



# Parks and Open Space Strategy 2016

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# INTRODUCTION

The Queenstown Lakes District (the District) is fortunate to have access to large areas of open space, lakes and mountains. There are a variety of open space and reserve areas that play a vital role in making this area a great place to work and play. This lifestyle is part of the cultural identity for many of the people that choose to live here or to visit. River corridors, lakes and their foreshores, cycleways and local reserves provide residents with many opportunities to experience and enjoy a range of open space. The public can also access a wealth of Department of Conservation land and World Heritage National Parks are on our doorstep.

Perhaps because of this great asset, more and more people are moving to the area and international and domestic visitor numbers are steadily increasing. This growth puts pressure on the use of the land as more people want access to open space areas. Development and protection of the open space network and improvements to the quality of open space is therefore increasingly important.

There are challenges in acquiring, maintaining or improving the quality, quantity and accessibility of open space. This strategy seeks to address these issues, establish priorities and enable partnerships to deliver public open space opportunities through an agreed plan.

## Why does Queenstown Lakes District Council need a Parks and Open Space Strategy?

The previous Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) Parks Strategy was developed in 2002 – at the time it was envisaged this would be a 10 year strategy. Since then, the District has experienced rapid residential growth and a huge increase in visitor numbers. New subdivisions in greenfield developments are being created, and intensification of some of the existing urban area is planned. In addition to meeting local sport and recreation needs (both passive and active), Queenstown and Wanaka are also venues for hosting significant regional and national events.

Competing usage demands, future growth and visitor projections and uneven distribution of open space (relative to some areas) creates a need for more pro-active and strategic management now and into the future. Where intensification is planned, the values of the existing open space must be recognised and enhanced where required to ensure a high standard of living can be enjoyed by those residents in these areas.

Many of our open spaces and reserves have high natural values and are home to a variety of ecosystems including tussock lands, wetlands, streams, riparian margins, native bush and lake foreshores. These natural areas provide habitat for our native biodiversity and protect ecosystem services that are essential for a healthy environment. They also serve to protect the regions iconic landscape. These values need to be protected, enhanced and celebrated to ensure future generations can learn about and enjoy them. This is important as our region is increasingly impacted by human activities and climate change.

A relevant strategy is required to ensure the existing open space network and new reserves meet the needs of the community, can provide for growth and will continue to be protected and enhanced.

The Parks and Open Space Strategy (the Strategy) encourages consideration of both quality and quantity to enable the continued provision of open space that meets the needs of current and future generations.

The Strategy will set direction on:

- The types of open spaces and experiences that the community should be able to access
- Provision of open space in greenfield developments
- Development and use of existing open space
- Spending of Development Contributions
- Ecological and biodiversity protection and enhancement

## WHY IS OPEN SPACE SO IMPORTANT?

Open space plays a vital role in making the District a great place to live work and play and are places for people to meet, connect and get involved in the community. Parks and open spaces are also often host to many of the events and activities that bring tourists to the District and they are therefore critical to our economy. The outstanding landscapes, large open spaces and natural values are what draw many of the visitors to our region.

There is much national and international research about how open space promotes health and wellbeing. *In research carried out for CABE, 85 per cent of people surveyed felt that the quality of public space and the built environment has a direct impact on their lives and on the way they feel. But having access to public space is not all that matters – just as important are the planning, design and management of that space.*<sup>1</sup>

### **Amenity Benefits**

Improves local and regional liveability,  
Provides a focus/identity to locations  
Provides attractive, natural places to gather

### **Economic Benefits**

Adds value to properties and localities  
Provides an asset for tourism  
Supports the recreation industry  
Provides destinations for visitors and tourists  
Provides active transport routes and networks

### **Environmental**

Protection of significant natural features and landscapes,  
Protection and enhancement of ecological values and biodiversity  
Enables awareness and understanding of nature,  
Enables participation in conservation  
Provides visual contrast to the built environment  
Climate Change resilience/adaptation  
Protects ecosystem services

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<sup>1</sup> CABE (2002) *Streets of Shame*. Summary of findings from 'Public Attitudes to Architecture and the Built Environment'. London, CABE.

**Cultural**

Helps to define urban and rural character and defines urban boundaries  
Recognises/supports local identity  
Protection of cultural heritage  
Provides sense of place

**Health Benefits**

Physical and Psychological

**Education Benefits**

Creates opportunities to learn to socialise  
Learn to be healthy  
Learn about natural and cultural heritage

**Sport and Recreation Benefits**

Places for active engagement and passive enjoyment

**Community**

Places to socialise  
Participate in community events/gatherings

## COUNCILS ROLE IN OPEN SPACE PROVISION

Through the Local Government Act 2002 the Council has a number of roles relating to open space:

**Provider/owner**

The provision, development and maintenance of parks and reserves is a core component of Council's business.

**Partnerships**

Council has the opportunity to participate in a number of partnerships of varying scales that provide access to open space and can further enhance the network

**Management**

Council manages or administers land that is in Crown ownership. Council develops reserve management plans that outline the purpose, management and development requirements for parks and reserves.

**Protection**

Council uses legislation such as the Reserves Act 1977, Local Government Act 2002 and the Resource Management Act 1991 to protect and preserve the open space network from inappropriate use and development.

## Advocacy

Through strategic documents, plans and information, Council can advocate the importance of open space to the community.

## Research and Planning

Ongoing research and planning is required to ensure that the open space network meets community needs both now and for further generations and to ensure that Council plans are responsive to people's changing needs and preferences. Planning also involves monitoring the region's growth and population characteristics, assessing this information and amending strategies and plans if necessary.

# STRATEGIC FIT

## Long Term Plan

The Council's Long Term Plan has the following outcomes for open space and reserves:

### Community Outcomes: (Long Term aspirations for the District)

- *Sustainable growth management*
- *Quality landscapes and natural environment with enhanced public access*
- *A safe and healthy community that is strong, diverse and inclusive for people of all age groups and incomes*
- *Effective and efficient infrastructure that meets the needs of growth*
- *High quality urban environments, respectful of the character of individual communities*
- *Preservation and celebration of the District's local cultural heritage*

### Long Term Council Outcomes:

- *The District's parks, libraries, recreational and other community facilities and services are highly valued by the community.*
- *The District's natural and built environment is high quality and makes the District a place of choice to live, work and visit.*

There is no legislative requirement to develop a Parks and Open Space Strategy. However, the decision to produce a strategy is strongly influenced by national and regional statements, policies, plans and legislation, for example the Local Government Act 2002.

## Plans and Policies

Proposed and Operative District Plan

Subdivision Guidelines

Development Contributions Policy

## Implementation tools

Reserve Management Plans

Development Plans

Asset Management Plans  
Levels of Service in maintenance contracts  
Future plans and policies such as Encroachment Policy, Weed Policy etc

### Other documents

QLDC Growth Projections March 2011 – Rationale  
Growth Management Strategy April 2007 - QLDC  
Wakatipu Wilding Conifer Strategy  
QLDC Infrastructure Code of Practice  
QLDC Residents and Ratepayers Satisfaction Survey 2014  
Memorandum of Understanding Agreements with parks and open space partners

## WHAT IS OPEN SPACE AND HOW MUCH DO WE HAVE?

Open space can serve a variety of purposes from recreation, amenity and preservation to providing and being part of views, protecting significant landscapes and sites, and providing a community focal point for the local area. There are also many different types of open space and the combination of these spaces makes up the open space network. Types include:

- Foreshore reserves
- Esplanade reserves
- Pocket parks
- Local parks
- Playgrounds
- Streetscape
- Stormwater reserves
- Neighbourhood (Community) reserves
- Sportsfields
- Walking tracks
- Cycle ways and trails
- Golf courses
- Cemeteries
- Wetlands
- Premier parks, public gardens, civic spaces (eg village greens, CBD streetscapes)

A quality open space network should provide the community with access to a range of recreational, social and environmental experiences while responding to the characteristics and geography of the local area. The District's rural and natural landscapes and mountains all contribute to the open space character of this area.

The District has over 1800 hectares of open space encompassing sportsfields, local and community parks, natural areas, public gardens, recreation and ecological linkages. Approximately 300 hectares of this is urban parks, 1500 hectares natural or outdoor recreation areas with more coming on board all the time with greenfield developments (new subdivisions in rural areas).

QLDC provides and maintains over 200km of trails and tracks, including the Queenstown Trails and Upper Clutha Track Network.

Cemeteries make a contribution to the open space network through providing areas of localised open space and amenity, as well as heritage sites. Cemeteries are unique in that they provide a relatively unchanging landscape that is protected from development and provide great opportunities to tell the history of the area. They can be a place for quiet respite and often have mature trees that support the biodiversity of the area.

Large areas of Council owned open space is leased for golf courses. There are also a number of privately owned golf courses. Golf courses do have visual amenity value but have limited public accessibility (with the exception of Frankton Golf Course).

The focus of this strategy is primarily on QLDC public owned land, however, it is recognised that DOC and privately owned open space also makes a considerable contribution to the development of an open space network (e.g. Ben Lomond Station or Deans Bank). It deals with the provision of land and some of the reserve assets but does not address activities or major facilities that occur on that land. The consideration of these facilities would be more appropriate in a future Sport and Recreation Strategy.

## **WHAT HAS THE COMMUNITY TOLD US ABOUT OPEN SPACE?**

### **QLDC Ratepayers and Residents Surveys**

QLDC regularly undertakes a satisfaction survey on the services and facilities Council provides. The most frequently used services in recent surveys are Trails, Walkways and Cycleways followed closely by Parks, Reserves and Gardens.

Approximately one in three respondents use Trails, Walkways and Cycleways, and Parks, Reserves and Gardens weekly; a further one in ten or more use them daily. Since 2010, over 80% of respondents have consistently been satisfied with these community services. The target of the Council's Long Term Plan 2015 – 2025 is to have 85% or residents satisfied with the quality of parks and for 95% to be satisfied with the quality of trails.

### **Otago Region Residents Satisfaction Survey**

The Otago Region Residents Satisfaction Survey was conducted in May 2016. This survey showed three key measures for each Council:

- overall satisfaction with each Council
- satisfaction with public facilities and usage levels
- satisfaction with the information each Council provides.

Of those surveyed 48% said more facilities are needed at the park, 19% said cleanliness of parks need improving and 12% said parks needed to cater to more age groups

An online survey conducted by QLDC in early 2016 for the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy asked the community questions like 'What do you like about our parks and reserves?', and 'What could QLDC provide more of?' Some initial stakeholder consultation was also undertaken. These responses were used to inform the development of the Strategy.

## SO, HOW WILL WE DO IT?

The following sections set out the Vision, Objectives, Methodologies and Actions for how we will achieve the goals of the Strategy.

### THE VISION

To provide a rich and diverse network of open spaces that are valued by the community and are protected and enhanced for future generations

### THE OBJECTIVES

The objectives are main goals of the strategy.

These have been identified through initial stakeholder consultation and council workshops.

- Our parks and reserves are diverse, multipurpose and provide for communities and visitors
- Open spaces are well designed, connected, accessible and valued
- We are able to plan for and accommodate growth
- Open Spaces are treasured and protected

**Our parks and reserves are diverse, multipurpose and provide for communities and visitors**

The Council provides a number of different open spaces that provide different experiences for the community and visitors who use the parks. The experiences are not mutually exclusive – a single area of open space may be able to provide for a number of experiences.

The following section of the Strategy sets out some key experiences the open space network should deliver both within greenfield developments (new subdivisions in rural areas) and existing urban areas. Ensuring the open space network delivers these experiences is the primary focus of the Strategy.



## TYPES OF PARKS/EXPERIENCES

### Local Park

A Local Park is an area of open space that is easily accessible for the immediate community, within easy walking distance to residents in the area. It provides a basic informal recreation experience for nearby residents, including:

- Play opportunities
- Flat, kick-around space
- Areas for respite and relaxation

#### EXAMPLES

Murdoch Park, Arthurs Point  
Fernhill Road Playground, Fernhill  
James Clouston Memorial Park, Queenstown  
Frye Crescent Reserve, Albert Town

### Community Park (formerly a Neighbourhood Park)

A Community Park is an area of open space on flat or undulating land that provide a variety of informal recreation experiences for residents across a neighbourhood/suburb. They are often well known by the wider community, are primarily used for the community for informal recreation, social, cultural and leisure activities and can have other complementary values, such as landscape amenity and playgrounds. A Community Park typically provides the following experiences:

- Multiple kick-around or play spaces
- Socialising areas, including picnic and BBQ facilities
- Perimeter or walking trail

These parks have a high standard of provision and often these park types have the most multiuse potential. Community Parks should be located in a prominent position within a suburb/neighbourhood and have good transport and cycling/walking access.

#### EXAMPLES

- McBride Park, Lake Hayes Estate
- Glenorchy Playground Reserve
- Kingston School Reserve
- Rose Douglas Park, Arrowtown
- Luggate Domain
- Peter Fraser Park, Lake Hawea
- Jardine Park, Kelvin Heights

## Sportsground Parks

Sportsground Parks are designed and used for organised sport with toilets, changing facilities, car parking and turf or playing surface formally maintained to an appropriate standard for the relevant sports code. These include sports fields, hard-court areas, club facilities as well as associated infrastructure such as car parking and changing rooms.

### EXAMPLES

- Queenstown Events Centre
- Jack Reid Park, Arrowtown
- Wanaka Sports Facility
- Millbrook Cricket Ground, Arrowtown
- Pembroke Park, Wanaka
- Glenorchy Domain
- Peter Fraser Park, Hawea
- Wanaka Showgrounds

## Premier Parks

A Premier Park provides a unique experience and typically has a more extensive range of facilities that people will travel to and spend more time at. These parks are usually larger (with the exception of civic spaces) and meet the needs of both residents within the District and visitors to the area as they provide a unique experience or point of difference to other parks. People make a special trip just to get there, often driving past one or more Local or Community Parks on the way. The reserve may enjoy a particularly advantageous location (such as lake edge) or have recreational assets of a higher quality, or be a civic space in the town centre. Civic spaces are for meeting, socialising, play and events located within the urban town centres and can comprise squares, plazas, greens, streets and shared spaces.

These reserves are likely to receive the majority of use from visitors and they are to be designed with this in mind with a high level of service. Events are often held in these areas, such as festivals, markets, prize-givings and fireworks. They are places that help establish connections and linkages where people can move through, visit and congregate.

A premier park would typically have:

- Networks of walking circuits and trails
- Destination and/ or multiple playgrounds and specialised recreation facilities
- Distinct natural or heritage features
- Multiple places for gatherings and socialising such as BBQ and picnic facilities.

### EXAMPLES

- Earnslaw Park, Queenstown
- Village Green, Arrowtown
- Roy's Bay Reserve, Wanaka
- Queenstown Gardens
- Wanaka Station Park
- Marine Parade, Queenstown

## Natural Reserves

A reserve or open space that maybe only partly be developed but contains a natural feature/s such as lake edge, river or mountain view. It is usually a large reserve or open space that provides for informal recreation. These areas may have high ecological values and/or provide access to our unique landscapes. They offer diverse recreation opportunities such as biking, walking, water activities and providing connections with nature.

These reserves can include recreational facilities such as boat launching areas, campgrounds, golf courses but might also have ecological values, protecting waterways and providing wildlife corridors.

Many of the partners and volunteer groups that work with QLDC use Natural Reserves. Many events are also held on Natural Reserves.

### EXAMPLES:

- Ben Lomond Reserve
- Queenstown Hill
- Arrow River Reserve
- Albert Town Lagoon
- Lake Hayes Reserve
- Matakauri Park
- Cardrona Mouth Reserve

## Connections

Open space should be distributed to create a contiguous network where possible that establishes recreational trail networks, cycling and walking linkages. Connections can be recreation linkages such as walkways or cycleways, or they can also be ecological linkages or greenbelts. They can include foreshore areas and esplanade strips. Connections or linkages can also make moving around our neighbourhoods easy, and can provide an alternative and sustainable mode of transport.

The District has an impressive network of walking and cycling trails and this is very popular for both recreation and tourism.

When new developments are planned they should connect with existing trails and reserves where possible.

## Pocket Parks

Pocket Parks are areas of greenspace that are either very small (less than 0.3ha) and/or are often not fully accessible as the land is often steep or located in gullies. These should generally only be acquired if providing connections or protecting views or heritage sites. Historically QLDC has inherited a large number of Pocket Parks through subdivisions. QLDC will generally not acquire small areas of open space as reserve that primarily serve an amenity purposes for a development or is too steep or narrow to develop. Open spaces smaller than a Local Park (minimum 0.3ha) should typically be retained in common or private ownership unless they have an important linkage or conservation function as part of the wider open space network.

Developments are encouraged to take advantage of the amenity and associated economic benefits of providing a well-designed and valuable public open space network and avoid creating small areas of surplus, undevelopable land.

### **Stormwater Reserves**

Stormwater infrastructure can have values such as wetland areas that also provide for wildlife but QLDC will not accept stormwater reserves in lieu of reserve development contributions if it has no recreation value and does not meet the criteria in the Provision Guidelines.

Developers will be required to engage with the Parks and Reserves Department early (at the Plan Change stage) to ensure an appropriate mix of parks are provided. Existing reserves should be reviewed to identify areas that are deficient and investment should be directed to those areas for development.

## **Volunteers and partnerships**

Queenstown Lakes District is fortunate to have a number of community groups, clubs and partners that work to provide recreation and ecological enhancement services on parks. These include Community Associations, Sports Clubs, Biking Clubs and Environmental Groups. These volunteers put in many hours and make a huge contribution to the success of the District's open space network.

## **Events**

The open space network provides for many of the regional and national events that are regularly hosted in the District. This can range from large-scale events to smaller community events. Well managed events can have a very positive effect on the District, drawing the community together and bringing financial, social and environmental benefits. The use of reserves to support and enable events should be encouraged where appropriate.

## Open Spaces are well designed, accessible, connected and valued

This objective seeks to achieve access to a diversity of high-quality open spaces that provide a variety of experiences.

Population increase, visitor growth and intensification in urban growth areas will mean our parks and open spaces will need to accommodate more use. While generally new parks will not be acquired (discussed in the next section) in these areas, existing parks will need to be upgraded or receive a higher level of service.

### Design

The layout and configuration of the reserve and infrastructure will ultimately determine the success of a reserve. Each sport and activity will have specific requirements for the size, configuration, topography and orientation. Multifunctional open spaces are encouraged as they enable socialising and are an efficient use of land and facilities.

Below are guidelines for how a reserve should be designed:

- Co-locate sports grounds with other recreation facilities such as a playground and walking circuits to make a multifunctional open space.
- Maximise street frontage and locate in central/prominent locations within a development to maximise accessibility and to provide good passive surveillance from passers-by and neighbouring properties.
- Relatively flat terrain is desirable as it provides for a wide range of activities, however some variation in terrain can add interest and play opportunities.
- 2 to 3 hectares is considered appropriate for a multi-use reserve.
- Avoid overly elongated, narrow or irregular shapes with dead ends. Provide multiple entrance points and connections through the open space to link with the surrounding neighbourhood.

Design Guidelines could be prepared in future to ensure quality open space and facilities are delivered across the open space network, in a way that allows for consistency but also a sense of local identity.

### Accessibility

All residents within urban/built up areas should live within reasonable walking distance to a Local Park. Pathways to the reserves should be easy for parents with young children, people with limited mobility and the elderly. This is becoming increasingly important with the ageing population. For a reserve to be 'accessible' it should generally be within 600m (an easy 5 to 10 minute walk) of a property it serves and easily and safely accessible by foot.

A series of base maps are included as Attachment 1 which show which show existing open space provision and which areas have reserves with playgrounds and sportsfields within a 600m radius.

These can be used to inform future Open Space Network Plans that will further analyse provision, connectivity and quality of park types. These plans will assist Council to understand and provide for the specific needs of the different communities in the District.

## Knowledge

The community also need to be aware that the open space network exists. By providing information about the activities and facilities our parks offer, their history and their special features, the community and visitors can make the most out of our parks and open spaces. The community should be able to learn about their parks through signage on parks, website information and participating in community events and activities on parks. The community can become involved in the management of their parks by inputting to consultation on Reserve Management Plans and Development Plans.

## Types of Recreation Facilities

The following table sets out what types of recreation facilities (excluding major sports facilities) should be provided (as a minimum) at each of the park types. These are aligned with QLDC's Levels of Service.

(Y=Yes, S=Sometimes)

Asset	Local Park	Community Park	Sportsground Park	Premier Park	Natural Reserve	Connection
Rubbish Bins		Y	Y	Y		
Turf Irrigation			Y	Y		
Amenity Lighting		S	Y	Y		S
Pathways	S	Y	Y	Y	S	Y
Basic playground	Y					
Bespoke Playground		Y		Y		
Destination Playground				S		
Floodlights			Y			
Seating	Y	Y	Y	Y	S	
Picnic tables		Y		Y	S	
Wayfinding signs		S	Y	Y	Y	Y
Entry sign	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Interpretative signs		S		S	S	
Toilet		Y	Y	Y	S	
Changing rooms			Y	S		
Carpark		S	Y	Y	S	
Barbeque		S		Y		

Drinking fountain (Seasonal)		S	Y	Y		
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## Plan for and accommodate growth

How much do we have and how much we need to provide for current and future generations?

The previous 2002 Strategy focussed on a quantitative approach using a process which calculates amount of reserve land per resident. For example, based on usual resident population of 30,000 this equates to approximately 60ha of park land per 1,000 residents. However, this methodology does not focus on providing high-quality open spaces that provide a diverse range of experiences. It also does not make appropriate provision for intensification in existing urban areas. Therefore achieving quantity targets is a secondary focus for this strategy.

The total park provision needs to be balanced against the disproportionately higher numbers of visitors to the region, most of whom come to participate in some form of outdoor recreation, and the high resident population growth. Much of the existing reserve land is under pressure from this population growth. The steep topography of the region means that flat usable accessible land is also under pressure. Our parks and open spaces will therefore need to accommodate more use.

In situations where land is not required from developers (such as in small developments or in urban intensification areas), development contributions should be used to improve facilities on other reserves in near proximity to the development.

### Urban Intensification Areas

Through the District Plan review and the Housing Accord Special Housing Area Act 2013, several areas in the existing urban areas in Queenstown are being targeted for intensification (referred to as brownfield developments in the Development Contributions Policy identified in the Long Term Plan 2015 - 2025). Specifically these areas are within or in close proximity to the Wanaka and Queenstown town centres (including Gorge Road and Fernhill). Buildings of up to six storeys high may be allowed in future in the Queenstown Town Centre.

The existing reserves in the areas that will be subject to intensification will therefore be subject to more use. Apartment style living relies heavily on public open space to provide amenity and high quality living standards for the residents.

Reserve Land Development Contributions are not required for brownfield developments. This is to promote affordability of housing and due to the lack of opportunities to provide reserve land in these areas. Reserve Improvements Development Contributions are required in these areas to increase the provision and quality of facilities in nearby reserves to accommodate the growth of residents, and their recreational needs.

Increased visitor accommodation in these areas will also put additional pressure on existing reserves. While there is little opportunity for acquiring new reserve land, the existing parks and open spaces in growth intensification areas can be readily identified and the enhancement of these spaces planned



accordingly. The need to improve the quality of the facilities of the reserves in these areas (including the Lake Wanaka Foreshore and the Queenstown Bay Foreshore Reserves) can be partly attributed to growth and development contributions spent accordingly.

## Provision Guidelines

Another method of providing for growth is acquiring new parks through greenfield developments. As proposals are being assessed for these developments the council can ensure that the proposed reserves are adequate and that open space values are enhanced or protected. This is also a time to identify opportunities to fill gaps in the network, connecting new reserves to existing trails and reserves and to transport networks.

The following provision guidelines describe the amount of public open space that should be provided in new greenfield developments.

Type	Provision Guidance
Local Park	Each local park requires a <b>minimum of 0.3ha of open space in greenfield developments</b> . This should be of a configuration that provides transition / buffer space from adjacent roads and housing and contains a flat kick-around space of approximately <b>30 by 30m</b> . <b>Residents should have access to a local park within a 600m walk (approximately 5 to 10 minutes)</b> <b>A local park is required for every 400 household units in greenfield developments.</b>
Community Park	A Community Park requires a <b>minimum of 2ha of open space and should be of generally flat or undulating land</b> . They should be located to create or enhance open space and community connectivity. <b>Residents in residential zones should have access to a Community Park within a 1500m walk.</b> <b>A Community Park is required in greenfield developments where there are 2000 household units or more.</b>
Sportsground Park	A Sportsground Park should be of a configuration that can provide a minimum of two full-sized sports fields in a side-by-side configuration. A Sportsground Park can serve a multi-use function with a Community Park. <b>A Sportsground Park is required in greenfield development areas catering for more than 2000 households</b>
Premier Park	No quantity guidance. Existing parks will be identified as being Premier Parks and upgraded where required. Civic spaces are limited to existing reserves in existing town centres. Should a new town centre be created however the civic space reserve should reflect the scale of the urban centre.
Connections	No quantity guidance, amount will depend on characteristics of the area such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If water bodies are present that trigger esplanade reserve requirements</li> <li>• The location of walkways and cycleways within greenfield developments</li> <li>• Opportunities to link to waterbodies such as lakes and rivers</li> <li>• Opportunities to link to nearby open spaces</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities to link with existing active transport networks</li> </ul>
Natural	No quantity guidance. Amount will depend on characteristics of the area

To ensure that the principles of this Strategy are upheld and that the provision guidelines below are met, developers should engage with the QLDC Parks and Reserves Department early, at the Plan Change stage where relevant. The most current Development Contributions Policy will be used in the conjunction with the Strategy.

## Open Spaces are treasured and protected

Many of our reserves are areas of significant vegetation and biodiversity. These natural areas protect important ecosystem services. Ecosystem services are the benefits people obtain from ecosystems, such as clean air, fresh water, climate moderation, carbon sequestration, fertile soil and flood control. For example, wetlands can improve water quality through filtration and can play a role in drought and flood mitigation through retention. These ecosystem services are important to environmental and human health and well-being, yet they are limited and often taken for granted. Human impacts such as pollution, introduced species and development is putting increasing pressure on the natural environment and reducing these ecosystem services.

Our open space network provides us with an opportunity to protect and enhance ecological values for existing and future generations. Protection, conservation and education about these areas will encourage people to treasure their parks and reserves and to connect with nature.

Ecological enhancement of our open spaces is largely led by a number of volunteer groups through planting programmes, growing of native plants nurseries and wilding conifer control. These groups and partners play a vital role in the protection of open spaces and these partnerships should be recognised and enhanced.

Identifying areas high in biodiversity and ecological enhancement potential, and the preparation of Revegetation or Enhancement Plans would create a framework in which QLDC can protect and enhance these values. This could include a policy for weed control.

Many reserves also protect historic heritage features such as monuments, buildings, graves or memorial plantings. These features provide the opportunity to educate the public and visitors to the area about the unique history of the District.

## Classification and Zoning of Open Space

There are a number of mechanisms available to protect the public open space network. Parks and open spaces are generally protected from inappropriate development by being in public ownership and through being vested and classified as a reserve under the Reserves Act 1977. Reserve Management Plans are required for classified Recreation Reserves and must be prepared in

consultation with the public. A review should be undertaken to ensure the appropriate classifications apply to different reserves within the network, and that all reserves are classified.

There is a need to adopt a consistent approach to the zoning of open space land in the District Plan. Currently reserves have the zoning of the adjacent land and the zone provisions do not generally allow for reserve activities. While designations over each of the reserves allow for QLDC to carry out works this can cause issues for external organisations such as sports clubs to provide for their activities. A review of the zonings that apply to open space can be done in the upcoming Stage 2 of the Proposed District Plan review. This will assist in clearly defining the purpose and intended use of public land included in the open space network.

## Encroachments

There are a large number of both historic and new encroachments onto public open space. Encroachments onto reserves can result in the community being prevented from accessing public open space. The preparation of an Encroachment Policy would set out how QLDC intends to deal with new and existing encroachments, including criteria for how to prioritise these.

## ACTION PLAN (What we will do, how we will do it)

Split Actions into:

Short term actions	(2016/2017 – 2017/2018)
Medium term actions	(2018-2019 – 2021/2022)
Long term actions	(2022/2023 – 2024/2025)
Ongoing	

Parks and Open Space Strategy 2016 Vision: To provide a rich and diverse network of parks and open spaces that are valued by the community and protected and enhanced for future generations.				
<b>Objectives</b>	Our parks and reserves are diverse, multipurpose and provide for communities and visitors	Open spaces are well designed, accessible, connected and valued	We can plan for and accommodate growth	Open Spaces are protected and treasured
<b>Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have the right mix of park types and experiences</li> <li>Good provision for Events</li> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality design</li> <li>Well connected, to encourage active transport options</li> <li>Create attractive urban areas through quality parks and reserves</li> <li>Invest in appropriate areas and facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep up with growth, especially in medium and high density residential zones.</li> <li>Developers to adhere to Provision Guidelines.</li> <li>Ensure the appropriate level of provision of park types</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Awareness and education opportunities</li> <li>Natural and Cultural Heritage Protection</li> <li>Enhance Ecological Values, Ecosystem Services and Biodiversity</li> <li>We recognise and celebrate the role of partners and volunteers</li> </ul>
HOW WILL WE DO IT?				
<b>Actions within plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create park types/experiences</li> <li>Local Parks</li> <li>Community Parks</li> <li>Premier Parks</li> <li>Sportsground Parks</li> <li>Connections</li> <li>Natural Reserves</li> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All residents in residential zones to have Local or Community Park within 600m walking distance</li> <li>Agree on Types of Recreation Facilities to be provided on each park type</li> <li>Align Strategy with Levels of Service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop Provision Guidelines to inform future Development Contributions Policies and investment in existing parks</li> <li>Require that developers engage with Parks staff early, at the Plan Change stage where relevant.</li> <li>Advocate for and require high quality open space outcomes by working with developers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support and undertake environmental initiatives with volunteer groups</li> </ul>
<b>Future actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Review Development Contributions Policy to ensure it aligns with Park Types.</b></li> <li>Ensure developers adhere to provision guidelines providing a diverse mix of park types in Greenfield Developments</li> <li>Develop open space network plans across the District to analyse existing provision, connectivity and quality of park types.</li> <li>Input into future community and sports facility strategies to ensure future needs of the community are met.</li> <li>Identify which reserves are appropriate for events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop open space network plans across the District to analyse existing provision, connectivity and quality of park types.</li> <li>Develop Design Guidelines (that will incorporate Crime Prevention Through Design principles)</li> <li>Review the Playground Strategy</li> <li>Improve website information</li> <li>Develop an Asset Management Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the Development Contributions Policy to ensure guiding principles of Strategy are met</li> <li>Develop a Parks Acquisitions Policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a weed control policy</li> <li>Identify key biodiversity and ecological restoration areas</li> <li>Develop and review Reserve Management Plans</li> <li>Develop Revegetation and Enhancement Plans</li> <li>Plan the enhancement opportunities for key reserves in growth intensification areas through Development Plans.</li> <li>Input into District Plan Review Stage 2 for appropriate Open Space Zones</li> <li>Undertake a review of Reserves Act Classifications</li> </ul>

# REVIEW AND MONITORING

Monitoring should be undertaken to ensure the Strategy is being successfully implemented. This can be done in a number of ways:

- Community feedback through the Annual Plan and Long Term Council Plan
- Targeted parks and open space questions in further QLDC customer satisfaction surveys
- Undertake a research programme on our parks to understand how people use and value them
- Identify and map ecological areas to allow for the effective management and protection of these sites
- Develop open space network plans across the District to analyse existing provision, connectivity and quality of park types.

# ATTACHMENTS

**ATTACHMENT ONE:** Maps of areas showing walking distances from Local and Neighbourhood Parks (DRAFT AT THIS STAGE).

DRAFT