

Invitation for Comment on Queenstown Arterials Project (LP17)

The Queenstown Arterials Project is a Listed Project under the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020

Application Name	Queenstown Arterials Project
EPA Reference	FTC000017
Applicant	Queenstown Lakes District Council
Comments due by	Friday, 26 th February 2021
Accessing the application	<i>The full application and supporting documents can be viewed on the EPA website, which can be accessed here:</i> https://www.epa.govt.nz/fast-track-consenting/listed-projects/queenstown-arterials-project/the-application/

An application has been made by Queenstown Lakes District Council under the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 for resource consent and notice of requirement for the Queenstown Arterials project.

To comment on the Queenstown Arterials Project application using the form below, please fill in the details and:

- **Email** the form to queenstownarterialsfasttrack@epa.govt.nz. Please mark in the subject line: "Comments on Queenstown Arterials Project Fast Track Application (Your name/organisation) by Friday, 26th February 2021; or
- **Post** the form to Queenstown Arterials Project Fast Track Application, Environmental Protection Authority, Private Bag 63002, Waterloo Quay, Wellington 6140 in time for the form to be received by the Friday, 26th February 2021; or
- **Deliver in person** to Environmental Protection Authority, Grant Thornton House, Level 10, 215 Lambton Quay, Wellington by Friday, 26th February 2021. Please note that due to potential changes in COVID-19 Alert Levels our reception may not be open to the public. We suggest phoning ahead to check.

Comments must be received by the EPA, on behalf of the Queenstown Arterials Project Expert Consenting Panel, no later than Friday, 26th February 2021

If your comment is not received by the EPA by Friday, 26th February 2021 the Panel is not required to consider your comment (although it may decide to). Under the COVID-19 Recovery (Fast-track Consenting) Act 2020 there is no right to seek a waiver of the time limit.

If you are an iwi authority you may share the consent application with hapū whose rohe is in the project area in the application, and choose to include comments from the hapū with any comments you may wish to provide.

Important information

Your personal information will be held by the EPA and used in relation to the Queenstown Arterials Project consent application process. You have the right to access and correct personal information held by the EPA.

A copy of your comments, including all personal information, will be provided to the Expert Consenting Panel and the applicants.

All comments received on the application will be available on the EPA website.

If you are a corporate entity making comments on this application, your full contact details will be publicly available. For individuals, your name will be publicly available but your contact details (phone number, address, and email) will not be publicly available.

Please do not use copyright material without the permission of the copyright holder.

All information held by the EPA is subject to the Official Information Act 1982.

More information on the fast-track consenting process can be found at <https://www.epa.govt.nz/fast-track-consenting/about/>.

Comment on the Queenstown Arterials Project Fast-track Application and Notice of Requirement

All sections of this form with an asterisk (*) are mandatory.

1. Contact Details

Please ensure that you have authority to comment on the application on behalf of those named on this form.

Organisation name (if relevant)	Department of Conservation		
*First name	Geoff		
*Last name	Deavoll		
Postal address	Department of Conservation, Private Bag 4715, Christchurch 8140		
*Home phone / Mobile phone		*Work phone	027 536 7020
*Email (a valid email address enables us to communicate efficiently with you)	gdeavoll@doc.govt.nz		

2. *We will email you draft conditions of consent for your comment about this application

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	I can receive emails and my email address is correct	<input type="checkbox"/>	I cannot receive emails and my postal address is correct
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3. Please provide your comments on the Queenstown Arterials Project Application

Comments on behalf of the Director-General for Conservation

Queenstown Lakes District Council seeks to construct, maintain and operate a new Queenstown Town Centre urban arterial road, (including associated infrastructure, structures, walkways, shared path, and landscaping.

The majority of the route is within Queenstown's existing urban environment and runs through an established suburban residential area, is located adjacent to community facilities including a school and recreation reserve, passes to the north of the core of the town centre.

Terrestrial Ecology Report and Proposed Conditions.

The proposed condition 1 (Part A) references several reports that the project shall be undertaken in accordance with. There is no mention of the Terrestrial Ecology Report/Ecological Assessment in that condition.

The Ecological Assessment (prepared by e3 Scientific, September 2020) ('Appendix 18 - Terrestrial Ecology Report' on EPA website) assessed the disturbance to the beech stands and habitat (for the At Risk NZ falcon) as moderate (although not significant). The Ecological Assessment recommends mitigation measures to reduce the effect to less than minor (restoration management plan, avifauna survey during breeding season and weed management).

It recommended to modify the resource consent conditions so that the Ecological Assessment as prepared by e3 Scientific, dated September 2020 is referenced in Condition 1 (Part A).

Freshwater considerations

Values

The New Zealand Freshwater Fish Database contains one record for koaro (at risk, declining) in the One Mile Creek catchment, and one record of brown trout for the Horne Creek catchment. The applicant states that there is likely to be koaro present in both waterways as well as the possibility of longfin eel (at risk, declining), common bully's (not threatened) and rainbow trout. The DOC FENZ fish prediction layer and records from neighbouring catchments supports this assumption. The applicant has undertaken invertebrate sampling in the waterways and the results show that the macroinvertebrate community index of Horne Creek indicates that the water quality is 'fair' and 'good' for One Mile Creek.

Activity and effects

The proposed activities will have short term effects such as: erosion and sedimentation, potential fish injury and mortality (working in the waterway), fish passage issues and damage to habitat. The potential long term effects include the loss of stream habitat, fish passage and changes in the waterway hydrology.

Proposed activities in Horne Creek:

- The existing vehicle/pedestrian bridge will be replaced with a new culvert (approx. 44m in length by 3m tall and 4m wide wetted channel, plus up to 3m width for a footpath alongside the wetted channel) for Horne Creek
- Potential for another pedestrian bridge (the applicant is undecided on this)
- Potential temporary bridge construction to assist with works (the applicant is undecided on this)

Proposed activities in One Mile Creek:

- The existing culvert will be upgraded by increasing the diameter to approx. 2m tall by 4m wide, conversion to box culvert and shortening to approx. 22m in length
- Upstream there is planned to be a 45m daylighted section of stream, followed upstream by a new culverted section to accommodate the new carriageway and roundabout of approximately 42m.

Mitigation

The applicant is proposing to undertake a suite of avoidance and mitigation activities to lower the effects of the activity on the two waterways. The mitigation includes minimising the areas of disturbance, management plans (erosion, sediment control), avoiding (where possible) migration season for fish, following the New Zealand Fish Passage Guidelines and undertaking a stream simulation approach, and fish surveys/salvage before work is undertaken. These measures appear to be sufficient to lower the potential effects of the activity as long as the applicant adheres to them.

Freshwater summary

The waterways affected by the proposed activities have limited records of native freshwater fish however, there is likely to be koaro present as well as eel and common bullies. The proposed activities will have a permanent effect on the waterways due to the proposed culverting which will remove the existing stream habitat. The applicant is proposing several avoidance and mitigation options that will lower the negative effects of the activity. In principal DOC believes that the effects of the proposed activity, while being permanent, will be minor as long as the appropriate mitigation and avoidance methods discussed are used. However, this will be dependent on the details in the final culvert designs as well as the details in the proposed management plans.

Heritage values

Values

There are gold tailings present in the One Mile Reserve which date to the initial goldrush period ca. 1862-1864. As a consequence they are historically significant as there are no other known gold rush period gold mining sites now remaining close to Queenstown and which are easily accessible by the public.

As these features are located on Public Conservation Land (PCL) DOC is able to provide a level of protection for this site and is required to do so for historically significant cultural heritage resources on behalf of the New Zealand public. Outside of PCL, DOC can exert no control on such important sites.

As the tailings predate-1900 they are protected as an archaeological site under the provisions of the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014. However, this Act is not a cultural heritage management tool with decisions on the management of heritage sites on PCL being left to DOC as one of its responsibilities under the Conservation Act 1987.

Also of note is an agreement between Heritage New Zealand and DOC that a covenant be placed over the historic remains in One Mile to protect them from future development if the Reserve was sold (letter attached). This was mitigation for works that DOC was, and has already undertaken, to destroy gold tailings at the Morningstar Reserve for a car park. The land where the site is located cannot therefore be disposed of without the site being better protected.

Site E41/228 One Mile Tailings

The visible gold workings in the reserve are located principally along the western third of the reserve. They comprise three small gullies with outflows to a steep bank dropping down into the true left bank of the One Mile Creek. There are traces of old races or pipe benches coming in from the west, probably from a tributary gully of the One Mile rather than the main creek.

Workings of this period (early-mid 1860s) have usually been obliterated by later sluicings, e.g. in the Moonlight area, or by later developments. The formation of the road to the One Mile power house has obliterated the workings on the terrace below the tailings on Section 95. The small area of tailings on Section 95 are sufficiently complete to show how the sluicing was done, and if the vegetation was cleared on the adjacent steep slopes, more of the head race system may be revealed.

Possible mitigation measures

Due to the significance of site E41/228, the only possible mitigation measure is avoidance and we seek a condition which confirms that this site will not be modified or disturbed. We also see an opportunity for the area to be cleared and enhanced so the tailings become a feature which shares this early gold mining history of Queenstown with the community.

Public Works Act

A Public Works Act (PWA) consent will be required for all lands administered under the Reserves Acts, not just the DOC managed reserve. There is no delegation for council to act as the Decision Maker for this process. As an acquisition under the PWA is still considered a disposal, because it is Crown to Council (rather than Crown to Crown if it was going to NZTA) then the triggers for First Right of Refusal are still met, so we would give notification to Ngai Tahu than the land was to be disposed of.