
RESERVE MANAGEMENT PLAN

GLENORCHY AIRSTrip

August 2016



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Glenorchy Airstrip Reserve (The Reserve) is a low volume, non-certified aerodrome situated just south of the township of Glenorchy, on the banks of Lake Wakatipu. It houses a grass strip utilised by small private fixed wing aircraft, helicopter operations and is also a base for skydive and other recreational aeronautical activities.

This Management Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Reserves Act 1977, and sets out objectives and policies for the management and development of the Reserve.

MANAGEMENT PLAN PROCESS

Action	Date
QLDC notified its intention to prepare a management plan.	Oct 2014
A workshop was held with the Glenorchy Community Association.	Oct 2014
Resolution made by QLDC to publicly notify Draft Glenorchy Airstrip RMP.	Feb 2015
Release of the Plan for public consultation and submissions.	Mar 2015
Hearings of public submissions.	June 2016
QLDC adopt the Reserve Management Plan via Council resolution.	August 2016

In summary, the Management Plan provides the following:

- The principle purpose of the Reserve is to provide for emergency, community, recreational and low intensity commercial tourism aviation.
- Funding for management and maintenance is to be provided for by user charges to be set in a transparent and equitable manner and following consultation between the different user groups.
- The Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC/Council) has ultimate responsibility for governance. The QLDC has delegated responsibility to the Queenstown Airport Corporation (QAC) for establishing safe operating procedures in accordance with Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) provisions.
- No further intensification of the Reserve is proposed. However, consolidation of the structures in one area with buildings of similar size and scale to 2016 levels is appropriate and encouraged. The Glenorchy community and airstrip users will be actively engaged in matters concerning any future development of the airstrip.

INTRODUCTION

The Reserves Act 1977 requires the QLDC to prepare reserve management plans for all land classified as 'Recreation Reserves' under council management or control. The Reserve was gazetted as Local (Airport) Purpose. Preparation of management plans for Local Purpose Reserves is not mandatory and is at the discretion of Council unless directed by the Minister.

This Reserve Management Plan (Management Plan) is a means by which the QLDC can manage and control the use of the airport and provides a vision for the Reserve. It describes the general intentions for the use, maintenance, protection, preservation and development of the Reserve through a series of objectives and policies. The objectives and policies assist with decision making regarding development and use of the Reserve.

The principle purpose of the Reserve is to provide and maintain the airstrip to an appropriate standard¹ for emergency and low intensity community, recreational and commercial tourism aviation activities.

¹ As a non-certificated aerodrome Glenorchy only has to comply with a basic set of aerodrome standards for a Code 1A, day visual flight rules (VFR) aerodrome, contained in CAA Advisory Circular AC139-6.

SITE DESCRIPTION

Located approximately 375m above sea level, the Reserve sits on a terrace above Lake Wakatipu. The terrace is well drained and forms the southern extent of a historic alluvial fan formed by Stone Creek. The soils comprise of Queenstown shallow silt loam with gravels and stones. The area has an average annual rainfall of approximately 900mm per year with a portion of this falling as snow during the winter months.

There is an area of remnant native vegetation surrounding the Reserve as well as an area of plantation pines between the Reserve and Lake Wakatipu. The Reserve is prone to gorse and it has been necessary to control weed growth and spread in recent years.

DESCRIPTION OF AIRSTRIP AND ACTIVITIES

OVERVIEW

The Reserve is in most part occupied by a non-certified aerodrome. The airstrip is a low volume grass strip located to the south of Glenorchy, adjacent to the Queenstown-Glenorchy Road.

It is used by small private fixed wing aircraft and as an airstrip for helicopter operations for organisations such as the Department of Conservation (DoC). A number of commercial

aviation operators also use the airstrip for heli-skiing and as a base for commercial skydive and hang gliding operations. Legal vehicular access is available to the Reserve from the Glenorchy-Queenstown road as the site bounds the road. As this access is not yet formed there is currently no legal public vehicular access to the Reserve. Vehicular access is currently over private land with no legal agreement in place for this type of access. Legal public pedestrian access to the Reserve exists via an easement over private land from the Queenstown-Glenorchy Road.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION AND RESERVE CLASSIFICATION

The Reserve has a total area of 19.7ha. It is held in one parcel legally described as Section 11 SO 443869 and owned by the Crown. The QLDC is responsible for administering the Reserve (including the airstrip) and the site is vested as such.

The site is gazetted under the Reserves Act 1977 as reserve for 'Local (Airport) Purpose'.

The part of the Reserve containing the airstrip is designated for 'aerodrome' purposes in the QLDC District Plan. There are no conditions associated with this designation. The site's underlying zoning is Rural General.

HISTORY

The Reserve was administered and developed by the Department of Conservation (DoC). During this time limited commercial use of the airstrip occurred.

DoC approached the QLDC with an offer to transfer ownership of the Reserve and on the 23rd of August 2013, following consultation with the Glenorchy community (who indicated support for QLDC to manage the reserve and associated airstrip), the Council resolved to accept the transfer of the airstrip and associated reserve land from DoC.

In 2001 the Glenorchy Community Plan – Head of the Lake was prepared by the Glenorchy community. This plan recognised the Reserve as being the entrance way to the Glenorchy Township. It promotes well planned and sensitively designed development of the airport, avoidance of proliferation of signs and for access to be formalised.

MANAGEMENT OF RESERVE

RECENT CHANGES

On the 27th of August 2013, QAC resolved to assist the QLDC with management and operation of the airstrip including the commitment of staff resource

(up to one week per year). This resource would address:

- Maintenance of the CAA's Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP) airfield plates for users.
- Quarterly site visits to assess obstacles, condition of the grass airstrip, marker boards, windsock, fencing, first aid kit supplies and the emergency telephone.
- Quarterly liaison with users.
- Minor housekeeping of the airstrip including mowing, pruning of small plants to avoid obstacle problems etc.

A number of management responsibilities reside with the QLDC including resolution of resource management issues, collecting user fees, insurance and authorising leases and/or licences.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

The airstrip component of the Reserve is best described as a community/tourism airstrip, used mainly for recreational related aviation, including gliding, light powered aircraft, micro-light aircraft, sports aircraft, skydiving, parachuting, paragliding and heli-skiing.

Through consultation with stakeholders it has been established that there are (as at November 2014) thirteen aviation operators using the airstrip for a range of commercial activities including small scale

passenger transport, sky diving, hang gliding, recreational flights and heli-skiing. Emergency services land at the airstrip as required.

Small scale beekeeping is undertaken in the northwest corner of the Reserve.

LEASES, LICENCES, PERMITS AND CONCESSIONS

Activities on, to and from the Reserve were previously controlled by DoC concessions. Due to the changeover of administration from DoC to the QLDC the formalisation of new leases to operate from the airstrip and to occupy parts of the Reserve is not complete. A process for formalising leases / licenses for existing activities will follow the adoption of this Management Plan.

Previous permits/concessions granted under the previous administration permitted the placement of a Portacom building and portable aircraft hangar for an ultralight aircraft and the retention of an existing Portacom building and associated deck and a toilet.

RUNWAY AND OPERATIONAL FEATURES

AIRSTRIP

The airstrip contains a single grassed runway, approximately 700 metres in length. It is oriented in a north-south direction.

Feedback from operators indicated that works may be required to smooth the runway. It is the QLDC's intention that any works undertaken will only be to maintain the current usability of the airstrip to maintain the status quo in terms of intensity of use. No upgrade of the airstrip facility is planned nor is it evident from consultation that the community is in favour of intensification of use that may lead to an upgrade.

Flights take off and land to the north and south and the direction of take-off and landing is influenced in part by wind conditions as well as the type of aircraft being operated.

A layout of the Reserve can be found in Appendix 1.

FACILITIES

The Reserve contains an onsite portable hanger (present for four months of the year), Portacom building, temporary parking area and small sheds. Two helipads have also been recently constructed and a shipping container is located next to these. Safety fencing has been installed by one of the

operators to manage user movements near the airstrip.

SkyDive Paradise currently provide a 'Bio Toilet' onsite that has been made available for public use.

DESIRED LEVELS OF SERVICE

The community and some user groups have indicated that they wish the level of service at the airstrip and intensity of use to remain generally as it was prior to the transfer of administration from DoC to the QLDC.

Some user groups wish to see some improvements made to the existing facilities including staff and customer facilities, and safe storage of fuel and equipment.

VISION, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

VISION

The vision for Reserve is:

To maintain and manage the airstrip to an appropriate standard for emergency, community, recreational and low intensity commercial tourism aviation activities.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND ACTIONS

The following objectives and policies will guide the management of the Reserve.

PURPOSE OF THE RESERVE

OBJECTIVES

- Facilitate existing emergency community, recreational and low intensity commercial tourism aviation as the principle purpose of the Reserve.
- Aviation activities are managed in a way that provides for the airstrip to be sustained into the future.
- The nature, scale and intensity of the use of the airstrip remain generally unchanged from the level that exists from the date of adoption of this plan.
- Other activities taking place at the Reserve remain compatible with the principle purpose of the Reserve.
- The Reserve is managed and maintained so that the airstrip is safe to use.
- The Reserve is managed and maintained so that the use remains compatible with the surrounding environment.

POLICIES

- Manage the airstrip in a manner that permits and promotes a mixture of uses. Authorised activities should promote a mixture of aviation users (emergency, community, recreational, commercial tourism) to ensure aviation needs of the community are provided for.
- Regulate the use of the Reserve in a manner that ensures that nature, scale and intensity of the use of the airstrip remains generally unchanged and that uses of the reserve are compatible with the Reserve's principle purpose.
- Ensure leases and/or licences are in place for all activities at the airstrip and that their terms clearly stipulate roles and responsibilities of respective users.
- Activities that existed prior to this plan must apply for leases and/or licences within three months from the date of adoption.
- Ensure maintenance agreements are in place to maintain the existing airstrip.
- Ensure user charges are collected to assist in maintaining and administering the airstrip to sustain its future use as an airstrip.
- Allow established beekeeping activities to be maintained at the level from date of adoption of this plan and any increases in nature and scale to be at the QLDC's discretion.

FUNDING AND USER CHARGES

OBJECTIVES

- The cost to manage and maintain the airstrip is funded from user charges and such other income that can be generated from the airstrip.

POLICIES

- Grant leases and licences for commercial occupation of areas of the reserve with the rent for such occupation to reflect market rentals and/or Council's pricing policy.
- Set landing fees in line with market rates, dependent on the type of activity taking place

GOVERNANCE

OBJECTIVES

- The QLDC's governance role is clear and distinct.
- Management arrangements for activities at the Reserve are inclusive of input from community representatives and users.
- Aviation activities will be coordinated in a way that maximises the airstrips use and enjoyment for all users at maintaining the level of intensity that exists from the date of adoption of this plan.

POLICIES

- The QLDC will govern and manage (with some activities delegated to QAC) the airstrip under its legislative responsibilities under the CAA in a way that promotes the principle purpose of aviation, in a manner that is safe and equitable to all users and to other ratepayers of the District.
- In terms of aviation activities on the airstrip, primary responsibility for adherence to operational rules and procedures rests with each individual operator.
- Establish an Airstrip Governance Committee to advise the Council on management and maintenance matters and potential future development of the Reserve. This committee will be comprised of the Councillor designated to the Glenorchy community, representation from the Glenorchy Community Association and representation from authorised users of the airstrip. The QLDC will make decisions on these matters taking into account the Committee advice, budgetary requirements and all user feedback.

AVIATION OPERATIONS

OBJECTIVES

- Aviation activities will comply with all relevant statutes and regulations.
- The airstrip will be maintained to a standard that promotes use by all approved aviation activities.
- Seek to minimise the impact of noise on the surrounding community particularly that from flights which concentrate noise over the town and surrounding residential areas.

POLICIES

- All operators/users on the airstrip are to take responsibility for and adhere to their own 'safety operations manual' in accordance with CAA regulations.
- All user groups are to instruct their members on the safety and operating procedures established by their 'safety operations manual' and any other Health and Safety regulations the QLDC may issue.
- Maintain the runway in accordance with the QLDC and QAC agreements.
- Establish safe and suitable legal vehicle access from the Queenstown-Glenorchy Road, through the Reserve to the Airstrip.

- There is to be safe and secure storage of fuel on site to prevent pollution from spillage or increased fire risk.
- Encourage all users to avoid undertaking circuit flights of the Glenorchy Township and surrounding residential areas from the airstrip.
- Request the QAC update the airfield plates for Glenorchy, addressing flight paths over residential areas.
- Limit the hours of operation for leases and licences for take offs and landings from the airstrip from 8am or Morning Civil Twilight (whichever is later) to 8pm or Evening Civil Twilight (whichever is earlier).
- For any new development encourage consolidation of replacement structures in one area with buildings of similar size and scale to the combined footprint area of those existing at the time of adoption of this plan.²
- Ensure development complies with relevant District Plan provisions, including future designation conditions.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVES

- The Reserve is managed and developed in a manner that maintains its use as an airstrip in balance with maintaining the amenity of the site and surrounds.

POLICIES

- Ensure all buildings onsite are low key, low visibility and commensurate with the degree of use of the reserve.

² Footprint of buildings existing at the time of this plan are shown on the survey plan in Attachment 2

ACTIONS

The following section outlines proposed actions to be undertaken on the basis of the Objectives and Policies proposed.

		What we will do:	Who will do it:	When we will do it:
Governance	Leases/ Permits	Formalise use of the Glenorchy Airstrip through the provision of leases/permits for all operators	QLDC / Users	2016-2017
	Establish Airstrip Governance Committee	Facilitate establishment of the Airstrip Governance Committee (User Group) to provide feedback to the QLDC in relation to the ongoing management and maintenance of the reserve.	QLDC / Users	2016
	Management of Reserve	Formalise maintenance arrangements to ensure that site is adequately and appropriately maintained for aviation purposes.	QLDC	Ongoing
Funding and User Charges	User Charges	Review charges annually in accordance with the QLDC's Annual Plan process so that the Reserve budgets can be met.		Ongoing
Aviation Operations	Flight Paths	Update Glenorchy Airfield plates to avoid flight paths over the township and established residential areas.	QAC/QLDC/Governance Committee	2017
District Plan	Designation	Ensure designation provision is appropriate and is aligned with this Management Plan.	QLDC	2016

APPENDIX ONE – AIRSTRIP RESERVE PLAN

