QLDC's Strategic Plans include future active travel connections along Riverbank Road and SH6 to Luggate connecting to the SH84/SH6 roundabout. A path connection along the site frontage would provide a key link to the wider active transport network and avoid path users having to navigate additional intersections through the Project Site. Not providing this connection now will limit the space available to provide a safe connection along the site frontage.
- QLDC at a minimum request that consideration be given to the final layout as to not preclude the ability for these paths to be constructed.

Timing of path formation

QLDC opposes the applicant's proposed condition to defer the construction of these paths until the subdivision stage that includes the 50th residential unit. In QLDC's view, the paths should be delivered prior to the occupation of any residential or commercial element of the development to ensure active transport infrastructure is available from the outset.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, while QLDC is highly supportive of the applicant's agreement to fund and construct Sections D1, D2, C1, C2, and E2, we urge the Panel to require consider amendments that resolve the remaining concerns. Specifically, we request that:

- Section D2 of the shared path be widened to 3.0m to ensure safe, two-way commuter flow;
- Lighting be required along the active travel network to guarantee safe, year-round use and encourage modal shift;
- The physical barrier at Junction Road be rejected in favor of a dedicated active transport link and B1/B2 be constructed at the applicants cost; and

- Consideration be given to the ability to provide paths along the site frontage, either through this development or at a future stage.

My team and I welcome any questions the Panel may have on our technical comments, expert evidence, and the matters discussed in this statement. Thank you.

7. Suggested Amendments to Conditions

To facilitate the requests above, the following amendments to the proposed conditions are sought. (changes shown in **bold underline** and ~~strikethrough~~):

Part B – Subdivision Conditions

9. *Prior to commencing works on the site...*

...

p) *Subject to landowner approval, the formation of the active transport paths in accordance with the stamped approved plans. These active transport links shall be constructed in terms of either QLDC Engineering Code of Practice drawing B5 -22 or B5-23 and shall be constructed in accordance with the following formation widths and surfacing. **A final active travel network plan shall be submitted to Queenstown Lakes District Council for certification prior to construction.***

- i. *The path shown as D1 **and D2** shall be constructed to an ~~unlit~~ 3m sealed formation width (drawing B5-22 or B5-23 or NZTA equivalent). This path shall be constructed ~~as part of, or prior to, the stage of the subdivision that includes the 50th residential unit.~~ **prior to occupation of any residential unit and prior to the operation of retail activities in the new retail building, the childcare facility, and the café.***
- ~~ii. The path shown as D2 shall be constructed an unlit 2.5m sealed formation width (drawing B5-23 or NZTA equivalent). This path shall be constructed as part of, or prior to, the stage of the subdivision that includes the 50th residential unit.~~
- ii. *The path shown as E1 shall be constructed as an unlit gritted path with a 3m formation width (drawing B5-23 or NZTA equivalent). This path shall be constructed ~~as part of, or prior to, the stage of the subdivision that includes the 50th residential unit.~~ **prior to occupation of any residential unit and prior to the operation of retail activities in the new retail building, the childcare facility, and the café.***
- iii. ***The path shown as B1 shall be constructed to a 3m sealed formation width (drawing B5-22 or B5-23 or NZTA equivalent). This path shall be constructed prior to occupation of any residential unit and prior to the operation of retail activities in the new retail building, the childcare facility, and the café.***

- iv. The path shown as B2 shall be constructed to a 3m sealed formation width (drawing B5-22 or B5-23 or NZTA equivalent). This path shall be constructed prior to occupation of any residential unit and prior to the operation of retail activities in the new retail building, the childcare facility, and the café.
- q) The active travel network shall be appropriately lit through the use of bollards, with a lighting plan to be provided to Queenstown Lakes District Council for certification prior to construction.
20. ~~The consent holder shall provide the consent authority written confirmation of approval from the NZ Transport Agency that the design of the active transport links is in accordance with the applicable NZ Transport Agency design standards.~~

ENDS