

Queenstown Strategic Network Plan





NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi

Published August 2026 (26-EX-064)

ISBN 978-1-997342-31-1

Copyright: July 2026

NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi

NZBN: 9429041910085



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Executive summary

Queenstown's strategic transport network plays a critical role in supporting the transport needs of a nationally important tourism destination and a rapidly growing residential centre. State Highway 6 (SH6) and State Highway 6A (SH6A) provide the primary connections between the eastern and southern growth corridors, Frankton, Queenstown Airport, Queenstown town centre and the wider regional network. These corridors carry resident, visitor, freight, servicing, airport, public transport and local access movements through a small number of constrained links and river crossings.

Queenstown is growing rapidly and performs a national economic role that is large relative to its permanent population. The Whakatipu Ward's peak-day population is forecast to grow from around 83,000 people in 2025 to around 143,000 by 2055, creating city-scale travel demand on a small and physically constrained network. Queenstown also supports around \$1.4 billion in tourism GDP and more than 11,500 tourism-related jobs, while Queenstown Airport handled around 2.6 million passengers in the year to June 2025. Its national significance is reinforced by 19% of visitors to New Zealand staying only in Queenstown, while 50% come to New Zealand at least partly because of Queenstown. Reliable access is therefore important to New Zealand's visitor economy and international reputation, not only to the district.

Many previous studies in Queenstown have identified the need for a more integrated and multi-modal response, including improved public transport, walking and cycling, targeted road improvements and demand management, before network performance would begin to impact the town's ability to function. Congestion is now reaching those levels and a new long-term approach is required.

Case studies examined through an international benchmarking exercise confirm this approach as comparable resort towns globally generally manage growth through a coordinated mix of public transport, demand management, active mode improvements and targeted road investment, rather than relying on road capacity expansion alone.

In this document, NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA) sets out a plan to manage and develop Queenstown's strategic transport network over the next 30 years, recognising the physical, financial and delivery constraints that exist in Queenstown.

The document covers three main parts:

1. Understanding the challenge

We set out the key challenges facing Queenstown's strategic network, including where, when and how pressure is likely to emerge as growth continues.

2. Developing the strategic response

We set out how these challenges could be tackled over time, through an integrated approach that makes better use of existing corridors, moves more people in less space and actively manages demand.

3. Identifying activities and investment choices

We identify activities for further development across the eastern corridor, Frankton, the southern corridor, SH6A, Queenstown town centre and network-wide enabling workstreams.

Queenstown's strategic network faces significant and complex challenges

The plan identifies four main challenges:

1. The system is not sustainably providing for growth, resulting in increasing congestion, delays and poor travel reliability.

Key parts of the Queenstown network are already operating at or above practical capacity for extended periods. Congestion is lasting longer, travel time reliability is worsening and small changes in demand or network conditions can create disproportionate delay. Forecast demand shows that without intervention, Frankton Road, the Shotover Bridge and the Kawarau Falls Bridge will become increasingly critical constraints, with severe congestion emerging by 2035 and worsening over time.

2. The strategic network is not consistently fulfilling its intended roles and functions.

SH6 and SH6A need to support regional movement, local access, freight and servicing, public transport, walking and cycling, visitor travel and access to major destinations. In several places, especially Frankton and SH6A, these functions compete for the same limited corridor space. Without clearer corridor roles and better integration between state highways, local roads, public transport, parking and land use, the network will become less able to support growth and reliable access.

3. The lack of alternative routes means the system is reliant on key parts of the strategic network, leading to widespread disruption during incidents.

Queenstown depends on a small number of strategic corridors and constrained river crossings. Incidents, maintenance, weather events or natural hazards can quickly affect the wider network because there are few practical alternatives. Additionally, there are fewer routes to distribute demand across as demand grows. Without intervention, the network will have less spare capacity to absorb and recover from disruption.

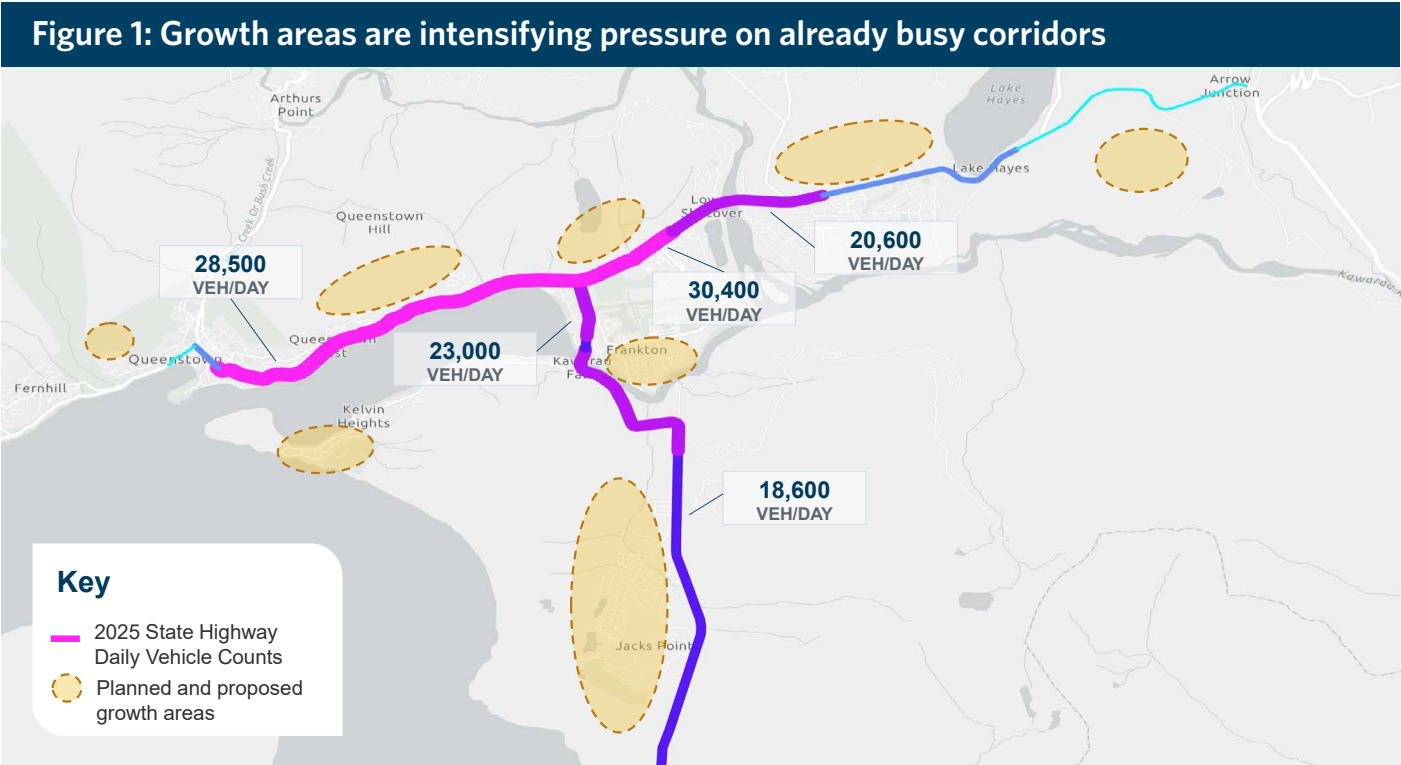
4. Increasing demand is creating harm for people, communities and the environment.

Higher traffic volumes, constrained urban corridors and competing access needs increase conflict between vehicles, buses, freight, pedestrians and cyclists, which contributes to increasing safety risk. Higher volumes of traffic also increase emissions, noise and severance, and cause poor conditions for public transport and active modes. If reliable alternatives are not provided, continued private vehicle reliance will reinforce congestion and make these impacts harder to manage.



These challenges are compounded by rapid and persistent resident and visitor growth, complex all-day travel demand, limited physical capacity to expand the network and a funding model that does not fully align costs with beneficiaries. Even with currently planned or identified activities, Queenstown's strategic network will continue to deteriorate over the next 30 years, with capacity at key parts of the network already being reached at peak times.

The forecasts in this plan are not intended to predict exact future traffic volumes, queue lengths or travel times. They illustrate the scale of transport challenges that may emerge under a particular set of growth and travel assumptions. Actual outcomes will depend on how people, businesses and the transport system adapt over time.

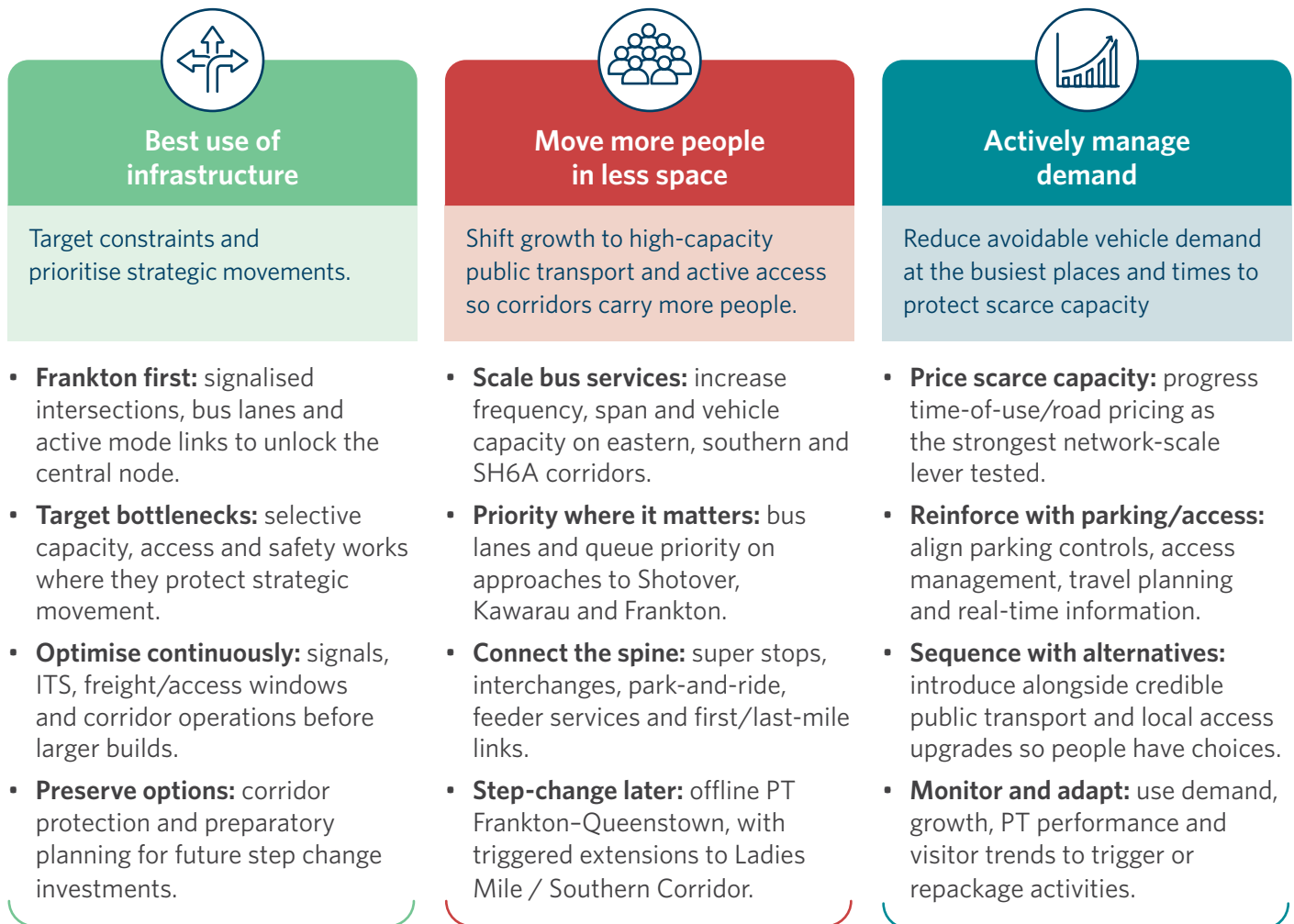


A balanced strategic response is needed to address the challenges

Queenstown cannot simply road-build its way out of the challenges facing the strategic network. The physical, environmental, property, constructability and funding constraints are too significant, and further general traffic capacity would feed demand into fixed downstream bottlenecks like SH6A and the town centre. A balanced approach is required to enable the network to move more people and goods reliably, efficiently and resiliently.

This plan identifies a three-part strategic response with a two-part delivery strategy, summarised in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Preferred strategic approach overview





Sequence step-change improvements

Use a trigger-based pathway that keeps options open. Make the most of existing assets, build readiness and only commit to larger moves when evidence, funding and deliverability align.

- **Start with readiness:** protect options, complete investigations and prepare enabling decisions before committing to major works.
- **Use clear triggers:** advance interventions when demand, reliability, growth or resilience signals show incremental responses are no longer enough.
- **Stage by dependencies:** align infrastructure with public transport services, local access, land use and funding decisions so benefits are not stranded.
- **Keep packages scalable:** progress modular works that can be expanded, re-scoped or deferred as conditions change.
- **Review continuously:** monitor performance and refresh the programme through partner governance and future investment processes.



Fund and deliver differently

Conventional NLTP and local funding alone is unlikely to deliver the programme. Queenstown needs a blended, beneficiary-aligned funding package.

- **Broaden beneficiaries:** capture a fairer contribution from visitors, users, growth areas and land-value uplift where demand and benefits occur.
- **Use pricing as a lever:** time-of-use can manage peaks and support investment, with equity and revenue use designed upfront.
- **Bring forward investment:** infrastructure funding and financing can raise finance against future levy or beneficiary revenue streams.
- **Partner where it adds value:** private or partnership delivery may accelerate offline PT, park-and-ride, interchange or visitor transport components.
- **Lock governance early:** agree partner leads, funding shares and critical dependencies through Way to Go, RLTP, Regional Deal and business cases.

Two strategic corridors

A key feature of the preferred approach is that SH6 and SH6A have different long-term roles. SH6 has greater potential to accommodate public transport priority, targeted capacity improvements and staged growth-corridor interventions. SH6A is the most constrained corridor in the network, with limited scope for continuous bus priority or meaningful additional road capacity. The long-term response for SH6A is therefore centred on an offline public transport connection between Frankton and Queenstown town centre, supported bus service and targeted physical improvements to maintain performance while the long-term pathway is developed.



Activities and investment choices

The plan identifies a selection of activities that contribute towards the long-term strategic response. These activities are not a funded programme and do not assign delivery responsibility at this stage. Future decisions on scope, timing, funding and delivery will occur through normal investment and statutory processes, including the State Highway Investment Proposal, Regional Land Transport Plan, National Land Transport Programme, business cases, Regional Deal processes and partner-led programmes.

The activities are organised around four corridors and network-wide activities (shown graphically in Figure 3):

- **SH6 Eastern Corridor:** interventions to safely manage growth and improve public transport reliability between Arrow Junction, Ladies Mile, Lake Hayes, Shotover Country and Frankton.
- **SH6 Frankton urban area:** foundation improvements to address Frankton as the central operating node of the network, including signalised intersections, bus priority and active mode links.
- **SH6 Southern Corridor:** targeted access, safety and bus priority improvements to support growth around Hanley's Farm, Jacks Point and the wider southern corridor, with longer-term options retained for additional crossing capacity and offline public transport.
- **SH6A Frankton to Queenstown and Queenstown town centre:** targeted operational improvements in the existing corridor, alongside development of a longer-term offline public transport solution between Frankton and Queenstown.
- **Network-wide activities:** public transport service uplift, first- and last-mile access, demand management, time-of-use charging, monitoring, governance and alternative funding and financing.

Figure 3: Preferred strategic approach summary



Activities are sequenced (but not programmed) to reflect urgency, effectiveness, integration with growth, affordability and delivery practicality. The first phase focuses on no-regret foundation activities that address current constraints and create the operating conditions needed for the wider strategy to work. Frankton Flats Network Improvements are sequenced first because Frankton is the central operating node of the Queenstown network and a dependency for later corridor, public transport and access improvements.

The second phase focuses on incremental capacity, including public transport priority, service uplift, park and ride, first- and last-mile improvements, targeted corridor enhancements and demand management. The third phase retains longer-term capacity step-change options, including offline public transport and major new infrastructure, to be advanced when growth, demand and performance triggers justify them.

Implementing the plan

Implementation will require coordinated action across NZTA, Queenstown Lakes District Council, Otago Regional Council, central government and, where appropriate, private sector partners. Many of the activities needed to make the preferred approach work sit outside the state highway network or outside NZTA's direct delivery responsibility. These include local road improvements, parking management, public transport services, first- and last-mile access, development integration, growth funding and demand management.

The plan also recognises that Queenstown's transport programme is unlikely to be deliverable through the status quo NLTP and local funding model alone. A structured funding and financing workstream is needed to test visitor and user contributions, growth-related funding tools, value capture, infrastructure funding and financing, targeted central government support and partnership delivery models.

Because the plan spans 30 years, it will need to adapt as growth, visitor demand, funding settings, technology, private development proposals and delivery conditions change. Ongoing monitoring will be used to compare observed demand and network conditions with planned capacity, public transport performance and delivery lead times. This will inform when activities should be advanced, deferred or repackaged through future RLTP, SHIP, NLTP, Regional Deal or partner delivery processes.

Overall, this plan provides an enduring strategic direction for Queenstown's transport network. It confirms that the network must be managed as a scarce and nationally important asset, with investment focused on moving more people in less space, protecting essential access, improving resilience, reducing harm and creating a realistic pathway to delivery through sequencing, partnership and alternative funding streams.

Introduction

Queenstown's strategic network

Queenstown is one of New Zealand's fastest-growing and most internationally recognised urban areas. Its transport system supports a resident population, a large and variable visitor population, nationally significant tourism activity, airport access, freight and servicing, and everyday local travel across a physically constrained basin. In 2025, the Whakatipu Ward's resident population was around 35,400, but its peak-day population was estimated at more than 83,000 with visitors included. By 2055, peak-day population is forecast to reach around 143,000, which is between the current sizes of Dunedin and Tauranga.

Queenstown's national significance is large relative to its permanent population. Tourism in Queenstown generated around \$1.4 billion of GDP and supported more than 11,500 jobs in the year to March 2024, while Queenstown Airport handled around 2.6 million passengers in the year to June 2025. Queenstown is also a key reason many international visitors come to New Zealand: 19% of visitors stay only in Queenstown, and 50% come to New Zealand at least partly because of Queenstown. Reliable access is therefore important not only for the district, but for New Zealand's visitor economy, export earnings and international reputation.

Why Queenstown's challenge is different

Queenstown's transport challenge differs from a typical urban network because it is structurally harder to solve and the consequences of underperformance are more acute:

Table 1: Queenstown's transport challenges

Transport Challenges	Description
Rapid and sustained growth in both residents and visitors	The district has to plan for nationally high population growth, overlaid with nationally high tourism demand that creates different travel patterns and transport pressures that are harder to solve with conventional infrastructure responses.
A visitor economy that does not directly fund the infrastructure it uses	A substantial share of pressure is generated by visitors, who do not directly contribute to the local funding base needed to provide and maintain infrastructure.
A highly constrained network form	Most movement is funneled through a small number of corridors and bridge crossings with little redundancy, while unique physical constraints mean opportunities for traditional road capacity expansion are highly restricted.
Complex all-day demand with overlapping and conflicting trip purposes	Travel is spread across the day, across seasons and across many trip purposes, with commuting, freight and servicing, visitor travel, airport access, school trips and local circulation often overlapping and competing for the same limited corridor space.
A structural funding and delivery mismatch	The district must plan and deliver infrastructure for peak-day populations far larger than its ratepayer base, while a substantial share of demand is generated by visitors who do not directly fund the local infrastructure they use. This makes traditional funding and prioritisation mechanisms less well suited to the scale and urgency of Queenstown's needs.

A constrained network shaped by geography

The strategic transport network is central to how Queenstown functions. SH6 and SH6A provide the main continuous connections between Frankton, Queenstown town centre, Queenstown Airport, the eastern and southern growth corridors and the wider regional network. Unlike larger metropolitan areas, Queenstown's strategic network is concentrated into a small number of corridors, intersections and river crossings, making it highly sensitive to growth, incidents, seasonal peaks and changes in land use.

Queenstown's network has developed within a constrained geography of lakes, rivers and steep topography. What was originally a small settlement network has progressively intensified around SH6, SH6A and a limited set of local routes. Corridors that once served regional access and local connectivity now perform the role of a larger urban system, carrying resident, visitor, commuter, freight, servicing, public transport and local access movements through the same limited space.

A dual-centre structure with corridors converging on Frankton

Queenstown now operates primarily with a dual-centre urban structure. Frankton has evolved into the district's main employment, retail, education, health, airport and public transport hub, while Queenstown town centre remains the primary visitor, hospitality and commercial destination. These centres perform different but complementary roles, generating high levels of movement between them and reinforcing the importance of the Frankton - Queenstown town centre corridor.

This structure has two primary growth corridors. The eastern and southern corridors are expected to accommodate much of Queenstown's future resident growth, while also carrying visitor movements, freight and servicing, public transport and access to major destinations. Both corridors converge on Frankton, increasing the importance of how that part of the network operates.

Frankton is the hinge point of the Queenstown network where eastern, southern, airport, local and town-centre movements overlap, as well as being a destination itself. Because most strategic movements pass through, connect to or depend on Frankton, relatively localised constraints can have network-wide effects. Improvements in Frankton are therefore a foundation for later corridor, public transport and access improvements.



SH6A between Frankton and Queenstown town centre performs a different role and faces different constraints. It is the main existing connection between the two centres, but it is also the most physically constrained part of the strategic network, with limited practical scope for conventional widening or continuous bus priority. As Queenstown grows, SH6A cannot continue to absorb increasing travel demand through the existing road corridor alone.

The same corridors must also accommodate a complex mix of users, including residents, visitors, freight and servicing, airport access, public transport, walking, cycling and local access. Queenstown's travel demand is not limited to traditional commuter peaks. Visitor activity, shift work, freight and servicing, events, weekends and seasonal peaks create sustained all-day pressure, making reliability important across more of the day and year. Public transport and active modes are therefore an essential part of any strategic network response. They provide the main means of increasing people-moving capacity through constrained corridors.

The map illustrates the State Highway Network in the Lake Taupo region, highlighting the SH6 Growth Corridor. The corridor is shown as a green line with a large green arrow pointing east towards Wānaka and Cromwell, and an orange arrow pointing south towards Milford Sound. The network is marked with red dashed circles indicating constraints. Various icons represent network users: Residents (house), Visitors (group of people), School (graduation cap), Freight (truck), and Employment (briefcase). Key locations include Milford Sound, Town Centre, Coronet Peak, Remarkables, Wānaka, Cardrona, and Lake Taupo. The map also shows the SH6A and SH6 routes, and the location of the airport.

Key Visitor Destinations

- Milford Sound
- Town Centre
- Coronet Peak
- Remarkables
- Wānaka
- Cardrona

Network Users

- Residents
- Visitors
- School
- Freight
- Employment

Key

- State Highway Network
- SH6 Growth Corridor (Eastern + Southern)
- Network Constraint
- Airport

Drivers of change

The 30-year perspective of this plan means it is important to consider how New Zealand, Queenstown and its surrounds, and the transport system could change over time, what challenges or opportunities may arise, and how this may influence what decisions we need to make about the strategic network.

Some of the drivers of future change and what they could mean for the Queenstown strategic network are:

Demographic change

Peak day population (including visitors) for the Whakatipu Ward is expected to grow from a current 83,000 and reach 143,000 by 2055 and will generate significantly more trips on the strategic transport network.

Changing demographics, such as an ageing population, mean that 70% of households over the next 30 years are expected to be made up of singles or couples. This demographic shift will influence travel behaviour, with more inter-peak trips for non-work purposes.

Technology and data

Advancements are changing how the transport system is used and managed and provide opportunities to tailor individual solutions and provide high-quality real-time information. Emerging technologies could change how we access things; Mobility as a Service, Connected and Autonomous Vehicles and the use of real-time information back to users. These developments provide opportunities to optimise the use of current networks, squeezing more out of what we already have by allowing the use of space to change dynamically, or for vehicles to safely travel closer together in a way that increases network capacity.

Changing travel patterns

Flexible working reduces peak-hour commuting, while growing demand for fast deliveries increases freight pressure in urban areas. Urban areas will need to accommodate more freight movement alongside passenger travel, without compromising safety or efficiency. Queenstown currently has unconventional travel patterns due to unique demographics and reliance on a small number of economic activities. Planning must anticipate more variable travel patterns and support a mix of modes that meet changing needs. This includes designing networks that can adapt to demand fluctuations and integrating land use planning with transport investment.

Urban growth

Most growth is planned to occur within the existing urban area through intensification and in urban growth areas on SH6 that are well serviced by public transport. However, a more enabling planning environment, including the Fast Track Approvals Act, creates increasing uncertainty about the timing, location and intensity of growth in Queenstown and the Wakatipu Basin. Strategic transport planning therefore needs to focus on resilience and adaptability, recognising that future development may not occur exactly as anticipated in current plans. The reach of PT services may need to evolve to serve potential urban expansion in the Wakatipu Basin.

Climate change

The transport network will need to adapt to escalating impacts from climate change. Queenstown Lakes will become hotter and drier, but with more intense rainfall events. This will increase the risk of fire and extreme weather events such as flooding. This has consequences for the resilience of infrastructure.

Meeting emissions reduction goals will require increased use of public transport, walking and cycling, while electrification of the vehicle fleet may increase maintenance requirements for road surfaces.

Changing economic structure

Queenstown Lakes is currently reliant on a few key sectors with the tourism industry accounting for the majority of jobs. There is impetus to diversify the economy post COVID-19 pandemic. Priority sectors for economic development include low-carbon, non-extractive industries such as the growing film industry and regenerative initiatives that will create high value jobs. Economic activity is expected to continue to be concentrated in Frankton with Queenstown Town Centre also playing an important role. The new urban growth areas in the eastern and southern corridors will comprise mixed use developments that will provide important albeit small contributions.

These drivers of change highlight the uncertainty that needs to be considered in long-term planning for Queenstown's strategic network. The scenarios used for this plan were therefore a tool for testing robustness and adaptability, rather than an attempt to predict a single future. Further detail on scenario assumptions and supporting modelling is provided in the future land use and demand forecasting appendices.

The Queenstown Strategic Network Plan

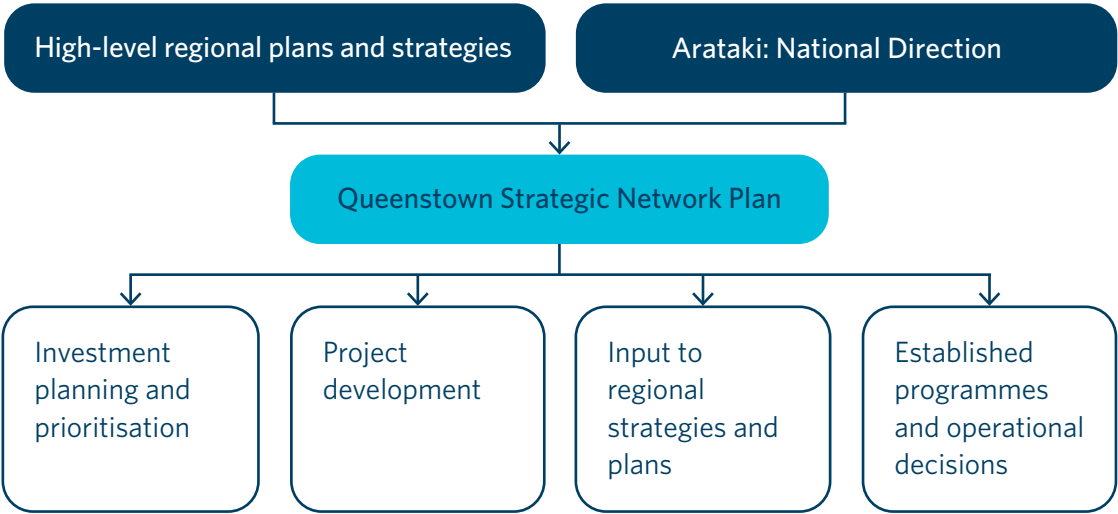
The Queenstown Strategic Network Plan (QSNP) sets out how NZTA, working with its partners, intends to manage and develop Queenstown’s strategic transport network over the next 30 years. It provides a strategic link between national and regional direction, day-to-day network management and future project development, recognising the importance of Queenstown’s network to the district, the lower South Island and New Zealand’s visitor economy.

The QSNP is an NZTA-led plan because of NZTA’s system leadership role and responsibility for the state highway network. However, it has been developed with input from Queenstown Lakes District Council and Otago Regional Council, recognising that public transport, local roads, parking, land use and demand management all influence how the strategic network performs.

The plan is not an investment case and does not seek funding or commit delivery of a fixed programme. Its purpose is to establish the network challenges, confirm the long-term strategic response and identify activities that should be developed further through normal statutory and investment processes, including the State Highway Investment Proposal, Regional Land Transport Plan and National Land Transport Programme.

The QSNP helps connect high-level direction in national, regional and local planning documents with guidance for the ongoing management of the strategic network and more detailed planning for individual projects. This will help ensure decision-making is integrated across the state highway network, local transport system, public transport network and land use planning.

Figure 5: QSNP links to other planning documents and processes

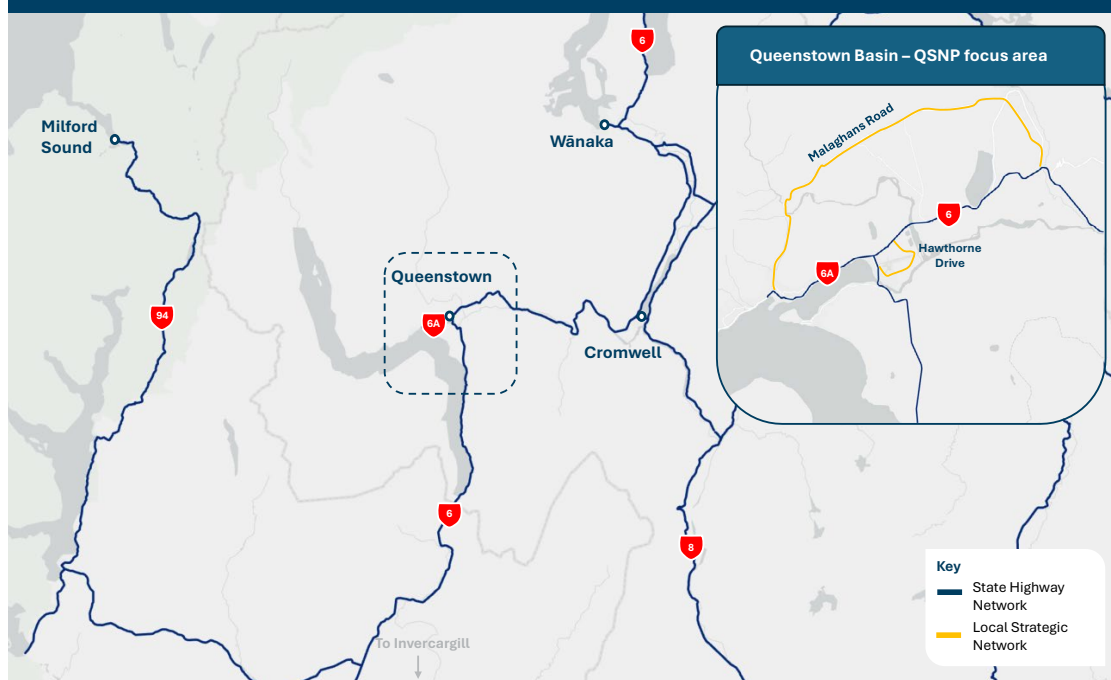


Scope

The QSNP focuses primarily on SH6 from Arrow Junction to Drift Bay and SH6A between Frankton and the Steamer Wharf, because these corridors provide the continuous strategic route through the Wakatipu Basin and carry a combination of regional, visitor, freight, commuter, public transport and local access movements.

The state highway network cannot be planned in isolation. Public transport, local roads, active mode networks, parking management, land use decisions and demand management all influence how the strategic network performs. For that reason, the plan includes partner-led activities where these are necessary to achieve the plan's outcomes.

Figure 6: QSNP geographical scope



Approach

The QSNP was developed in three linked phases:

- **Phase 1** – Understanding the challenge: identification of the key challenges facing the network, how these may change in the future, and the evidence base for intervention.
- **Phase 2** – Developing the strategic approach: testing potential strategic responses, including optimisation, public transport, demand management and targeted capacity options, to identify the preferred long-term direction.
- **Phase 3** – Activities and investment choices: identification of activities for further development, including broad timing, sequencing, dependencies, next steps and the role of NZTA and partner organisations.

The plan builds on previous district spatial planning, masterplans and transport business cases developed through the Way to Go partnership. That work has consistently shown that it is neither practical nor feasible to provide enough road capacity for private vehicles alone to meet future demand. The QSNP therefore reconfirms this existing direction, and provides NZTA's long-term position on how the state highway network should adapt as growth, visitor demand, land use change and funding conditions evolve.

Stakeholder and partner input has helped confirm the evidence base, test emerging directions and identify where coordinated action will be needed. The QSNP's success will depend on continued alignment between NZTA, Queenstown Lakes District Council and Otago Regional Council through the Way to Go partnership, supported by engagement with mana whenua through Kā Huanui a Tāhuna.

Understanding the challenge

The Challenge: a network at its limits

This section articulates why change is required, outlining the nature, scale and timing of issues. It sets the foundation for identifying the best strategic direction, supports prioritisation of activities and examines the current and future pressures on the transport system, considering what could happen if no action is taken.

The following sections explain how Queenstown's transport challenge is a structural network capacity issue. A rapidly growing resident population, a large visitor economy and increasingly complex travel demand are being loaded onto a constrained network with limited redundancy and little scope for conventional expansion.

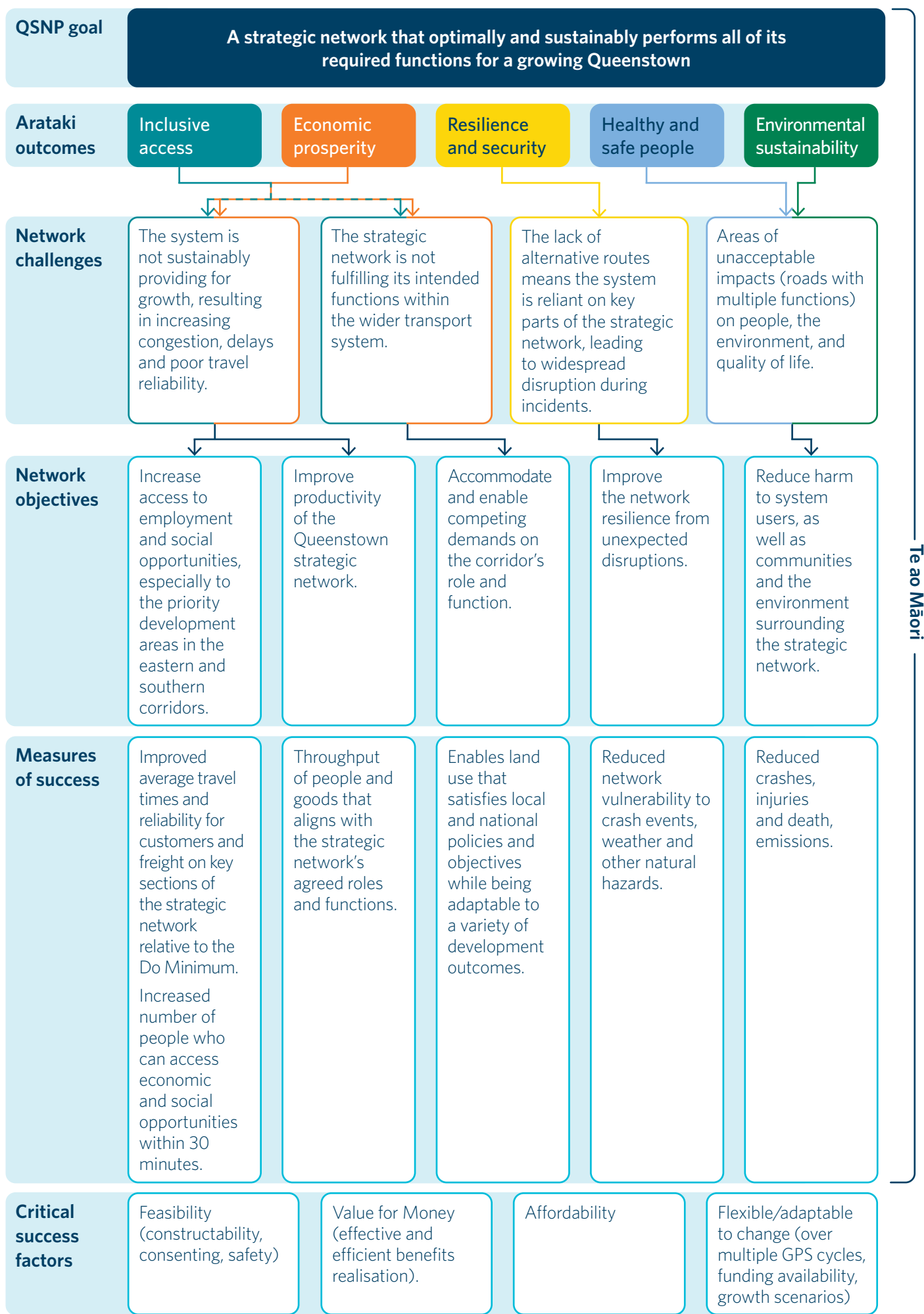
Observed conditions indicate the network is approaching its practical limits, with more persistent congestion, worsening travel time reliability and increasing pressure at key constraints. Forecast demand shows this is a systemic issue rather than a short-term fluctuation. Queenstown supports a nationally significant visitor economy that depends on reliable access, workforce mobility and efficient movement of people and goods, and as such addressing the challenge is in the national interest.

The evidence supports intervention now. The task for this plan is to identify a staged response that is realistic to fund, consent, develop and deliver, while retaining a clear pathway to the higher-capacity system Queenstown will require.

Strategic Framework

The strategic framework below connects long-term transport outcomes with the specific challenges facing the state highway network, the objectives sought through addressing those challenges, measures of success and critical success factors. The strategic framework builds on the substantial body of existing planning and investment cases within the Queenstown area. Together, these provided the structure for comparing options and determining which approach best met the plan's intent.

Figure 7: QSNP strategic framework outline



Future demand

Future travel demand on Queenstown's network is expected to increase substantially as resident and visitor growth continue over the next 30 years. Growth will be concentrated onto a small number of corridors, intersections and river crossings that already have limited spare capacity and few practical alternatives.

By 2055, the Whakatipu Ward is forecast to accommodate a peak-day population of around 143,000 people (between the current size of Dunedin and Tauranga). Growth of residents and visitors is summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Whakatipu ward growth projections (source: QLDC)

Demand measure	2025	2055	Why it matters
Residents	35,400	59,500	More everyday travel between growth areas, Frankton, Queenstown Airport and Queenstown town centre.
Average day visitors	20,800	36,600	Adds substantial all-day demand across airport, accommodation, town centre and visitor attraction trips.
Peak day visitors	47,900	83,500	Creates demand peaks that are large relative to the local funding and infrastructure base.
Peak day population	83,300	143,000	City-scale travel demand on a small town's network.

Unlike a typical commuter-focused urban network, Queenstown experiences sustained all-day, weekend and seasonal demand. Visitor activity, airport access, shift-based employment, freight and servicing, school travel and discretionary trips overlap with conventional commuter movements (see Table 3). This means reliability is important across more times of the day and more times of the year. It also reduces the effectiveness of responses that focus only on short peak periods.

Frankton's increasing role as the district's primary centre for employment, retail, education, health services, airport access and public transport interchange is also changing travel patterns. While Queenstown town centre remains the nationally significant visitor, hospitality and commercial destination, more everyday trips now move between the eastern corridor, southern corridor, Frankton, Queenstown Airport and Queenstown town centre. As growth continues, these cross-basin movements will place increasing pressure on Frankton Road, the Shotover Bridge and the Kawarau Falls Bridge.

Understanding the forecasts

The demand forecasts in this plan are based on a specific set of assumptions about population growth, visitor growth, land use and travel behaviour. They are intended to indicate the scale of future network pressures rather than provide a precise prediction of future conditions.

As congestion increases, travellers, businesses and the transport system itself are likely to adapt. Some people may travel at different times, shift transport modes, work remotely, increase vehicle occupancy, travel less often, or make different location decisions. These responses can moderate growth in traffic volumes and influence how the network operates over time.

For this reason, forecasts of future congestion should be interpreted as an indication of the scale of the challenge rather than a literal prediction of future queue lengths or travel times.

Table 3: Key customer groups and implications for future demand

Customer group	Demand pattern	Implication for the strategic network
Residents and commuters	Everyday travel between growth areas, Frankton and town centre, with peak and inter-peak demand.	Increases baseline demand on SH6, SH6A and key crossings as growth disperses east and south.
Visitors and airport users	All-day, weekend and seasonal trips between the airport, accommodation, town centre and visitor destinations.	Creates dispersed demand and reinforces the need for reliable access to nationally significant visitor destinations.
Workers, trades and service industries	Longer-distance, early, late, weekend and multi-stop trips, often with limited ability to shift mode or time.	Makes reliability important beyond the peak and requires network space to be protected for trips that are harder to shift.
Freight and servicing	Time-sensitive deliveries, servicing, construction and visitor-economy support trips across the day.	A smaller share of total trips, but highly sensitive to delay and therefore important to economic productivity.
Students, public transport passengers and active mode users	School peaks, all-day bus trips and short local trips that depend on safe, reliable and legible access.	Highlights the need to provide credible alternatives to private vehicle travel through constrained corridors.

The main sources of future demand are expected to be:

- **Resident growth** in the eastern and southern corridors, including Ladies Mile, Lake Hayes, Jacks Point and Hanley's Farm, which will increase everyday trips to Frankton, Queenstown Airport, Queenstown town centre and other key destinations. The Fast Track Approvals Act could enable growth in unplanned areas.
- **Continued visitor growth**, with a large volume of trips spread across the day for airport access, accommodation, town centre activity, ski fields and other visitor attractions.
- **More dispersed origins and destinations**, as Frankton strengthens as a major employment, retail, education, health and transport interchange centre while Queenstown town centre remains a nationally significant visitor destination.
- **More sustained all-day and seasonal demand**, which will require the network to operate reliably outside traditional commuter peaks as well as during peak visitor periods.

There is substantial uncertainty about where and when growth will occur. Recent growth has repeatedly exceeded previous forecasts, and Fast Track Approvals Act development proposals may bring forward additional growth or locate activity outside areas previously anticipated for urban development. For this reason, the plan needs to be adaptable to different growth futures rather than relying on a single forecast.

Demand forecasting for this plan identified Frankton Road, the Shotover Bridge and the Kawarau Falls Bridge as the main network constraints. These locations are critical because most future travel demand across the basin will need to pass through one or more of them, regardless of the precise growth scenario. Under a do-minimum network, all three constraints are expected to deteriorate materially, with severe congestion emerging by 2035 and worsening thereafter.

Future network performance will depend on moving more people through constrained corridors, rather than relying primarily on additional general traffic capacity.

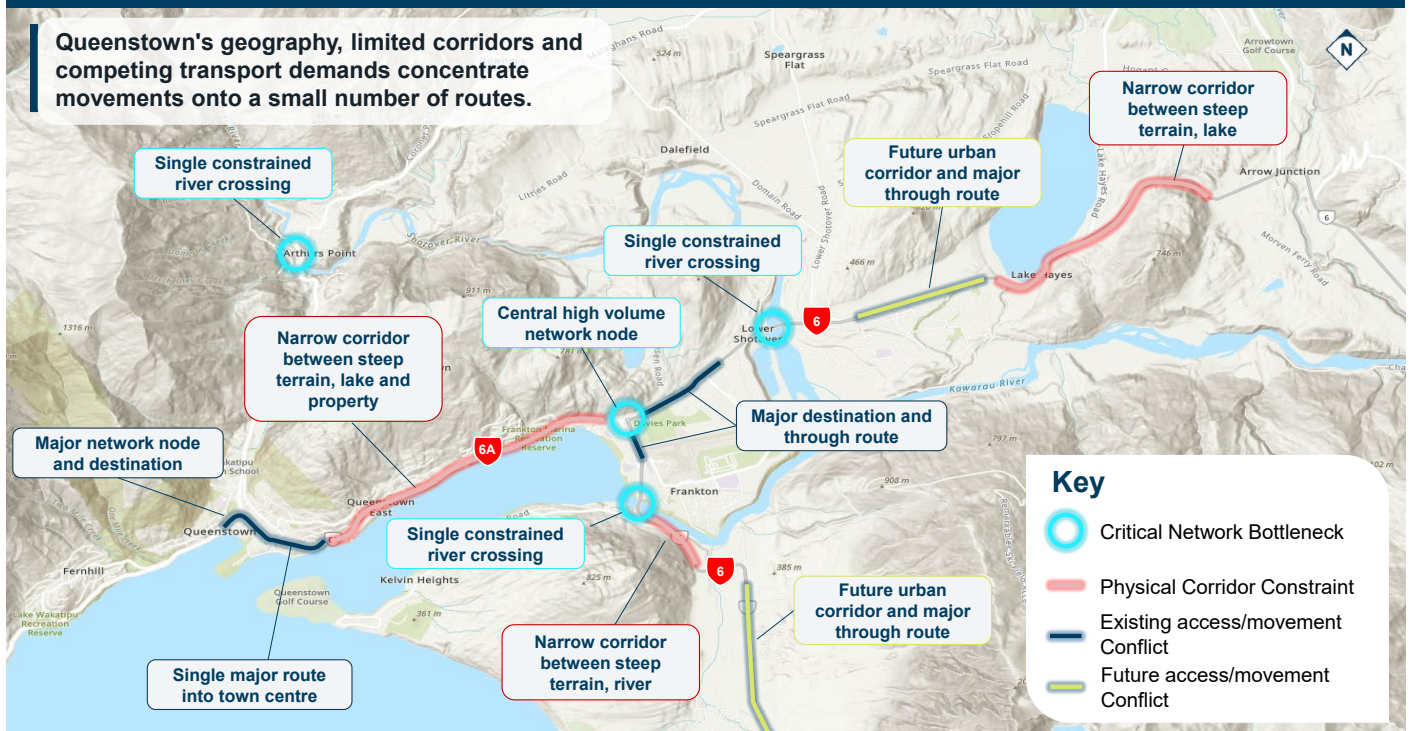
Network constraints

Queenstown's transport challenge is shaped as much by what cannot easily change as by the growth pressures placed on the network. The district's geography funnels movement through a small number of corridors and bridge crossings, while established development, high land values, construction constraints and funding arrangements limit how quickly or extensively the network can be expanded. These constraints mean the response needs to be realistic about space, cost, disruption, delivery risk and complexity. This is summarised in Table 4, and visually in Figure 8.

Table 4: Queenstown Strategic Network Constraints

Customer group	Demand pattern	Implication for the strategic network
Physical and geographic	Lakes, rivers, steep terrain, confined urban edges and a small number of river crossings concentrate movement into limited corridors, particularly SH6, SH6A and the Shotover, Kawarau and Edith Cavell bridges.	There is limited redundancy and little practical scope to rely on conventional road widening or new parallel corridors as the primary response.
Land use and property	Development sits close to constrained corridors in the town centre, Frankton and along SH6A, while land values are high and growth timing continues to change, including through fast-track proposals.	Property impacts, corridor protection, development timing and growth contribution mechanisms need to be considered early rather than treated as later implementation matters.
Delivery and constructability	The network is already busy, with limited spare space for staging, temporary traffic management and maintaining access during works. Poor ground conditions, river crossings, landslide risks, the Alpine Fault context and rising labour, materials and construction costs add cost and programme risk.	Options need to be assessed for consentability, constructability, disruption, operating risk and whole-of-life maintenance implications, as well as transport performance.
Funding, institutional and policy	Queenstown faces a structural infrastructure funding challenge. The district must provide transport infrastructure for a peak-day population far larger than its resident and ratepayer base, while a substantial proportion of demand is generated by visitors who do not directly contribute to local infrastructure funding. At the same time, transport investment is prioritised nationally through processes that do not always recognise the full impact of visitor-driven demand and Queenstown's national economic role. This creates a mismatch between the scale of transport investment required and the funding mechanisms available to deliver it. Responsibilities are also split across state highways, local roads, public transport, parking, land-use planning and demand management, requiring coordinated funding and delivery across multiple organisations.	Funding, financing, governance and delivery pathways are core parts of the strategic response, not implementation details. Activities need to be prioritised and sequenced around affordability, funding availability and delivery readiness as well as transport need.

Figure 8: Queenstown strategic network constraints and bottlenecks



Challenge summary

Queenstown's strategic network is under pressure from a combination of rapid growth, concentrated demand and limited corridor capacity. The result is a set of interconnected challenges that affect reliability, network function, resilience and harm.

These challenges matter to New Zealand due to Queenstown's role as a nationally significant visitor destination. Declining reliability affects access to the airport, town centre, workplaces and visitor destinations, with consequences for the visitor experience, the district economy and New Zealand's wider reputation.

Table 5 summarises the four core challenges. More detailed supporting evidence is provided in the following sections and Problem Definition Evidence appendix.

Table 5: Queenstown challenges summary

Challenge	Primary cause / pressure	Network effect	Consequence
Network performance	Resident and visitor growth is increasing demand on a small number of constrained corridors, intersections and bridge crossings.	Congestion lasts longer, travel times become less reliable and key corridors operate near or above practical capacity for more of the day and year.	Access to jobs, services, the airport and visitor destinations becomes less reliable, increasing travel costs and weakening the visitor experience.
Network function	SH6 and SH6A support regional movement, local access, freight and servicing, public transport, walking, cycling and visitor travel within limited corridor space.	Strategic, local and modal functions increasingly compete with one another, reducing person throughput and limiting the effectiveness of public transport and local access.	The network becomes less able to support growth in Frankton, Queenstown town centre and the eastern and southern growth corridors.
Network resilience	The network depends on a small number of critical corridors and river crossings, with few practical alternative routes.	Incidents, maintenance, weather events or natural hazards can quickly disrupt movement across the wider basin.	Emergency access, airport access, freight, employment and essential services become more vulnerable to delay and disruption.
Network harm	High reliance on private vehicles and limited mode separation place increasing pressure on constrained urban corridors.	Emissions, noise, safety exposure, severance and conflicts between users increase as demand grows.	Queenstown becomes less liveable for residents, less accessible for workers and less attractive for visitors.

Challenge 1: Network performance

Overview

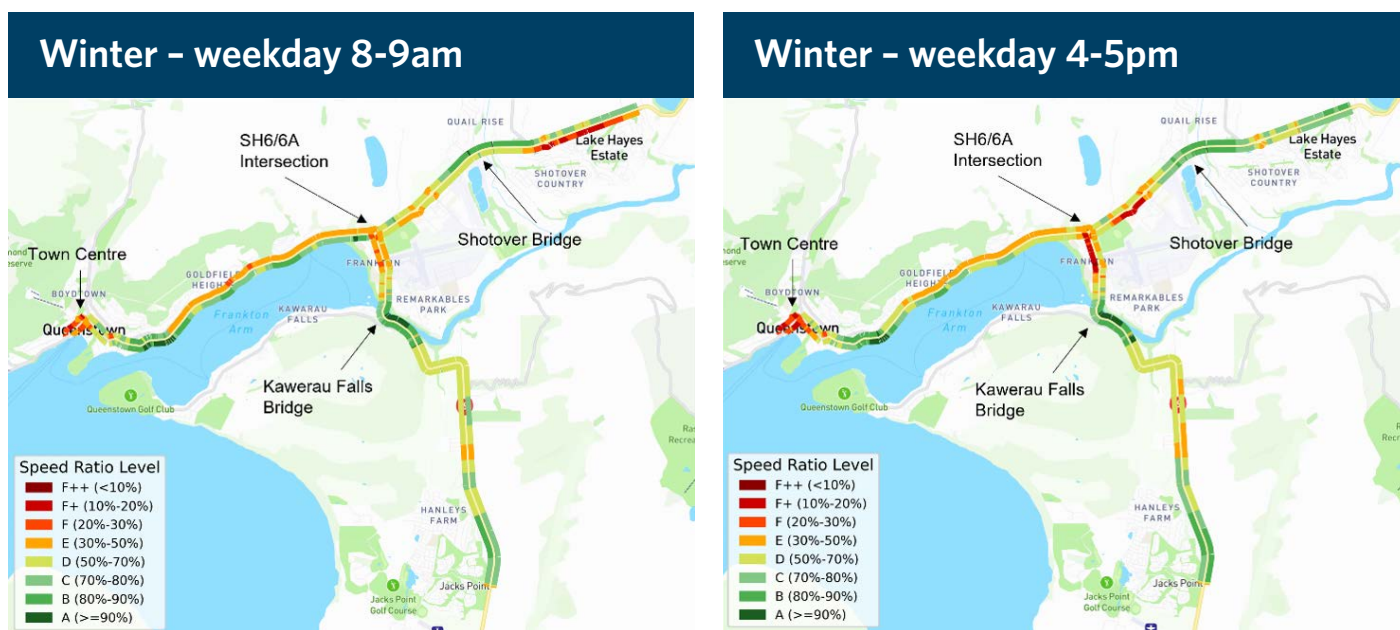
Queenstown's network performance challenge is the progressive loss of network functionality as growing travel demand is concentrated onto corridors and river crossings with limited spare capacity. The strategic network is now being asked to carry city-scale demand through a small number of constrained links. When these links operate near practical capacity, relatively small increases in demand, incidents, seasonal peaks or weather-related disruption can create disproportionate delay across the wider basin.

Current state

The current performance challenge is evident in traffic volumes, travel times and reliability (see Figure 9). Key parts of SH6 and SH6A are now carrying significant traffic volumes comparable to major urban areas. Some corridors operate above 85 percent of practical capacity for up to 6.5 hours per day and on up to 361 days per year, meaning congestion is now a persistent operating condition rather than a short peak-period or seasonal issue.

Figure 9: Strategic network travel times 2025

Note: 2026 travel times are expected to be higher than reported in these diagrams, however data for this time period was unavailable at the time of publish.



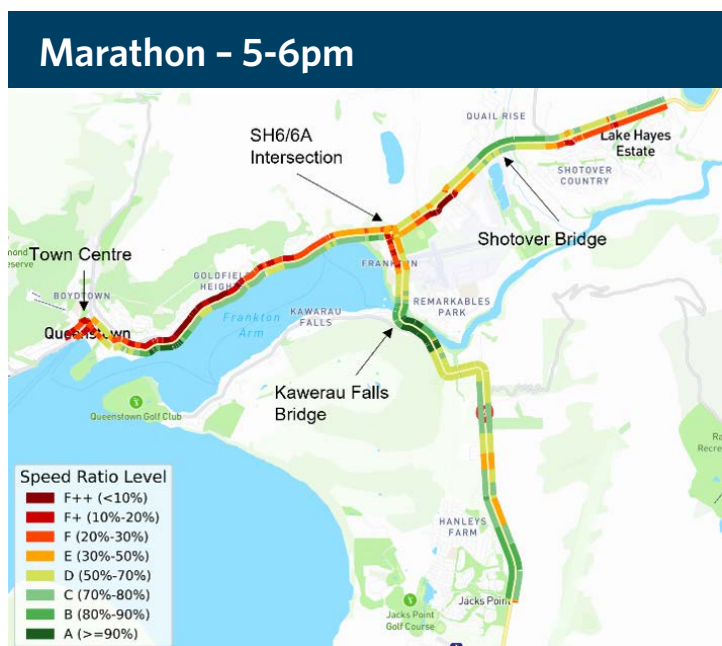
Key points

- **Travel time reliability is deteriorating:** on SH6A eastbound in 2025, 95th percentile travel times exceeded 23 minutes compared with average travel times of around 8 minutes.
- **Average conditions understate the customer impact:** users need to allow for much longer travel times on unreliable days, which affects commuters, students, visitors, freight operators, emergency services and businesses with fixed delivery or servicing windows.
- **Public transport is exposed to the same congestion:** buses use constrained corridors including SH6A, Frankton Road and the approaches to Frankton, reducing the reliability and attractiveness of the alternative needed to move more people through limited space.
- **Freight and servicing trips are highly delay-sensitive:** while they are a smaller share of total movements, unreliable travel times have disproportionate effects on deliveries, servicing windows, trade scheduling and visitor-economy operations.

The effects are not limited to private vehicle users. Freight and servicing trips are a smaller share of total movements, but they are highly sensitive to delay because they rely on vehicle access, delivery windows, trade scheduling and access to specific sites. Public transport is also exposed to the same corridor conditions, reducing the reliability and attractiveness of the alternative needed to move more people through constrained corridors.

Figure 10: Travel times for the PM peak on the day of 2025 Queenstown marathon

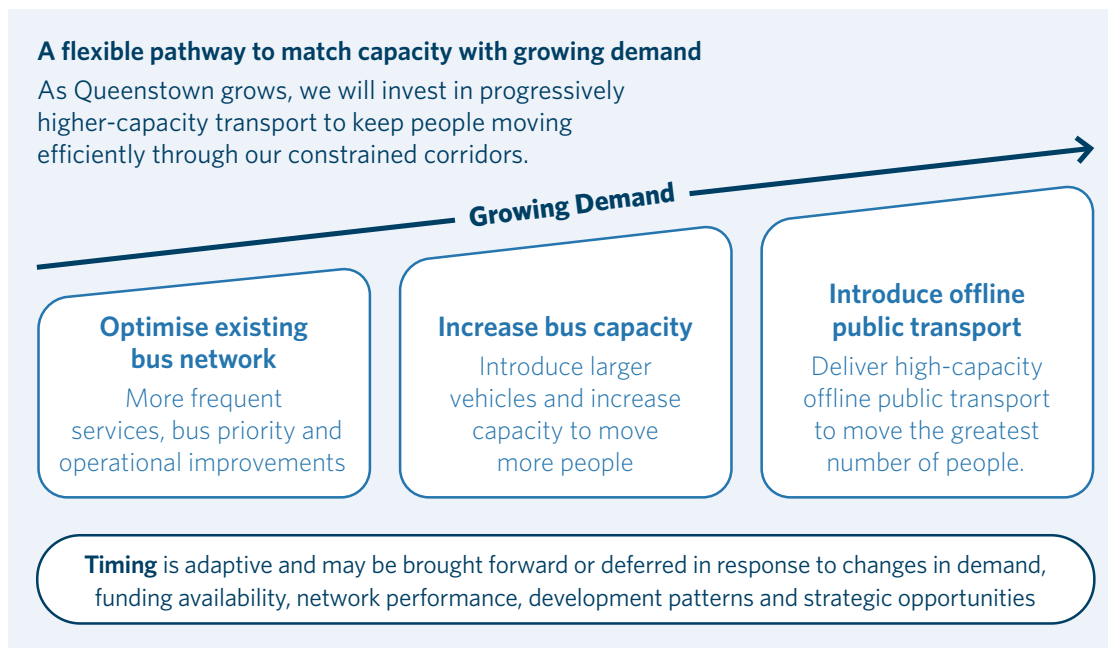
The travel time chart identified in Figure 10, showcases the average network travel times for the 2025 Queenstown Marathon PM peak. These travel times are aligned with what is expected to be experienced on an average day between 2035 and 2040.



Future state

Transport demand forecasting confirms that these observed pressures will intensify without intervention. Frankton Road, the Shotover Bridge and the Kawarau Falls Bridge are the main network constraints because a large proportion of trips must pass through one or more of them. Under a do-minimum network, these constraints are expected to deteriorate materially, with severe congestion emerging by 2035 and worsening thereafter. Figure 11 identifies the step-change in network capacity required to support the forecast level of demand on SH6A.

Figure 11: The step-change in strategy required to support the forecast level of demand on SH6A



Based on constraints identified above, the strategic network cannot maintain reliable access by adding general traffic capacity alone. The strategic response needs to increase person throughput, improve reliability for trips that are harder to shift, prioritise public transport where it can carry more people in limited space and manage demand so scarce corridor capacity is used more efficiently.

Challenge 2: Network function (conflicting demands)

Overview

Queenstown's network function challenge is that SH6 and SH6A have to perform multiple roles within corridors that cannot provide equally for every movement. These routes need to support regional movement, local access, freight and servicing, public transport, walking, cycling, airport access, visitor travel and frontage activity. In Frankton and Queenstown town centre, many of these functions overlap in the same constrained road space.

Current state

Each function has different needs on each corridor. Strategic movement needs reliability and efficiency while local access generates demand for turning movements, property access and short trips. Public transport needs dependable and efficient travel times, and walking and cycling need safe, legible and separated space. Freight and servicing needs predictable access. Where these functions all compete without a clear hierarchy, the network becomes less efficient for everyone.

Key points

- **Regional movement and local access compete for the same space:** through trips, local trips and turning movements use the same constrained corridors, making strategic movement slower and local access harder to manage safely.
- **Public transport reliability is undermined where priority is missing:** buses are exposed to the same congestion as general traffic, even though they need to carry more people through corridors that cannot accommodate unconstrained vehicle growth.
- **Freight, servicing and visitor movements depend on predictable access:** delay has wider effects on business operations, airport access, visitor experience and the functioning of the local economy.
- **Movement and place functions overlap in urban areas:** corridors such as Frankton and SH6A also need to support walking, cycling, frontage activity and safe access to adjacent land uses, increasing conflict when space is limited.

Future state

As growth continues, SH6 and SH6A will be increasingly unable to perform their required functions. Without clearer corridor roles, increasing traffic volumes, public transport demand, local access needs and development pressure will continue to compete for the same space. This will reduce the effectiveness of the network as a strategic movement system while also making local access, walking, cycling and public transport less attractive, reliable and safe.

The strategic response needs to protect and manage corridor function deliberately in the same way as managing capacity. The plan needs to identify where public transport and active modes require priority, where freight and servicing reliability must be protected, and where local access, parking and land use decisions are needed to support the role of the strategic network.

Challenge 3: Network resilience

Overview

Queenstown's resilience challenge is that the network depends on a small number of critical links and crossings, with limited ability to absorb or recover from disruption, while being exposed to natural hazards and extreme weather. SH6, SH6A, the Shotover Bridge and the Kawarau Falls Bridge carry a high proportion of all movements in the basin. When any of these links are disrupted, the effects can quickly spread across the network.

Current state

This lack of redundancy is partly a consequence of Queenstown's geography. Lakes, rivers and steep terrain funnel travel through a limited number of corridors, while established development and high land values constrain the ability to provide new parallel routes. The current network already has limited spare capacity for much of the day, meaning incidents, maintenance, crashes or weather-related disruption can have wider effects than they would on a more connected network.

Key points

- **Critical crossings and constrained corridors carry most strategic movement:** disruption around Frankton, SH6A, the Shotover River crossing or the Kawarau Falls Bridge can quickly affect the wider basin.
- **Limited spare capacity reduces recovery:** when key corridors are already operating near practical capacity, incidents, maintenance, event traffic or seasonal peaks take longer to clear and have wider impacts.
- **Hazard and operating risks are concentrated:** weather events, flooding, landslide risk, crashes, construction activity and network maintenance can affect corridors with few practical alternatives.
- **Changing growth patterns increase uncertainty:** growth may occur earlier, faster or in different locations than currently planned, including through fast track proposals and changing visitor demand.

Future state

As growth continues, the same incident or closure will have a larger and more widespread effect because there will be less spare capacity elsewhere in the system. Future growth may also occur earlier, faster or in different locations than currently planned, including through fast track proposals and changing visitor demand. A network with little redundancy is less able to adapt to these changes without targeted capacity, operational and demand management responses.

The strategic response needs to improve the network's ability to recover from disruption and change through targeted infrastructure resilience, reliable public transport and active mode alternatives, demand management, and land use decisions that do not increase dependence on the most vulnerable parts of the network.

Challenge 4: Network harm

Overview

Queenstown's network harm challenge is that increasing demand in constrained urban corridors is creating greater safety, environmental, access and liveability impacts. As more trips occur on the network, exposure to conflict, emissions, noise, severance and poor conditions for walking, cycling and public transport all increase.

Current state

These impacts are most acute where strategic movement, local access and place functions overlap. Frankton, SH6A and the approaches to Queenstown town centre carry high traffic volumes while also serving schools, health services, retail, employment, accommodation, visitor activity and residential areas. Limited corridor width means buses, general traffic, freight, turning vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists often compete for the same space, increasing exposure and conflict risk.

Since 2021, the network has recorded 2 fatal, 39 serious and 203 minor crashes. Safety is currently less of a risk than the national average, but increasing volumes, turning movements and property access within limited space will increase exposure unless corridor space is managed differently.

Key points

- **Safety exposure and conflict are increasing:** high traffic volumes, turning movements, buses, freight, pedestrians and cyclists operate within constrained corridors and at busy intersections.
- **Congestion worsens emissions, noise and amenity effects:** private vehicle reliance and stop-start traffic increase the impacts of transport activity in urban areas that also function as local streets and activity centres.
- **Busy corridors create severance and access barriers:** higher traffic volumes make it harder to cross corridors, reach public transport stops, access local services or make short trips without a car.
- **Poor alternatives reinforce car dependence:** unreliable buses, incomplete active mode connections and limited priority make lower-impact travel options less competitive, which in turn adds further pressure to constrained corridors.

Future state

Without reliable alternatives, reliance on private vehicles will be reinforced along with the resulting congestion, making network harm harder to manage. Higher demand in constrained corridors will increase idling traffic, emissions, noise and exposure at intersections and crossings. Poor public transport reliability and incomplete active mode connections will also make it harder for residents, workers and visitors to choose lower-impact travel options and get around the basin reliably.

Reducing harm depends on the same strategic response required to maintain network function – moving more people in fewer vehicles, providing safer and more attractive alternatives, managing demand and protecting reliable access for journeys that couldn't otherwise happen. If these changes are not made, Queenstown risks becoming less liveable for residents, less accessible for workers and less attractive for visitors.

International benchmarking

International benchmarking provides insight into how comparable resort towns have responded to constrained geography, high visitor demand, limited road networks and pressure on town-centre amenity. No example is directly transferable to Queenstown, but the case studies show a consistent pattern that successful resort towns don't rely on road capacity expansion alone.

Across resort towns like Banff, Whistler, Morzine, Aspen and Zermatt, five lessons are most relevant to Queenstown:

- **Integrated packages outperform single projects.** Comparable resort towns combine public transport, parking management, access controls, park-and-ride, active mode improvements and visitor information rather than relying on one dominant intervention.
- **Moving people matters more than moving vehicles.** Additional road space can provide short-term relief but is quickly absorbed where geography, seasonal peaks and downstream bottlenecks constrain the network.
- **Public transport requires supporting measures.** Frequent buses, shuttles, rapid transit or gondolas work best when supported by priority measures, parking controls, simple visitor information, good first- and last-mile access and land uses that are easy to serve.
- **Demand and access management are central to performance.** Paid or managed parking, peripheral parking, park-and-ride, access restrictions and visitor travel campaigns are commonly used to reduce peak vehicle pressure and protect constrained centres.
- **Land use, visitor management and transport need to be aligned.** The strongest examples concentrate activity around walkable centres, transport hubs and served corridors, while managing vehicle access into the most constrained or sensitive locations.

While these examples show that Queenstown's challenges are not unique and have been managed elsewhere in the world, Queenstown's context is slightly different. It is both a local urban network and a national gateway, with airport, town-centre, worker, visitor and freight movements converging through Frankton, SH6 and SH6A. The lesson is therefore not to copy any one model, but to apply the common principles in a way that fits Queenstown's geography, funding context and national economic role.



What happens if we don't act

Refer to the Counterfactual Appendix for more detailed metrics on what is forecast to happen to the network if the plan isn't delivered.

Growth will exceed the network's ability to respond

Without intervention, Queenstown's strategic network will become increasingly congested and unreliable as growth is concentrated onto a small number of constrained corridors and river crossings. The Whakatipu Ward's current peak-day population of around 83,300 people is forecast to reach around 143,000 by 2055. The network is already operating at or near practical capacity, meaning this scale of growth cannot be absorbed without major impacts on the network.

The scale of the future issue is significant even under conservative assumptions. Demand forecasting indicates that under a do-minimum scenario, all key network constraints would exceed capacity by 2035, with severe congestion as a result. Even in a low growth scenario, volume/capacity ratios reach around 1.5 by 2035, meaning demand is 50 percent above available capacity before any additional growth enabled by fast track is included. In the 2055 high growth scenario, demand is forecast to reach more than three times capacity on the Shotover and Kawarau bridges, with more than 5,000 person trips per hour needing to cross each of the rivers in the peak direction.

Forecast demand would translate into material operational failure

While detailed modelling hasn't been undertaken, these forecasts indicate the likely scale of operational failure. For example, with a practical capacity of 1,500 vehicles per hour, projected demand at 2055 is in the order of 2,250 to 3,000 vehicles per hour more than the link can clear. If sustained for one hour, that level of excess demand would equate to several kilometres of queued vehicles, 2-hour delays and there would be insufficient spare capacity for the network to recover. The forecast demand-capacity ratios therefore represent a material network performance risk rather than a marginal reduction in level of service.



The consequences are important to New Zealand

The consequences of this counterfactual scenario are nationally significant because Queenstown performs a disproportionate economic role for its size. The district is one of New Zealand's most recognised visitor destinations and integral to the national tourism economy, a major international gateway and a fast-growing centre of employment and economic activity. Transport underperformance therefore has consequences beyond the district, affecting national productivity, visitor experience, export earnings and tax revenue.

Tourism in Queenstown generated around \$1.4 billion of GDP and supported more than 11,500 jobs in the year to March 2024, with an indicative central government revenue contribution of around \$392 million. Queenstown generates around 1.1% of New Zealand's GDP, provides around the same share of employment and is home to around 1.0% of the population. It is also more productive than the country as a whole, with GDP per capita around 11% above the national average in 2025. Reliable access to Queenstown therefore supports nationally material fiscal and export value, not only local and regional outcomes.

Indicative economic analysis suggests that reduction of just 0.5% in international visitor growth associated with worsening conditions could create a material national cost, with an estimated Net Present Value of around \$2.8 billion in GDP and \$1.1 billion in tax revenue over the next 40 years. Refer to the Economic Benefits appendix for more details on the economic assessment.

Deferring action increases future cost, disruption and risk

A less reliable network would increase costs for businesses and workers, reduce the reliability of airport, town centre and visitor-destination access, weaken the visitor experience and make future intervention harder. Some corridors already operate above 85 percent of practical capacity for up to 6.5 hours per day and on up to 361 days per year. Deferring action would allow pressure to build until interventions become larger, more disruptive and more expensive.

This risk is becoming more tangible, with visitor experience survey results showing a decline in rolling 12-month NPS from 75 in mid-2024 to 67 by June 2025, and parking, traffic management and congestion now among the most commonly identified areas for improvement by visitors. While the precise effect of congestion on future visitation is not yet quantified, the direction of evidence suggests that worsening reliability should be treated as a material economic risk rather than a local amenity issue.

Strategic approach

The strategic response

The QSNP strategic response sets the framework for addressing these challenges over the next 30 years. It builds on previous Queenstown business cases and the Way to Go partnership, while making the next stage of investment planning more explicit about sequencing, trade-offs and delivery constraints. It is intended to guide future project development and investment choices, not lock in a fixed programme regardless of changes in growth, funding or technology.

Queenstown's strategic network needs a new approach to move people, goods and visitors more reliably. While the network has historically absorbed growth from a relatively low base, supported by periodic road-capacity investments such as the 2018 Kawarau Falls bridge, previous plans have consistently pointed to the need for an integrated multi-modal response around Frankton and the Queenstown town centre. This plan reconfirms and extends that direction across the wider growing network, while recognising funding and delivery constraints, and setting out an adaptable pathway to delivery.

Relying on road-capacity expansion alone is not practical, affordable or effective given Queenstown's geography, constrained corridors, limited redundancy and funding context. The strategic response focuses on making better use of existing corridors, increasing people-moving capacity through public transport and active modes, protecting reliable access for essential trips, and using demand management to reduce pressure at constrained times and locations.

The response was developed by testing plausible strategic approaches against the QSNP objectives, critical success factors and future demand scenarios, then considering the feasibility, affordability and deliverability of the activities required. The result is a preferred multi-modal approach combining high-capacity public transport, targeted road and intersection improvements, network optimisation, active mode connections, land use integration and demand management.

The preferred approach is organised around three strategic priorities, supported by two delivery principles as summarised in Figure 12.

Figure 12: Preferred strategic approach overview

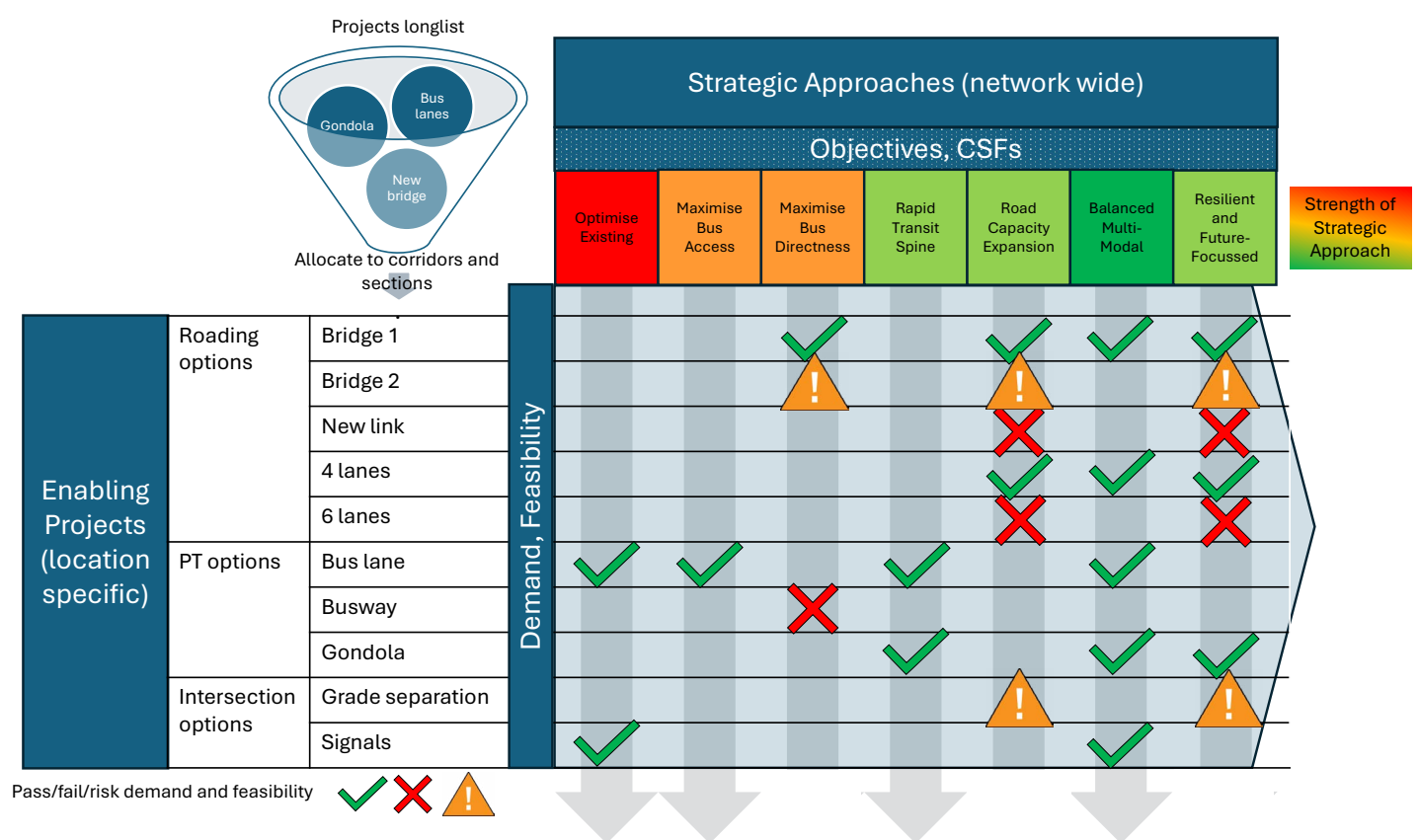


Developing the strategic response

The strategic response was developed through an optioneering process that combined top-down system-level assessment with more detailed bottom-up testing of the interventions needed to make each approach credible. Refer to the Option Assessment Technical Memo for full details. A longlist of potential strategic approaches and interventions was drawn from previous business cases, the intervention hierarchy, stakeholder input, demand and capacity analysis and known constraints.

The two workstreams were then integrated through a multi-criteria assessment, shown graphically in Figure 13. Strategic approaches were moderated where the enabling interventions were likely unaffordable, difficult to deliver, weakly aligned with the intended network function, or unlikely to address challenges at the system level. The assessment also tested robustness to uncertainty, including growth timing, funding availability and the need to stage investment over several funding cycles.

Figure 13: Optioneering approach





Best use of infrastructure

Given Queenstown's network has limited ability to expand, better use needs to be made of existing corridors, intersections, bridges and supporting local routes before committing to larger and more disruptive investment. This includes improving how the network is operated, protecting the function of key corridors, removing localised bottlenecks where this supports wider network performance and ensuring maintenance, renewals and resilience work contribute to long-term network outcomes (Table 6).

Table 6: Best use of infrastructure – strategic direction

Component	Strategic direction
Operate the existing network more actively	▪ Use signals, lane allocation, bus priority and access management to improve reliability at constrained locations. ▪ Plan maintenance, renewals and improvements to minimise disruption and contribute to safety, resilience and corridor function.
Target localised bottlenecks and access conflicts	▪ Progress targeted intersection, access and local road improvements where they improve whole-of-network performance rather than shifting queues downstream. ▪ Target critical parts of the network where small changes can support reliability, public transport performance or safety. ▪ Ensure local access decisions do not erode the strategic movement function of SH6 and SH6A.
Protect corridor roles and scarce road space	▪ Use available access management, parking management and development controls to prevent adding avoidable friction to constrained state highway corridors. ▪ Align state highway, local road and land use decisions so that corridor function is protected over time.
Build resilience into renewals and minor works	▪ Use maintenance, renewals and safety programmes to progressively improve resilience at vulnerable locations and critical crossings. ▪ Prioritise interventions that reduce disruption risk, shorten recovery times and support emergency access. ▪ Coordinate works across agencies to avoid compounding disruption on a network with limited redundancy.



Move more people in less space

Also governed by Queenstown's limited ability to expand, the network will also need increased people-moving capacity through the most constrained corridors. Queenstown cannot accommodate forecast growth by carrying the same share of trips in private vehicles. The network needs to move more people within the same physical space, particularly between the eastern and southern growth corridors, Frankton and the Queenstown Town Centre.

Public transport is the main mechanism for achieving this shift because it can provide substantially higher person throughput than general traffic in constrained corridors, leaving road capacity for journeys that can't be made using other modes. Active modes also have an important role for short trips and access to public transport, particularly in Frankton, the town centre and growth areas. Over time, the system needs to progress from incremental bus priority and service improvements toward a higher-capacity, more reliable public transport spine where demand and constraints justify it (Table 7).

Table 7: Move more people in less space – strategic direction

Component	Strategic direction
Progressively deliver a high-capacity public transport spine	• Develop a staged public transport spine connecting the eastern and southern growth corridors, Frankton, the airport and the Queenstown town centre. • Start with service, priority and interchange improvements that can be delivered earlier, while protecting the pathway to higher-capacity and more separated infrastructure where needed. • Prioritise reliability through the most constrained corridors, especially SH6A, Frankton Road and approaches to Frankton.
Improve public transport access, priority and interchange function	• Provide bus priority, queue jumps, signal priority and interchange improvements where these improve end-to-end reliability. • Ensure ORC service improvements, NZTA corridor investment and QLDC access, parking and land use settings are planned as a single system. • Improve first and last-mile access to stops and interchanges through walking, cycling, micromobility, local feeder services and pick-up/drop-off provision.
Close strategic active mode gaps	• Prioritise walking and cycling links that enable short local trips without adding pressure to SH6 and SH6A. • Support improvements for active mode access to public transport stops, Frankton, Queenstown town centre, schools, employment areas and visitor destinations. • Design active mode improvements to support safety, mode shift and corridor amenity, recognising that recreational routes can support broader trips as micromobility improves.
Use targeted road investment to support person throughput	• Retain targeted road and intersection investment where it supports public transport, freight, resilience, safety or essential access. • Avoid road investment that increases general traffic demand into fixed downstream constraints. • Sequence road upgrades so they complement, rather than compete with, the shift to higher-capacity public transport.



Actively manage demand

Regardless of improvements to infrastructure and public transport services, demand will need to be actively managed so the network can operate within its physical limits. Infrastructure and service improvements will not be sufficient on their own to accommodate forecast growth. Without measures that influence when, where and how people travel, additional capacity will be quickly absorbed and the most constrained corridors will remain unreliable.

Demand management is therefore a critical enabling part of the strategy, not an optional add-on. The strongest network-scale lever is likely to be time-of-use charging or another form of road pricing, supported by parking management, access management, travel planning, real-time information and land use settings that make lower-impact travel choices practical. These measures need to be introduced alongside public transport and active mode improvements so network users have credible alternatives (Table 8).

Table 8: Actively manage demand – strategic direction

Component	Strategic direction
Develop time-of-use charging or road pricing as the primary demand lever	• Progress investigation of a pricing scheme that can manage demand at the most constrained times and locations. • Design pricing to protect essential access, support mode shift and improve network productivity rather than simply raise revenue. • Use pricing revenue opportunities, where available, to support the wider transport package.
Align parking management with network outcomes	• Encourage management of parking supply, price and duration in Queenstown town centre, Frankton and key visitor destinations so parking settings do not undermine public transport and active mode investment. • Encourage use of parking management to reduce circulation traffic, encourage turnover where appropriate and support park-and-ride or intercept options where these are part of the agreed network strategy. • Coordinate QLDC parking policy with state highway, public transport and land use decisions.
Support behaviour change and smarter travel choices	• Work with employers, schools, accommodation providers, tourism operators and event organisers to reduce avoidable peak-period car trips. • Use travel planning, visitor information, wayfinding, ticketing and real-time information to make lower-impact travel choices easier. • Target programmes to the users and trip purposes most able to shift, while recognising that freight, servicing, emergency access and some visitor movements will still require reliable vehicle access.
Integrate land use, funding and demand management	• Align growth areas with corridors and centres where public transport, walking and cycling can realistically carry a larger share of demand. • Use development planning and funding tools so growth contributes to the infrastructure and services needed to manage its network effects. • Review demand management settings over time as growth, visitor patterns, funding conditions and public transport capacity change.

Roles of different modes

The preferred approach relies on all parts of the transport system working together, with each mode playing a clearly defined role. Table 9 identifies the role of different modes in the Queenstown context.

Table 9: The role of different transport modes in the Queenstown context

Roads	Public transport
Roads remain essential for freight, servicing, emergency access, public transport and other vehicle trips that cannot shift to other modes. Their role is to use limited corridor space more efficiently, not to provide broad general traffic capacity. Strategic local roads such as Malaghans Road/Gorge Road and Hawthorne Drive support resilience, redundancy, local circulation and access to key destinations, but cannot deliver significant additional system capacity.	Public transport is the main way to accommodate future growth because it can move more people through constrained corridors than private vehicles. Its role is to provide scalable people-moving capacity, maintain access to major destinations, reduce pressure on road space and improve resilience. This requires progression from bus service and priority improvements to higher-capacity, more reliable infrastructure, offline where appropriate. Ferries may support niche markets around the Frankton arm of Lake Wakatipu but cannot resolve the system’s long-term capacity constraint. Given public transport’s criticality to the success of the plan, delivery pathways, requirements and specifications have been fleshed out in more detail – refer to the Public Transport Delivery Pathways and Requirements and Specification for Future PT Network Technical Notes.
Active modes	
Walking and cycling support local access, short trips and first and last-mile connections to public transport. They extend the catchment of stops, interchanges and ferry services, reduce pressure on constrained corridors and support safer, healthier, lower-emission travel. Some active mode corridors will become more important for commuting and local access, but active modes cannot resolve the system’s long-term capacity constraint on their own.	

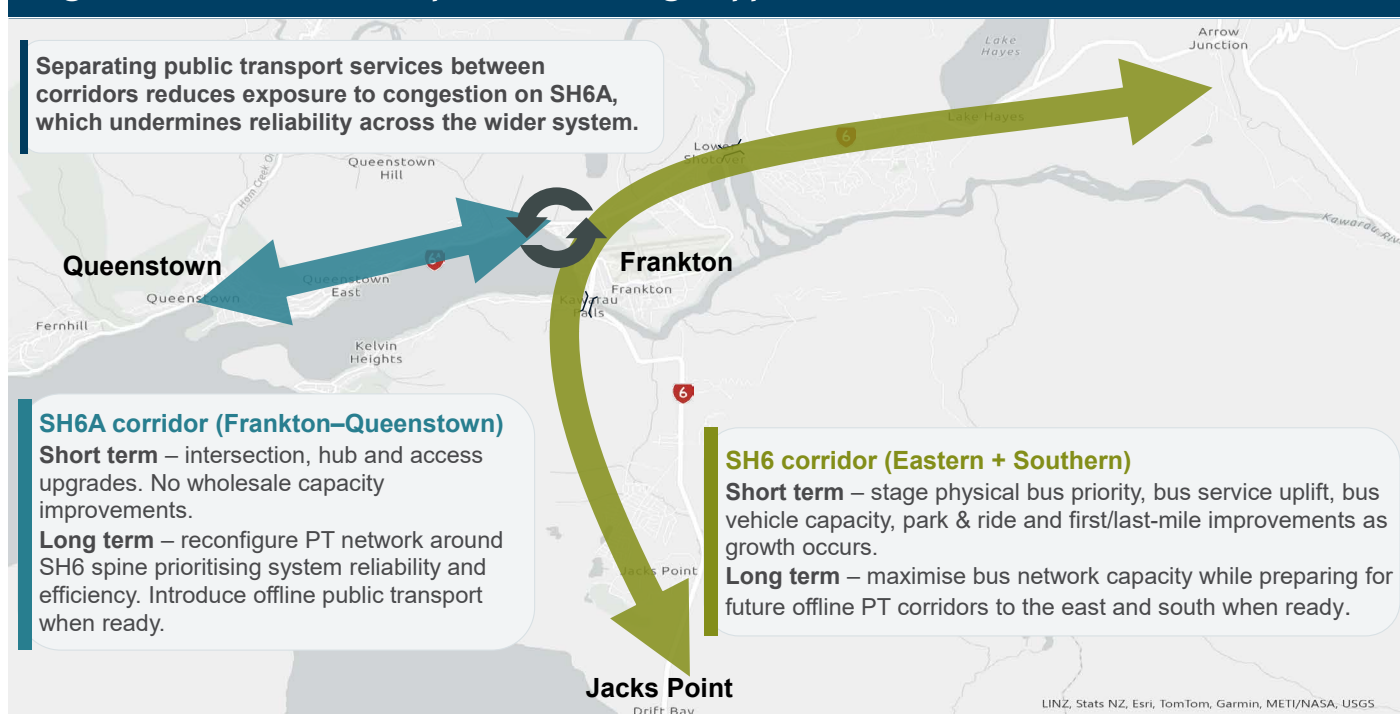


Strategic corridor roles

As described in Understanding the Challenge, Queenstown's network functions as two primary strategic corridors with different constraints and therefore different strategic tasks. SH6 must carry a greater share of the future high-capacity movement task because it has more scope to accommodate public transport priority and staged capacity improvements. SH6A, by contrast, is the most constrained corridor in the network. Continuous corridor-wide bus priority is not feasible on SH6A, and the existing road corridor cannot continue to absorb future growth on its own. These differences are central to the preferred approach and explain why the corridor responses are not the same.

Constraints on SH6A, and the relative lack of constraints on SH6, mean the SH6 corridor will need to perform the primary high-capacity movement function for the wider public transport system. For SH6A, the only remaining viable strategic response is offline public transport, with targeted interventions to manage declining performance until delivery obstacles for the offline solution are resolved. The preferred approach for the two corridors is summarised in Figure 15.

Figure 15: Corridor roles in preferred strategic approach



Maintaining and operating the network efficiently

In a geographically constrained environment with limited redundancy, maintenance activities and operational disruptions can also have disproportionate effects on network performance.

Maintenance and operations were not a major determinant of option selection in isolation, but increasing maintenance and operational pressures reinforce the preferred direction. They strengthen the case for making better use of existing assets, targeting investment where it delivers the greatest system benefit, and being selective about creating new infrastructure or network complexity that would add substantial long-term operational and maintenance liabilities without clearly resolving the underlying strategic problem.

Implementing the plan

This section translates the preferred strategic approach into a staged way forward. It sets out the activities that form the programme, their relative priorities, indicative timing, high-level costings, key risks, dependencies, roles and responsibilities, and the next steps. It also explains how the plan can adapt to uncertainty and new information.

The need for intervention is immediate. The evidence in this plan shows that key parts of the network are already operating beyond desirable levels and that further decline is expected without action. The response is staged because the scale of intervention required is larger than can realistically be funded and delivered at once, particularly without changes to infrastructure funding arrangements. Prioritisation and sequencing therefore reflect delivery reality, not a lack of justification for action.

Success of the plan depends on coordinated delivery across NZTA, ORC, QLDC and other providers. The preferred approach is an integrated system response that includes state highway bus priority, public transport service uplift, local access improvements, parking and demand management and land use decisions that need to be aligned in scope and timing. If these components are delivered separately or out of sequence, the programme risks under-delivering benefits or creating stranded investment.

Responsibility for funding or delivery is not allocated at the individual activity level at this strategic stage. Those decisions sit beyond the scope of a strategic network plan and will need to be resolved through subsequent investment planning, business case, RLTP, NLTP, regional deal and partner governance processes.

The plan sets out the expected long-term direction for Queenstown's transport system. It is nominally a 30-year plan based on current projections, but is designed to respond to changing conditions such as growth rates, private schemes and funding constraints. The plan is intended to guide future investment and project development by setting out a suite of activities that contribute to an agreed strategy over time, while preserving flexibility around scope, timing and delivery.

Sequencing activities

Funding constraints, delivery constraints and the scale of Queenstown's transport challenge mean that not all activities can be progressed at once, even though the evidence supports intervention now. Sequencing is therefore a key step in translating the preferred strategic approach into a deliverable plan that addresses network challenges while maintaining flexibility to respond to uncertainty. Sequencing is guided by principles derived from the objectives and critical success factors in the Strategic Framework:

- **Urgency** (address critical network constraints and risks first) - Network productivity; Inclusive access; Resilience; Feasibility; Value for money; Flexibility
- **Effectiveness** (maximise people movement and network productivity) - Network productivity; Economic prosperity; Value for money; Affordability
- **Transport and land use integration** (promote growth patterns that support efficient movement while ensuring the plan can adapt where actual growth differs from current assumptions) - Inclusive access; Network roles and functions; Flexibility; Feasibility
- **Efficiency and affordability** (lower cost, high impact interventions first) - All objectives; Affordability; Value for money

Sequencing for the plan has three connected phases that optimise limited funding while addressing the most urgent parts of the challenge first. The first phase aims to get ahead of rapid growth by addressing the most critical constraints and restoring a level of operating headroom for the wider strategy to work. The second phase is optimisation and incremental capacity that uses lower-cost, higher-value interventions to make better use of the network and support mode shift once credible alternatives are in place. The third phase is long-term capacity interventions likely to be needed if growth occurs as forecast and incremental measures reach their practical limits.

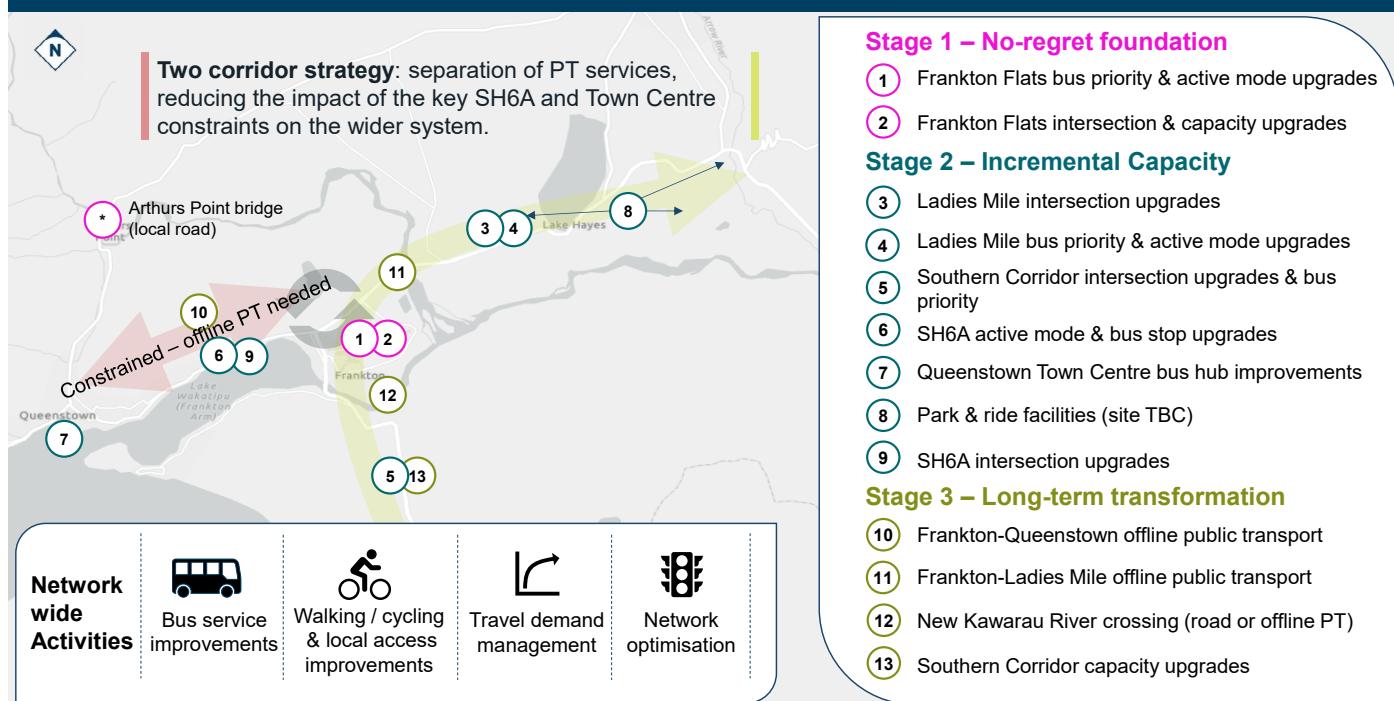
Table 10: Sequencing rationale for priority activities

Sequence	Role in the strategy	Rationale	Example activities
No-regret foundation	Address current constraints and establish the operating conditions needed for the preferred approach to work.	Frankton is first because it is the key network constraint, delivers system-wide benefits, supports planned growth and enables most later interventions. Edith Cavell Bridge / Arthurs Point Crossing is also critical for strategic network resilience.	Frankton Flats Network Improvements; early Ladies Mile and Southern Corridor interventions; Edith Cavell Bridge / Arthurs Point Crossing; targeted bus priority, access, safety, reliability and network management improvements; corridor protection and preparatory planning.
Incremental capacity	Scale the parts of the preferred approach that increase people-moving capacity and make better use of constrained corridor space.	These measures follow because they provide stageable, value-for-money people-moving capacity, support mode shift in growth corridors and build on earlier investments.	Expanded public transport priority and service capacity; park and ride, interchange and first/last-mile improvements; targeted capacity enhancements; parking and demand management; time of use charging or road pricing.
Long-term capacity	Provide a step change in capacity where incremental improvements can no longer maintain network function.	These activities are sequenced later due to cost, complexity and uncertainty, but become more important if growth exceeds what optimisation and incremental investment can manage.	Offline public transport solutions; major new infrastructure or corridors; new crossings or large-scale network reconfiguration; potential higher-capacity extensions to Ladies Mile and the Southern Corridor.

Activities in the plan

The activities in this section translate the preferred strategic approach into corridor-based packages of activities. The activity tables in the following section summarise each activity's strategic role, indicative sequencing, key dependencies, relationship to the wider programme and high-level costings. The overall plan is represented graphically in Figure 16.

Figure 16: Preferred strategic approach activities



Activity tables legend

Timing of need

When the activity is broadly expected to be needed:

- Phase 1
Foundation for change
1-3 years
- Phase 2
Incremental capacity
3-10 years
- Phase 3
Capacity step change
10-30 years

Contribution to outcomes

The potential contribution of the activity towards the long-term transport outcomes identified in Arataki, represented by the following icons:

- P** Economic prosperity
- R** Resilience and security
- E** Environmental sustainability
- I** Inclusive access
- H** Healthy and safe people

Indicative costs

An indication of the scale of the costs involved to implement these activities:

- \$ <\$10m
- \$\$ \$10-99m
- \$\$\$ \$100-249m
- \$\$\$\$ \$250-999m
- \$\$\$\$\$ \$1bn+

Next steps

The immediate next step to progress the activity

State Highway 6 Eastern Corridor (Arrow Junction to Shotover Bridge)

The SH6 Eastern Corridor is the primary eastern approach to Queenstown, connecting Arrow Junction, Arrowtown, Lake Hayes, Shotover Country and Ladies Mile with Frankton and the wider urban network. It carries regional, visitor, freight, commuter, public transport and local access movements, and will be one of the main corridors through which future resident growth enters the strategic network.

- **Performance:** Growth around Ladies Mile, Lake Hayes and Shotover Country will increase pressure on SH6 and the Shotover Bridge approach, where downstream constraints through Frankton limit the benefit of adding general traffic capacity alone.
- **Function:** The corridor must balance through movement, growth-related access, local trips, public transport, walking and cycling within a corridor that is increasingly urbanising.
- **Resilience:** The corridor depends on the Shotover Bridge and has limited practical alternatives, meaning incidents, weather or construction disruption can quickly affect access between the eastern basin and Frankton.
- **Harm:** More traffic, turning movements and development access points will increase safety exposure, severance and pressure on public transport and active mode access unless corridor space is managed deliberately.

Applying the preferred strategy on the Eastern Corridor means managing growth-related access while progressively increasing people-moving capacity toward Frankton. The focus is on improving public transport reliability, providing higher-quality stops and access, managing key intersections, supporting park and ride where dispersed demand is difficult to serve by fixed-route services alone, and protecting a longer-term pathway for offline or separated public transport if demand grows beyond the practical limits of on-road priority.

Table 11: SH6 Eastern corridor activities

ID	Section	Activity/intervention	Network outcome	Cost	Next steps
Foundation for change					
No corridor-specific activities identified in this phase.					
Incremental capacity					
—	Ladies Mile / Lake Hayes / Shotover Country	Ladies Mile bus super stops: Higher-quality bus stops on Ladies Mile with improved passenger facilities, safer access and integration with walking, cycling and future development access. ^{xz}	I H	\$	Confirm stop locations, access and developer interfaces through investment case.
4	Ladies Mile / Shotover Bridge approach	Westbound bus lane from Howards Drive to Shotover Bridge: Inbound bus priority on the approach to Shotover Bridge to improve public transport reliability through a key eastern corridor bottleneck. ^z	P I	\$	Progress design, consenting and construction staging.

ID	Section	Activity/intervention	Network outcome	Cost	Next steps
3	Lower Shotover Road / SH6	Signalise SH6 / Lower Shotover Road intersection: Traffic signal upgrade to manage turning movements, improve safety and support more reliable access between SH6, Lower Shotover Road and adjacent growth areas. ^z	P H	\$\$	Progress pre-implementation, property and consenting.
4	Eastern Corridor east of Howards Drive	Westbound bus lane east of Howards Drive: Extension of inbound bus priority further east on SH6, with the final extent to be confirmed through corridor investigation and staging. ^z	P I	\$\$	Confirm extent and staging through investment case.
NW	Ladies Mile / Lake Hayes Estate / Shotover Country	Incremental bus service improvements: Progressive increases to bus frequency, span and capacity serving Ladies Mile, Lake Hayes Estate, Shotover Country and the wider eastern corridor.*	E I H	\$ ^y	Confirm service uplift with ORC through RLTP / NLTP.
8	Eastern Corridor	Eastern Corridor park and ride: Park and ride facility or facilities to intercept vehicle trips before the most constrained parts of the network and support transfer to higher-frequency public transport.	E I H	\$\$	Confirm location, scale and operating model.

Capacity step change

13	Ladies Mile / Eastern Corridor	Ladies Mile offline public transport: Future separated or offline strategic public transport connection serving Ladies Mile and the eastern corridor if on-road bus priority and service uplift reach their practical limits.	P R E I H	\$\$\$	Protect option; progress investment case when triggered.
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* local council project; ^x may include local road bus priority; ^y per 3 year funding cycle;

^z developer led project

State Highway 6 Frankton urban area

Frankton is the central operating node of the Queenstown strategic network, where the eastern corridor, southern corridor, SH6A, Queenstown Airport, major retail, employment, education, health destinations and public transport services converge. Its performance strongly affects how the wider network functions because most strategic and local movements either pass through, transfer, or terminate in Frankton.

- **Performance:** Growth from the eastern and southern corridors, airport activity and local Frankton demand will increase pressure on an already constrained urban network
- **Function:** Strategic movement, public transport, airport access, local circulation, walking, cycling and frontage access all compete within the same limited space.
- **Resilience:** Because Frankton is the network hinge point, incidents or poor operation in this area can transfer delay across SH6, SH6A, the airport and both growth corridors.
- **Harm:** High traffic volumes and competing movements increase safety exposure, severance and poor conditions for people walking, cycling or accessing public transport within Frankton.

Applying the preferred strategy in Frankton means creating the operating headroom needed for the wider plan to work. The focus is on coordinated intersection upgrades, continuous bus priority, safer local access and active mode links that improve movement through the node while supporting Frankton's role as a destination and interchange. These improvements are foundation activities because later service uplift, corridor improvements and any future offline public transport hub depend on Frankton operating more reliably.

Table 12: SH6 Frankton urban area activities

ID	Section	Activity/intervention	Network outcome	Cost	Next steps
Foundation for change					
2	Frankton Flats	Frankton Flats signalised intersections: Coordinated signal upgrades at Hawthorne Drive, Grant Road and Lucas Place to improve network operation, manage access and support safer movement through the Frankton node.	P H	\$\$\$	Confirm scope, staging and funding; progress implementation.
1	Frankton Flats	Frankton Flats bus lanes: Continuous westbound and eastbound bus priority through Frankton to improve reliability for services connecting the eastern, southern and SH6A corridors.	P I	\$\$	Confirm bus-priority design and implementation staging.
1	Frankton Flats	Frankton Flats active mode links: Walking and cycling connections, including a link to Frankton Track, to improve local access, support public transport interchange and reduce short vehicle trips.	E I H	\$	Confirm active mode scope and deliver with Frankton package.

ID	Section	Activity/intervention	Network outcome	Cost	Next steps
Incremental capacity					
NW	Frankton urban area	Incremental bus services from Ladies Mile and the Southern Corridor: Staged service increases feeding into Frankton from the two main growth corridors, aligned with bus-priority and interchange improvements.*		\$ ^y	Confirm service uplift with ORC through RLTP / NLTP.
Capacity step change					
10	Frankton central hub	Offline public transport central hub: Central Frankton interchange for a future offline public transport spine, enabling transfers between high-capacity services, local buses and key Frankton destinations.		\$\$\$	Define hub role through offline public transport investment case.

* local council project; ^x may include local road bus priority; ^y per 3 year funding cycle;

^z developer led project

State Highway 6 Southern Corridor

The SH6 Southern Corridor is the only southern approach to Queenstown, connecting Hanley's Farm, Jacks Point, Kingston and the wider Southland route with Frankton, Queenstown Airport and the urban network. It also supports visitor, freight and servicing movements, including access toward Milford Sound and southern regional connections.

- **Performance:** Planned growth at Hanley's Farm, Jacks Point and along the southern corridor will increase pressure on SH6 and the Kawarau Falls Bridge approach.
- **Function:** The corridor must support growth access, strategic through movement, freight and servicing, public transport and visitor travel while avoiding erosion of SH6's movement role.
- **Resilience:** The corridor is highly dependent on the Kawarau Falls Bridge, with limited alternative capacity if incidents, weather, maintenance or construction disrupt the route.
- **Harm:** Increasing traffic volumes, access points and turning movements will increase safety exposure and make reliable lower-impact travel options more important.

Applying the preferred strategy on the Southern Corridor means safely accommodating growth while protecting the strategic movement function of SH6 and progressively increasing people-moving capacity toward Frankton. The focus is on targeted intersection and access improvements, northbound bus priority, service uplift and staged corridor management, while retaining longer-term options such as additional crossing capacity or offline public transport if growth and demand exceed what incremental measures can manage.

Table 13: SH6 Southern corridor activities

ID	Section	Activity/intervention	Network outcome	Cost	Next steps
Foundation for change					
No corridor-specific activities identified in this phase.					
Incremental capacity					
5	Kawarau Falls Bridge approach / Southern Corridor	Northbound bus lane to Kawarau Falls Bridge: Bus priority on the approach to the Kawarau Falls Bridge to improve reliability for services from the Southern Corridor into Frankton.	PI	\$	Confirm extent and staging through investment case.
5	Hanley's Farm / Jacks Point access	Jack Hanley Drive and Maori Jack Road intersection upgrades: Targeted SH6 intersection improvements to manage growth-related access, improve safety and reduce friction at key southern growth area connections. ^z	PH	\$\$	Confirm developer interface and delivery responsibility.
5	Peninsula Road / SH6	Peninsula Road intersection upgrade: SH6 intersection improvement to better manage access to Peninsula Road, improve safety and support more reliable operation of the Southern Corridor.	PH	\$\$	Progress investment case and preferred form.

ID	Section	Activity/intervention	Network outcome	Cost	Next steps
5	Southern Corridor	Rationalisation of SH6 accesses: Access management along SH6 to reduce conflict points, consolidate turning movements and protect the corridor's strategic movement function as growth occurs.	P H	\$	Identify priority access changes through investment case.
5	Southern Corridor	Expansion of northbound bus lane: Staged extension of bus priority on the Southern Corridor, with the final extent and form to be confirmed through investment case work.	P I	\$	Confirm extent and staging through investment case.
NW	Southern Corridor	Incremental bus service improvements: Progressive increases to bus frequency, span and capacity serving Hanley's Farm, Jacks Point and other southern corridor growth areas.*	P E H	\$ ^y	Confirm service uplift with ORC through RLTP / NLTP.
Capacity step change					
11	Kawarau River / South Frankton	New river crossing into south Frankton: Additional Kawarau River crossing to improve resilience, support southern growth and provide new strategic access into Frankton, potentially for road, public transport or both.	P R I	\$\$\$\$	Progress investment case; confirm funding and delivery pathway.
12	Southern Corridor to new crossing	Southern Corridor capacity upgrades: Potential four-laning and bus lanes up to a new river crossing, where justified by system-level benefits and coordinated with downstream capacity.	P I	\$\$\$	Investigate with new crossing and downstream capacity.
12	Southern Corridor	Southern offline public transport line: Future separated or offline strategic public transport connection serving the Southern corridor if on-road bus priority and service uplift are no longer sufficient.	P R E I H	\$\$\$	Protect option; progress investment case when triggered.

* local council project; * may include local road bus priority; ^y per 3 year funding cycle;

^z developer led project

State Highway 6A Frankton to Queenstown and Queenstown Town Centre

SH6A is the primary connection between Frankton and Queenstown town centre, linking the district's main employment, retail, education, health, airport and public transport hub with its nationally significant visitor, hospitality and commercial centre. It carries commuter, visitor, freight, servicing, local access and public transport movements through the most physically constrained part of the Queenstown strategic network.

- **Performance:** Demand between Frankton and Queenstown town centre will continue to increase as resident and visitor growth intensifies, but the existing SH6A corridor has very limited ability to accommodate additional general traffic or continuous bus priority.
- **Function:** The corridor must support strategic movement, town centre access, public transport, freight and servicing, visitor travel, walking, cycling and local access within a constrained urban environment where movement and place functions overlap.
- **Resilience:** SH6A has few practical alternatives and limited spare capacity, meaning incidents, events, maintenance, weather or construction disruption can quickly affect access between Frankton, the town centre, visitor destinations and accommodation areas.
- **Harm:** Increasing traffic volumes through constrained urban corridors will worsen safety exposure, severance, emissions, noise and amenity impacts unless more people can be moved by public transport and other lower-impact modes.

Applying the preferred strategy on SH6A and in Queenstown town centre means recognising that the existing road corridor cannot absorb future demand through conventional widening or continuous bus priority. The focus is on targeted operational, safety and access improvements in the existing corridor, while developing and protecting the pathway for an offline public transport connection between Frankton and Queenstown. This needs to be supported by parking, access and demand management in the town centre so scarce road space is used for the highest-value movements.

Table 14: SH6A Frankton to Queenstown and Queenstown town centre activities

ID	Section	Activity/intervention	Network outcome	Cost	Next steps
Foundation for change					
No corridor-specific activities identified in this phase.					
Incremental capacity					
NW	SH6A Frankton to Queenstown	Incremental bus service improvements: Progressive service increases on the Frankton–Queenstown corridor to maintain public transport capacity and reliability ahead of any offline solution.*	I H	\$ ^y	Confirm service uplift with ORC through RLTP / NLTP.
7	Queenstown town centre	Queenstown town centre bus hub improvements: Upgrades to town centre bus stop, layover and passenger facilities to improve capacity, operations and customer experience.	E I H	\$	Progress pre-implementation and property.

ID	Section	Activity/intervention	Network outcome	Cost	Next steps
6	SH6A Frankton to Queenstown	Targeted bus priority: Localised bus-priority measures on SH6A and approaches to the town centre where benefits can be achieved within the constrained corridor.	P I	\$\$	Confirm locations through investment case.
9	SH6A / town centre approaches	SH6A and town centre intersection upgrades: Targeted upgrades at constrained intersections to improve safety, access management, bus reliability and network efficiency.	P I H	\$\$	Progress pre-implementation and property.
Capacity step change					
10	Frankton to Queenstown	Frankton–Queenstown offline public transport line: Future high-capacity public transport spine between Frankton and Queenstown, operating outside the constrained SH6A road corridor; technology to be confirmed through the next phase.	P R E I H	\$\$\$	Progress investment case or integrate aligned private proposal.
10	Queenstown town centre / Frankton interchange interface	Integrated offline public transport and bus interchange: Interchange infrastructure to connect the offline public transport spine with local bus services, walking and cycling access, and town centre or Frankton destinations.	P R E I H	\$\$	Define interchange requirements through investment case.

* local council project; * may include local road bus priority; ^y per 3 year funding cycle;

^z developer led project

Network wide

Network-wide activities are the system enablers that make the corridor programmes work as an integrated transport response rather than a collection of standalone projects. They support public transport service uplift, first- and last-mile access, demand management, network operations, funding, monitoring and governance across the whole Queenstown strategic network.

- **Performance:** Corridor improvements alone will not provide enough capacity to manage forecast growth, particularly where demand is concentrated through Frankton, SH6A, the Shotover Bridge and the Kawarau Falls Bridge.
- **Function:** Public transport services, local access, parking, pricing, network operations and land use decisions need to work together so scarce corridor space is used for the highest-value movements.
- **Resilience:** The network has limited redundancy, so stronger governance, monitoring, operational management and adaptive sequencing are needed to respond to incidents, growth uncertainty, funding changes and delivery constraints.
- **Harm:** Without stronger mode shift and demand management, increasing vehicle demand will worsen emissions, safety exposure, severance, noise and amenity impacts across constrained urban corridors.

Applying the preferred strategy at the network-wide level means treating system management, funding and governance as core parts of the transport response, not implementation add-ons. Public transport service improvements, first- and last-mile upgrades, signal optimisation, travel demand management and time-of-use charging are needed to increase the effectiveness of corridor investments and move more people through constrained parts of the network. Governance, monitoring and alternative funding and financing provide the delivery framework needed to align NZTA, QLDC, ORC, central government and private sector decisions over time, particularly given Queenstown's structural funding challenges and the need to adapt sequencing as growth, demand and delivery conditions change.

Table 15: Network-wide activities

ID	Section	Activity/intervention	Network outcome	Cost	Next steps
Foundation for change					
NW	Programme delivery	Alternative funding and financing workstream: Programme-level work to test visitor, user, growth, value capture, infrastructure financing and partnership funding tools needed to deliver the plan.	P R	\$	Establish workstream and confirm funding package.
NW	Governance and alignment	Programme governance and partner alignment: Governance arrangements to coordinate NZTA, QLDC, ORC, central government and private sector decisions across funding, delivery, land use and public transport.	P R I	\$	Confirm portfolio governance arrangements.

ID	Section	Activity/intervention	Network outcome	Cost	Next steps
Incremental capacity					
NW	Public transport access / local networks	Walking, cycling and local access improvements: First- and last-mile access upgrades that make public transport easier to reach from growth areas, centres, schools and visitor destinations. ^x	E I	\$	Identify priority first/ last-mile gaps.
NW	Network-wide demand management	Travel demand management measures: Coordinated measures such as parking management, access management, travel planning and behaviour change to reduce pressure on constrained corridors.	P E	\$\$	Develop coordinated demand management package.
NW	Network operations	Ongoing optimisation of signalised intersections: Active monitoring and adjustment of signal timings and intersection operation to improve reliability, bus movement and network efficiency.	P	\$	Establish monitoring and optimisation programme.
NW	Network-wide demand management / pricing	Time of use charging scheme: Road pricing or similar demand management scheme to influence vehicle demand at the busiest times and locations and support more efficient use of limited corridor capacity.	P E	\$	Progress scheme design and statutory pathway.
NW	Monitoring and adaptive sequencing	Programme monitoring and trigger process: Ongoing monitoring of demand, growth, public transport performance, visitor trends and delivery conditions to inform when activities should be advanced, deferred or repackaged.	P E I	\$	Build dashboard and report through partner governance.

Capacity step change

Capacity step-change activities are identified under the relevant corridor tables.

^{*} local council project; ^x may include local road bus priority; ^y per 3 year funding cycle;

^z developer led project

Non-state highway activities

Many of the activities required to deliver the preferred strategic approach sit outside the current state highway network or NZTA's direct delivery responsibility, though this may change in future. These activities influence how effectively the strategic network performs, how people access public transport, how growth is accommodated and how demand is managed across the wider transport system.

The QSNP therefore identifies a number of partner-led activities and dependencies (Table 16) that will need to be progressed through mechanisms such as local authority programmes, RLTP processes, Way to Go governance arrangements, development agreements and regional deal initiatives. While delivery and funding responsibilities are not yet confirmed for these activities, they are critical to achieving the intended network outcomes.

Table 16: Non state highway activities

Component	Strategic direction
Strategic local road improvements	Improve resilience, local circulation and access to key destinations. This includes the Edith Cavell Bridge replacement and maintaining supporting routes such as Hawthorne Drive.
Future Southern Corridor crossing	Provide long-term resilience, support southern growth and reduce reliance on the existing Kwarau Falls Bridge.
Demand management and pricing	Manage demand at constrained locations through tools such as time-of-use charging, parking management and access management.
Public transport integration and first/last-mile access	Support access to public transport through local bus priority, interchanges, feeder services, park-and-ride facilities and walking and cycling connections.
Active travel and local access links	Reduce short vehicle trips and extend the catchment of public transport services and key destinations.
Growth-related infrastructure and development integration	Align development, funding and infrastructure provision with network capacity and strategic transport outcomes.

Alternative funding, financing and delivery

The preferred strategic approach is unlikely to be deliverable through the current funding approach. Queenstown's scale, visitor-driven demand and constrained funding base mean alternative funding, financing and delivery models are essential to implementing the programme.

A key objective is to establish a coherent funding and delivery pipeline across investment cycles rather than on a project-by-project basis. In practice, Queenstown is likely to require a blended funding package that combines conventional transport funding with mechanisms that better reflect demand generated by visitors and growth beneficiaries. These opportunities are explored further in Table 17.

Table 17: Alternative funding, financing and delivery mechanisms

Mechanism	Role in the Queenstown context	Key implication
Visitor and user contributions	Captures a contribution from visitor demand and other non-resident users who place pressure on the network but are not reflected in the local rating base.	Helps address the mismatch between who generates demand and who currently funds local infrastructure.
Time of use charging and network pricing	Manages demand at the busiest times and locations while also creating a potential revenue stream for transport investment.	Improves network performance and supports funding, provided revenue use and equity impacts are addressed through scheme design.
Growth-related funding tools	Uses development contributions, development levies, targeted rates and value capture mechanisms to recover a greater share of growth-related infrastructure costs from developments, landowners and areas that benefit from land value uplift or improved accessibility.	Supports earlier delivery of enabling infrastructure and reduces the extent to which growth-related costs are transferred to the wider ratepayer base or national land transport funding system.
Infrastructure funding and financing mechanisms	Enables finance to be raised against future levy or beneficiary-based revenue streams for infrastructure that supports growth and urban development.	Can bring forward investment where conventional council balance sheet or annual funding constraints would otherwise delay delivery.
Private sector and partnership delivery	Provides a potential pathway for discrete components such as offline public transport, park and ride, interchange infrastructure or integrated visitor transport services.	Can accelerate delivery where proposals are commercially viable and aligned with system outcomes.
Targeted central government support	Recognises Queenstown's national economic role and the wider benefits of maintaining reliable access to a nationally significant visitor destination.	Supports the case for investment beyond what can be justified through local affordability or conventional regional prioritisation alone.

Triggers and monitoring

The QSNP is intended to provide a durable strategic direction while retaining flexibility to respond to changing growth, funding and delivery conditions.

Sequencing will be guided by demand at key network constraints, supported by indicators such as development activity, visitor growth, public transport performance and visitor satisfaction. A repeatable monitoring cycle will be used to determine when activities should be advanced, deferred or repackaged through future investment and delivery processes.

As this plan spans 30 years, it will inevitably need to adapt to changes in policy, funding, technology, and Queenstown's growth priorities. NZTA will review and update this plan as necessary to reflect changes in context, position and to align with national and regional strategies. The QSNP will remain a primary input into the SHIP, and the NLTP, ensuring consistency across the wider transport system.

Expected outcomes

Table 18 summarises how the activities identified in this plan are expected to contribute to each strategic outcome area.

Table 18: Expected outcomes from QSNP activities

Component	Strategic direction
Inclusive access	- More people can access jobs, education and services in Frankton, Queenstown town centre and along the growth corridors, because the plan increases people-moving capacity via bus priority, service uplift, park and ride and (ultimately) offline rapid transit where the corridor is most constrained. - Improved accessibility and choice for residents, workers and visitors through an expanded PT "spine + feeder" system supported by first/last mile upgrades (walking/cycling access to stops and interchanges).
Economic prosperity	- Improved travel time reliability for key movements (people and servicing/freight) through targeted intersection/corridor upgrades and network optimisation, supporting day-to-day productivity in a constrained network. - Reliability of PT operations with increases through greater bus capacity utilising articulated buses and improved bus priority measures.
Resilience and security	Improved incident tolerance and recovery through network optimisation and targeted corridor/intersection improvements that improve operation performance at critical nodes.
Healthy and safe people	- Safer operation at high-conflict locations through intersection upgrades and reconfiguration, reducing risk exposure where congestion and multi-modal conflicts are concentrated. - Improved safety and comfort for vulnerable users by expanding and upgrading walking/cycling connections and making access to PT stops/interchanges safer and more attractive.
Environmental sustainability	Lower emissions pathway through mode shift aligning with the plan's emerging strategic approach, balanced multi-modal.

Next steps

Although current conditions clearly warrant actions identified in this plan, the strategic response must be converted into fundable, consentable and deliverable activity packages through:

- Regional Land Transport Plans (RLTP)
- State Highway Investment Proposals (SHIP)
- National Land Transport Programmes (NLTP)
- initiation and refinement of business cases

Initial project development should focus on foundation and enabling activities that unlock or protect future options, improve network reliability, or support public transport performance.

A critical next step is to agree the funding, financing, governance and delivery pathway for the programme. The plan deliberately stops short of assigning funding or delivery responsibility to individual activities because those decisions require partner agreement, statutory investment processes and potentially new or alternative funding tools.

The strategic direction set out in the plan, and the priorities and sequencing described above, result in the immediate programme development priorities summarised in Table 19. These don't constitute investment recommendations but set out the next stages of project development required for the plan to progress to successfully achieve intended outcomes.

Table 19: Immediate programme development priorities

Activity	Why now	Next stage scope and outputs	Indicative resourcing/cost
Frankton Flats Network Improvements	Frankton is the central network node and a core dependency for future corridor, public transport and access improvements across the wider programme. Investment in Frankton Flats Network Improvements is required to realise the benefits of Queenstown Package Stage 1.	▪ Confirm funding availability and resulting scope and staging decisions. ▪ Updated cost, risks and delivery approach. ▪ Progress implementation.	Similar scale to Frankton Intersection and Bus Hub Improvements currently being delivered by Queenstown Transport Alliance. Indicative cost: \$250m (can be staged)
Ladies Mile Corridor Improvements	High growth is already planned with potential for significantly more on a corridor that performs both local access and regional movement functions. Not progressing plans now will mean growth proceeds unmitigated.	▪ Investment case for short term and long term interventions. ▪ Pre-implementation for short term interventions.	Moderate complexity requiring transport planning, modelling, design, planning, engagement and cost inputs Indicative cost: \$0.75m-\$1m
Southern Corridor Early Interventions	High growth is already planned with potential for significantly more on a corridor that performs both local access and regional movement functions. Not progressing plans now will mean growth proceeds unmitigated.	▪ Investment case for short term interventions. ▪ Pre-implementation for short term interventions.	Moderate complexity requiring transport planning, modelling, design, planning, engagement and cost inputs Indicative cost: \$0.75m-\$1m

Activity	Why now	Next stage scope and outputs	Indicative resourcing/cost
Arthurs Point Crossing (QLDC-led)	The existing crossing is an end-of-life asset on the only practical alternative route to outside of SH6A between Frankton and Queenstown town centre. While not a strategic capacity project, replacement of the crossing is important to maintain network resilience, emergency access and the ability for the wider network to recover from incidents and planned closures.	- Progress pre-implementation. - Confirm funding pathway and delivery timing. - Implementation if funding available	High complexity but resourced by QLDC. Indicative cost: \$60m-\$80m (assumed 51% Funding Assistance).
Offline public transport	Offline public transport is required to meet future demand and is the only option for reliable high-capacity public transport between Frankton and Queenstown.	- Investment case to confirm mode, alignment, staging and integration with the rest of the network. - Confirm corridor protection requirements, operating model, cost range and funding pathway. - Confirm delivery model, governance requirements and relationship with any private sector proposals.	High complexity requiring substantial technical, commercial, legal, planning, economic, engagement and governance input. Indicative cost: \$1m-\$2m.
Time of use charging^{1, 2}	Demand management is required to achieve the level of mode shift and network performance needed. Evidence indicates that time of use charging, or similar road pricing, is the most effective and straightforward network-scale lever.	- Develop scheme design, policy settings, technology requirements and enforcement approach. - Confirm exemptions, equity provisions, revenue use and integration with public transport and parking. - Confirm implementation pathway, governance requirements and enabling decisions.	Moderate complexity requiring policy, legal, technology, modelling, economics, engagement and implementation planning inputs. Indicative cost: \$1m-\$2m.
Alternative funding and financing	The plan is not expected to be deliverable through status quo NLTP and local funding alone. This work likely needs to be complete before the second phase can be implemented.	- Structured workstream to test visitor and user contributions, growth funding and value capture. - Assess infrastructure funding and financing tools, private sector pathways.	Moderate complexity requiring specialist commercial, legal, policy, Treasury/central government and partner agency input.

¹ Lead/governance to be confirmed through statutory scheme-board process involving QLDC, ORC and NZTA; subject to ministerial approval.

² Setup funding to be confirmed through scheme development and partner funding arrangements.

Progressing the alternative funding and financing workstream is a prerequisite for several later-stage activities because the current programme is unlikely to be deliverable under existing funding arrangements alone. Early agreement on funding, financing and delivery pathways will be critical to informing the scope, staging and timing of subsequent business cases, implementation programmes and long-term capacity investments.

Partnership and governance

Successful delivery of the QSNP will require coordinated governance across transport, land use, public transport, funding and delivery decisions. While NZTA retains ownership of the plan, implementation depends on coordinated action by NZTA, QLDC, ORC, central government and, where appropriate, private sector partners.

Existing governance and investment processes should be used wherever possible to maintain programme alignment and manage delivery dependencies. The programme should be managed as a coordinated portfolio of activities, ensuring infrastructure, services, demand management and funding decisions progress together and support the intended network outcomes.