

# Queenstown Mountain Bike Club

## 2018 to 2028 Strategic Plan

Consultation Document

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# Background

The Queenstown Mountain Bike Club (QMTBC) was formed in 2003. In the early years the club had a small but active membership of around 100 people. These early years saw the mountain bikers of Queenstown coming together to establish a strong group of riders with a keen interest in trail development and advocating for mountain biking in the area.

By 2004 the club was already gaining international attention for its trail network including the then, ahead of it's time "Dream Track".

The establishment of the 7 Mile Recreation Area trail network, commonly known as 7 Mile was the club's first trail network. The trail network catered to a wide cross section of riders of all skill levels. The area was the cornerstone of mountain biking in Queenstown and saw the beginning of the club forming a close working relationship with the Department of Conservation as the development of these trails was a departure from the un-sanctioned trail development which was occurring in the area.

The trail network grew and with it local businesses began to profit from the increased interest, and mountain bike tourism that the trails brought along.

The QMTBC continued to grow and in 2010 the opening of the Skyline Gondola to bikes saw the development of further trails and businesses associated with mountain biking.

In 2011 QMTBC started volunteer digs on Wednesday nights with the construction of the B.O.B (Built on Beer) trail. Wednesday Night Digs have since become an institution, with 10 to 15 people turning up to work on trails each week. It is not uncommon for visitors to turn up the day they get off the plane in Queenstown, keen to get involved in the local riding community.

In 2012 QMTBC built what is now considered one of NZ's most famous mountain bike trails, Rude Rock on Coronet Peak This trail has featured in lots of mountain biking related media and served to cement our reputation as a riding destination internationally.

Mountain biking is a favourite recreational activity of many local people and is an increasingly important part of the town's identity. Queenstown has become a popular destination for pro riders to spend their northern hemisphere off-season, which has greatly enhanced our reputation as a riding destination. Queenstown now has an arguably higher profile than destinations such as Nelson and Rotorua that have much larger trail networks.

With funding provided by QLDC the club engaged TRC Tourism to undertake an economic impact study of mountain biking in the district. This study was completed in 2017 and found that:

- a total of \$64.95 million is spent by mountain bike trail users each year
- 297.2 direct jobs are generated as a result of spending by mountain bike trail users

- 38.1 indirect jobs are generated as a result of employee expenditure by those working in jobs servicing the trails visitors
- the trails generate a total of \$25.12 million in income for the Queenstown region annually.
- Of the total spend of \$64.95 million, \$60.12 million is spent by visitors to the region. This equates to approximately 2.8% of total tourism spend in the region.

Additionally the study interviewed visiting trail users about their satisfaction levels and found that demand was greatest for more intermediate to advanced trails.

## Mountain Biking in Queenstown

The club has a small yet excellent trail network. We have trails in diverse ecosystems, from high country tussock, to beech forest, mixed native bush, and exotic conifer forest. On a global level the trail network is small. MTB destinations of a similar or even lower profile than Queenstown have much more extensive trail networks.

What Queenstown doesn't have in size, it makes up for in quality.

The network broadly consists of the following:

### 7 Mile Scenic Reserve (7 Mile)

Accessed from either Wilson Bay or 7 Mile car park, this area provides for a wide cross section of abilities. The network is relatively small but is a favourite of many local riders. Open year round, it provides great riding in any weather due to the forest canopy provided by the thirsty conifer trees in the reserve.

### Jardine's Park

QMTBC has two beginner level cross country loops and a pump track at Kelvin Heights. This park is enjoyed by families with young children and people new to the sport, however the trails are not heavily utilised. The lack of use is largely due to the out of the way location for many families. A planned ferry service may cause an increase in use of this facility.

### Fernhill and Ben Lomond

The management of the Fernhill Loop was undertaken by the QMTBC in 2012. This was in response to the landowners abandoning the trail. The club saw the trail as a community asset needing protection and management. The trail is now the centrepiece of a wider network allowing riders a long and sustained riding opportunity direct from downtown Queenstown.

This area currently caters to intermediate and above skilled riders, and trails in this area have been described as some of the best in the world.

Using the gondola to avoid the first 450 vertical meters of climbing allows for 'good value' rides, where you still do a reasonable amount of climbing, but are rewarded with an even longer descent for your efforts.

## Ben Lomond Recreational Reserve

QMTBC has been involved in the development of trails within the bounds of the Skyline Bike Park. These trails are accessible by either pedal or by gondola uplift during the operational season. The trails built by the club in the park have been aimed at riders at high skill levels and appeal to riders coming to Queenstown for specifically that style of trail. Currently QMTBC is wrapping up development on an 18 month project to build an intermediate singletrack trail around the perimeter of the bike park.

## Coronet Peak

The Rude Rock trail was a major enhancement to the existing trails on Coronet Peak. This trail has been a boon to the town with riders from overseas and around NZ travelled far and wide to experience this trail. Catering to all but the most beginner rider, the trail is celebrated by all who ride it. A bucket list trail.

Options from Rude Rock include a descent down to the historic Skippers Pack Track, allowing riders to stop off and investigate old miners huts and relics. The Skippers Pack Track along with Zoot track that descends from Skipper Saddle have been popular with mountain bikers since the 1990s.

Additionally, a link trail from Coronet Peak to Arrowtown has been established. "Corotown" riders usually finish their day with a cold beer and hearty meal in one of Arrowtown's fine pubs. Two descents built by NZSki in the mid 2000's, the imaginatively named Coronet DH and Coronet XC, remain popular, particularly the XC track which can be ridden in either direction.

## Gorge Road Jump Park

First established in 2010, Gorge Road Jump Park is one of the world's best.

Catering to those who want a little more air under their wheels, riders have no end of options from learning to jump to 'pro' lines for experts only.

Featured in films and media since its inception, "Gorge" had become a jumping mecca for riders.

All the trails, their locations and styles are part of what makes mountain biking in Queenstown so iconic. The trail networks entice riders from around the world to come ride, shop, eat and play in our town to the tune of \$60 million each year.

# Why do we need more trails?

As discussed above we have a relatively small trail network, albeit one with some very good riding. While not as important as quality, it is key to have a good quantity of trails. People don't want to ride the same trails over and over again. Mountain bikers are always looking for a new trail to master, a new view to behold or a new perspective on familiar territory. This is especially true of mountain bikers who are traveling to ride, visitors are unlikely to return to ride the same trails again when they could go elsewhere to ride all new trails.

As mountain biking in the region continues to grow in popularity, more trails are needed to spread riders out to allow a sense of solitude. This is particularly important of longer back country trails.

Queenstown has world class mountain biking descents and famous jumps that attract bikers from around the world, but is lacking when it comes to some types of riding.

Globally, cross country (XC) has been the most popular mountain biking discipline<sup>1</sup>. XC riding is less about long descents and more about undulating terrain with speed coming from pedalling, not gravity and Queenstown has little of this type of riding.

There are no multi-day adventure rides in our region. This type of riding is a major attraction for people who travel to ride and there are many possible routes in our region that would make for excellent multi-day adventure rides.

While it will be good to broaden the type of riding available around Queenstown, it's important that we continue to build on our strengths. We have fantastic mountainous terrain with great views and our very best trails will always be those that take advantage of both of these.

Our existing network is also disconnected. The main riding areas of 7 Mile, Ben Lomond and Coronet Peak are situated on islands of public land in a sea of leasehold. By cooperating with land owners these areas could be connected by relatively short trails. Connecting trails offer very good 'bang for your buck' as they instantly enable much longer rides than the distance they cover. Connecting the disparate parts of our network will give a sense of cohesion across the network.

One possible measure of success would be having a trail network capable of hosting a two day Enduro World Series event. The EWS is a global race series that showcases some of the best riding locations around the world. EWS races consist of one or two days of enduro style racing where competitors are timed on technical descending special stages and ride between them on untimed liaison stages. The type of tracks used in the EWS are the kind that Queenstown excels at, but we would need several more long expert level descents to hold such an event. For a two day EWS event the *minimum* total special stage time for the

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<sup>1</sup> Secondary Research –Mountain Biking Market Profiles, IMBA Canada 2010, Retrieved 19/3/2018 [http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:aD\\_RW4tsRwAJ:www.imbacanada.com/sites/default/files/Mountain-Biking\\_Market-Profiles.pdf+&cd=16&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=nz](http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:aD_RW4tsRwAJ:www.imbacanada.com/sites/default/files/Mountain-Biking_Market-Profiles.pdf+&cd=16&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=nz)

fastest rider is 40 minutes<sup>2</sup>, so we would need 8 descents that the fastest riders in the world would need more than 5 minutes to get down at a minimum.

High profile amateur events such as the Trans NZ Enduro showcase our area to some extent, but the EWS is another level in terms of both audience and the trails required.

## Challenges

The QMTBC faces several challenges over the next few years. As Queenstown's population grows and visitor numbers increase, QMTBC, like many in our community, have to cope with the increase in demand for our services - in our case - trails. In addition to this (not unwelcome) pressure to expand, we expect to encounter some specific threats to the progress of mountain biking development in Queenstown.

### 7 Mile Scenic Reserve - Wilding Pine Control

As noted earlier, the 7 Mile Scenic Reserve is a cornerstone of many rides for locals and visitors alike.

The trails are located in a mixture of exotic and native forest.

The land is managed by the Department of Conservation. As part of the battle against wilding pine seeding DoC has decided that the pine trees need to be removed, thus removing a seed source.

This logging will cause damage to trails, remove the 'rideable in all weather' nature of the network and create erosion issues.

The loss of amenity will have numerous problems:

1. Loss of trail network
2. Loss of economy for mountain bike related businesses in town; rental, retail, tours, etc
3. Increased usage of other trails, creating maintenance issues.

QMTBC has been in discussions with DoC to establish some protocols around the process and timeframes for this work.

QMTBC hopes this process will be staged and carried out over the course of 5-10 years.

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<sup>2</sup> Enduro World Series Rule Book - Race Format, Retrieved 19/5/2018  
<http://www.enduroworldseries.com/rule-book/>



This will allow the club time to build new trails, repair damaged trails and establish new plantings.

There is a great deal of work for the club in this. The cost of trail reinstatement and re-build is difficult to estimate. Budgets to rebuild the trail network to its current size and quality could extend to \$500,000. The manner in which the logging is carried out will largely dictate the final cost of the project.

A possible silver lining to the logging of these trees could be the opportunity to build an Upper 7 Mile zone if the upper section of the reserve is logged, and the lower section felled at a later date, or only thinned. The amenity of the area will be greatly increased as native bush is established, although it will be decades before a beech canopy can develop to provide the wet weather riding we have today.

## Gorge Road - License to Occupy Expiry.

QMTBC has a license to occupy at the Gorge Road site. This license came to an end in February 2018. QLDC has granted a new license for a year, expiring in April 2019, this may have an additional year extension depending on QLDC infrastructure requirements.

QMTBC sees the jump park as a vital asset to the club and the community and it is an important facility for athlete development in many disciplines. To this end the club is looking for new locations.

Once a new location is established, the club will need to build new jumps, install the sprinkler system and arrange any fencing/ planting etc. This all leads to high costs for relocation.

QMTBC hopes to obtain funding assistance from QLDC for this work.

Estimates for the rebuild of the park are around \$100,000.

## Maintenance

An increasing mountain bike population with a limited trail network leads to a higher concentration of traffic on trails, increasing wear and tear. High levels of traffic are needed before wear and tear becomes a major factor in trail maintenance. Overuse has become a problem of some of our most popular trails, with corrugations known as braking bumps becoming a common problem. Spreading riders out over a greater number of trails would alleviate this.

Maintenance is still required on less heavily trafficked trails, but mostly consists of just clearing deadfall, trimming vegetation, and addressing drainage issues where they arise.

This summer QMTBC engaged a contractor to be available for maintenance without a separate contract for each piece of work. This approach worked well, and we hope to extend our budget for this in the near future.

Where possible the club has chosen long term fixes to problem sections of trail. This approach can be expensive in the short term, but even in the short term gives a better experience to trail users, and saves money in the long term.

Examples of these long term fixes include the rerouting of the 'Face Melter' straight on Rude Rock. This notorious section of the trail was prone to braking bumps, the rerouted section of trail has more corners, extending the length of the trail, and will not suffer from braking bumps. Another example is a boggy section of Beeched As that was altered to include large grade reversals so there is no flat area for water to pool. Not only is this once boggy section now dry and firm, but the new swoopy section of trail is also more fun to ride.

We have found that new trails typically need more maintenance in the first few years, but become more resilient to traffic and weather after a few years of settling in.

For our current network of trails an annual maintenance budget of \$40,000 is sufficient. We would expect this to grow somewhat as we add more trails to the network, but expect the average cost per metre to decrease as our network grows.

## Land Access

Getting permission to build trails along with obtaining the funding to do so is the primary challenge the club faces. While it can take a long time, both QLDC and DoC are generally supportive of the club building trails on public land. However, the majority of the hills and mountains around the basin are leasehold land, and this means getting permission for trails is entirely dependent on the lease holder. This can be frustrating when all that stands between linking up disparate riding areas is seemingly unproductive leasehold land that the club cannot get permission to build a trail on.

QMTBC feel we have been left out of tenure review discussions in the past. In particular we are disappointed that the proposed Moonlight Trail through Mt Crichton\ Station will not be open to bikes. In the future QMTBC intends to seek the support of QLDC and agencies such as DoC and the Walking Access Commission should any land in the basin come up for tenure review.

QMTBC can improve its relationship with land managers by promptly following through with obligations like providing GPS coordinates of final trails and evidence of revegetation when required, and addressing issues such as rider/walker conflict when they arise.

## E-Bikes

E-bikes are rapidly growing in popularity, this presents benefits and challenges for the mountain biking community.

E-bikes extend the ability to participate in mountain biking to those who would not otherwise be able to. Any car or public transport journey replaced by a bike ride is a good thing, and

e-bikers may be more likely to do so than traditional cyclists. E-bikes allow longer rides for the same effort as traditional mountain bikes, and can make unclimbable trails climbable.

This new- found climbing ability may encourage some riders to take shortcuts resulting in braiding of climbing trails. Promotion of trail etiquette and signs asking riders to “keep singletrack single” may be required to counter this.

Many traditional mountain bikers view e-bikes as cheating and oppose their use on trails, the QMTBC committee does not support this view and believe our trails should be open to all.

The increase in trails ridden in the same amount of time, combined with more power resulting in increased loss of traction on climbs, means that the maintenance burden per rider will be greater for e-bikes. As numbers of e-bikes increase QMTBC may look at raising the membership fees for e-bikers to cover this cost.

As the proportion of e-bikes increases demand will grow for longer, more physically demanding rides with more elevation gain/loss. Building more long rides will be important for Queenstown to remain a premier MTB destination in the future.

## Impacts of Mountain Biking

As mountain biking increases in popularity care must be taken to manage the impacts. QMTBC can play a role in educating riders about trail etiquette, promoting respect for trails and other trail users. There are certain areas in the trail network that have the potential to be conflict hotspots that are popular with both walkers and bikers.

One such area is Upper Missing Link where the mountain bike trail crosses the Ben Lomond Track. Some walkers walk up the bike track, and some bikers don't slow down for walkers. In this specific case, missing signage needs to be replaced. Signage to inform riders as they leave Queenstown Bike Park that a change in mentality is required when riding trails outside the bike park could also be effective. QMTBC can continue to promote rider etiquette on our website and social media.

QMTBC could also do more to promote the idea that is important to keep to the trail to avoid braiding and widening of the trail.

## Avenues for Funding

QMTBC is a volunteer organisation with no employees. Eight committee members with jobs and families perform all administrative functions of the club. While the club does as much as it can with volunteer labour and donated or discounted equipment and materials, building and maintaining a world class trail network does cost money. The club has the following existing and potential avenues for raising money.

## Memberships

Current annual membership prices are \$40 for adults, \$25 for juniors, \$80 for families - 2 adults, 2 juniors.

Membership goals: To increase memberships to 1000+ and maintain this level each year.

To achieve this the committee need to continue to educate local mountain bikers on the important work QMTBC does building and maintaining trails.

Introduce a membership mobile app - simplify process for members to join and renew their membership. This would significantly reduce administrative burden from volunteers.

Youth and High School subcommittees to drive membership for the next generation of riders.

## Merchandise

QMTBC raises a significant proportion of our revenue through the sale of merchandise. This has the added benefit of acting as advertising for the club to hopefully drive memberships as well.

- In local bike shops we sell trail maps and stickers to locals and visitors.
- T-shirts, caps, sweatshirts and riding apparel, sold internationally via our online store and locally in bike shops.
- We also sell merchandise specifically related to certain fundraisers. Examples of this are the Through the Loop merchandise and the upcoming t-shirts to fundraise for Upper Rude Rock.

## Registering as a Charity

The Central Lakes Trust has large grants available to charities. QMTBC has begun the process of registering as a charity by changing the constitution of our society to better reflect what we do as a club and this will become our charitable purpose when we register. CLT makes grants in the region of \$100,000 and this would be an appropriate source of funding for larger scale projects like Remarkables Ridge.

## Events

In 2017 the club invested in an automated timing system. This has made it much easier to run races and the club has been able to organise several successful events this summer on short notice. We are re-negotiating our license agreement with DOC to include a provision for running events without requiring further permission. This will further simplify event organisation and lead to more events. Additionally the timing system has been rented to other event organisers for \$500 per day.

Atlas Beer Cafe continue to run biannual fundraising parties on behalf of the club. These have typically each raised 5 figure sums for the club. Atlas have obtained resource consent to continue to hold these parties until at least 2021 and intend to do so indefinitely.

## Sponsorship and Donations

We have donation boxes in bike shops, at trail side, and at the airport so departing visitors can unburden themselves of New Zealand currency. After registering as a charity donations will become tax deductible.

Currently local businesses sponsor us in return for advertising on maps and signs. There is the potential to expand sponsorship of trails to increase funds raised.

## Crowdfunding Campaigns

Crowdfunding is an unexplored avenue for funding for QMTBC. Nelson Mountain Bike Club has run successful campaigns and were forthcoming with advice for us. NMTBC had a big social media push led by a high profile local athlete, Queenstown has no shortage of high profile riders as members and attracts many international athletes for their off season so we are well positioned for this. They also suggested we choose a trail that appeals to a wide range of users and is an exciting prospect. The Upper Rude Rock project is a good candidate for this.

We will however need to be careful not to exhaust the public's goodwill and will probably only be able to run such a campaign every year or even two, so this will not be a solution for every trail.

## QLDC Funding

QMTBC is likely the largest sports club in Queenstown with close to 1000 paying members. As we have established there is a massive economic benefit to mountain biking in Queenstown, and as the Adventure Capital of the world we believe it is the town's best interest to support the club financially. QMTBC already works closely with the council for land access and is appealing to the council to help with funds to maintain our network and for funding to build more facilities on council land.

# The Future

## Goals

Queenstown Mountain Bike Club has identified the following strategic goals to guide development of mountain biking in Queenstown.

1. Build on our strengths to expand our trail network that already attracts all levels of riders from around the world.
2. Broaden our network to cater to all mountain biking disciplines to engage a greater portion of the local community.
3. Connect our riding areas into a cohesive trail network to reduce the need for vehicle trips to access trails and facilitate longer rides.
4. Provide facilities capable of hosting international events and suitable for use by professional athletes across the major disciplines of mountain biking.

## Strategies

The following strategies have been devised to help us achieve the above goals.

1. Extend existing high quality descents.

Queenstown has some excellent descents, some of which have become internationally renowned, many of these have the potential to be made longer. It is preferable to make an existing trail longer than to build a similar separate trail of the same length. Potential candidates for extension are Rude Rock, Salmon Run and many of the trails at 7 Mile.

*Goals contributed to 1, 2.*

2. Make use of infrastructure to provide more 'good value' rides.

Like much of Europe but unlike much of New Zealand, we are lucky to have high mountain roads and gondola infrastructure. This allows us to create rides that have more descending than climbing, this also creates opportunities for businesses to provide shuttle services between either end of trails. QMTBC should aim to build trails that begin in areas such as Coronet Peak, Remarkables, Ben Lomond and the Crown Range and end on the valley floor.

*Goals contributed to 1.*

3. Make use of terrain and views unique to Queenstown.

We have mountains and scenic vistas, this is what makes Queenstown such a good place for mountain bike trails. We should take advantage of this! One obvious yet untapped trail location is Remarkables and the most famous ridge in Queenstown.

*Goals contributed to 1, 2.*

4. Link existing trails to allow them to be ridden as part of longer rides or included in smaller loops.

Linking up existing existing trails is the most efficient way to build longer rides. Connecting our different riding area will create a feeling of cohesion across the network.

*Goals contributed to 1, 2, 3.*

5. Continue to provide a steady stream of new technical trails so riders constantly have a new challenge to master.

Mastering a new trail is one of the most satisfying experiences for mountain bikers. Regularly introducing new technical trails is important for the development of improving riders. More of these types of trails will be required to hold an EWS event, and fresh trails would be required past this point for Queenstown to become a regular stop.

*Goals contributed to 1, 4.*

6. Use the many water races around the district to form the backbone of a longer distance network.

In many parts of the world the majority of mountain bike trails are made up of ancient disused walking tracks that have been reclaimed for use by mountain bikers. While we don't have ancient walking trails, we do have many disused water races. These can be easily reclaimed for use as mountain bike trails, that cover large horizontal distances. Many of these are situated appropriately for linking our riding areas.

*Goals contributed to 2, 3.*

7. Build unique trails with a distinct flavour.

Flow trails in particular can fall into the trap of being quite similar to each other, this is particularly true in open terrain. Thought needs to be given to how to make each trail of this type unique to avoid building the same trail over and over again.

*Goals contributed to 1, 2.*

8. Continue to provide and expand world class dirt jump and freeride facilities catering to riders ranging from beginners to professional athletes.

A large part of Queenstown reputation as a mountain bike destination comes from professional athletes showcasing areas like Gorge Road Jump Park and the Dream Track. It is important to the club that we continue to provide world class facilities such as these.

*Goals contributed to 1, 4.*

9. Maintain existing trails to a high standard, opting for permanent fixes over temporary repairs.

While permanent fixes to maintenance issues are more expensive initially, they reduce long term maintenance cost, and improve the experiences of trail users.

*Goals contributed to 1, 2, 4.*

10. Work with partner organisations, such as the Queenstown Trails Trust, to secure funding and land access.

The Queenstown Trails Trust has a lot of experience negotiating access with landowners and raising funds for large projects. QMTBC should cooperate with the QTT whenever our interests align.

*Goals contributed to 1, 2, 3, 4.*

## Future Trail Development

This section outlines QMTBC's vision for mountain bike trail development in Queenstown for the next ten years. The proposed trails are just that, proposed. Permission has not been sought for the majority of these trails and we are not guaranteed to obtain permission for all of them.

### 7 Mile

Two upcoming events will spur further trail development at 7 Mile, the felling of conifer trees, and the construction of a trail extending the Sunshine Bay Track to 7 Mile or possibly even the 12 Mile Delta.

As stated in the challenges section above, ideally the top section of trees on the north side of the reserve will be felled first. This will allow an extension of the climbing trail to open up approximately another 80m vertical of trail. This will allow the three major flow trails (Kachong, Gravitron, and Jack be Nimble) on the north side of the reserve to be extended. These three trails have unique character (fast and flowy, lots of switchback berms, lots of



jumps) and that would be continued in their extensions. There will also be space for two to three new trails in this area.

A trail extending the Sunshine Bay Track to 7 Mile would either require the DOC track climb to be made easier or a trail around the edge of the lake to Wilson's Bay, either way returning from lake level at the eastern end of the riding area would be made easier. There is unused space at the east end of the reserve and there is potential to build trails from the new high point down to the lake, as well as extending existing trails down to this level.

Having a bike track from town to 7 Mile would mean the many tourists who rent bikes and ride out to 7 Mile would not have to do so on a busy, windy road, and many locals would chose to ride out this way rather than driving their cars.

There is also potential for a dedicated descent in the same gully as the Gold Digger trail. This would make for a nicely contained loop, and separate climbing and descending riders.

## Fernhill Bike Park

The QMTBC has been in discussion with QDLC regarding the area of land above the Wynyard Bike Park (WBP) and the native bush around the head of the One Mile Creek. This area has the Fernhill Loop Track running through it.

The Fernhill Loop (FHL) above WBP is steep and unsuitable for a dual use trail. QMTBC is looking at solutions to provide a suitable place to route a climb (uphill) trail as an alternative to this part of the FHL and to connect the other climbs we have in the area. The Fernhill Loop will remain in place for walkers. QMTBC propose to provide alternative descents to separate walkers and riders on this steep section.

There are no trails close to town with the easy climbs and multiple descent options that make riding areas like 7 Mile so popular. The FBP is an ideal location to provide a great set of trails that satisfies this demand for riders who are short on time and/or lack access to transport to go further afield.

QMTBC proposes a set of six to ten descents to cater to riders of all skill levels. This includes a number of unsanctioned trails in this area that the club plans to legitimise and adopt the maintenance of. The club also proposes a new climbing trail to access these descents without relying on the gondola or the steep access road, and two to three linking climbs between existing trails.

A trail network of this range would cost approximately \$150,000 to establish and an ongoing cost of \$5,000 per annum to maintain. The club has a dedicated and enthusiastic group of volunteers, who would work on construction of some trails in this area.

## Ben Lomond, Bowen Peak and Beyond

Beyond Fernhill Bike Park, trail development on these hills so close to town will continue. This hill is not only central to Queenstown, but is centrally located between 7 Mile and Coronet Peak.

With cooperation from the landowner we could link into Gold Digger via a trail traversing across Fernhill. In the other direction we could link from Ben Lomond to the Moonlight Track via a watterrace above Gorge Rd. This would not only complete the loop around Bowen Peak, but also go a long way to linking the Ben Lomond trails to Coronet Peak. The linking to Coronet Peak would be completed by a trail from the Edith Cavell bridge linking into Atley Terrace Track.

Trails down Horne Creek and Five Mile Creek would be descents worthy of becoming EWS stages.

## Coronet Peak

QMTBC currently has a hugely successful trail that runs above the Coronet Peak Road from the base buildings to the Skipper Road turn off. "Rude Rock" is an internationally renowned trail with hundreds of riders a week. This trail alone is a drawcard for many visiting riders.

QMTBC proposes to extend this trail such that it would start at the top of the GreenGates chairlift and take a route at the western extremity of the DoC Coronet Recreation Reserve to join the existing "Rude Rock" start. This trail would be built by the same contractor to ensure continuity.

While we would expect the same number of people to ride this trail, the need to pedal to the top would mean that each rider would do fewer laps than they typically do when shuttling Rude Rock so we would much lower maintenance costs for this trail, and a potential reduction in traffic on the existing portion of Rude Rock as well.

QMTBC is working with the Queenstown Trails Trust to gain permission through the QEII Covenant land on Coronet Peak Station for a dedicated down trail from below Rude Rock to the bottom of Dan O'Connell's track. With these trails we would have a descent from the top of Coronet Peak to the valley floor, this ride would be a major attraction for mountain bikers coming to Queenstown.

## Coronet Forest

QLDC is planning the early harvest of Coronet Forest to remove it as a seed source of wilding pines. After harvesting the plan is for walking, equestrian and mountain bike trails to be created providing a recreation resource for a large range of users.

The ridge that Coronet Forest rises to, is about 300m above the valley floor and is about 3km long. This area is large enough for a large number of trails to exist without interfering

with each other. Unlike our other riding areas that have evolved over time, this would be an opportunity to plan a trail network from scratch.

The key trails the club sees forming the initial network here would be:

- An easy climbing trail from either Allen Reid Road or the Flight Park to the highest point on the eastern end of the ridge. At an easy climbing grade this would be about 5 km long.
- A two way trail from Bush Creek Saddle to the top of the above climbing trail. This would be good ridgeline trail in its own right, but also serve as an important link between Slip Saddle, Bush Creek, and the Around Coronet trails to the new Coronet Forest trails. This trail would cover some difficult terrain and may require some directional sections to get the best result.
- A selection of flow and technical descents. Grade 3 and 4 flow descents and grade 4, 5 and 6 hand built technical descents. It will be important for the flow trails in particular to have their own distinct character.
- An XCO style loop. Our trail network is lacking when it comes to cross country trails. A World Cup level XC loop would help to address this. This could fit at the lower eastern end of the forest and would be about a 5 km loop with a total of 200m climbing.

As the replanted bush grows more trails could be added in the long term to keep the riding fresh.

The time frame for logging of Coronet Forest is unclear but the Coronet Forest Revegetation Proposal prepared for QLDC shows the harvesting phase lasting for two and a half years so it is probably at least 3 years before trail construction can begin.

Coronet Forest would become a major feature in the Queenstown trail network. We would expect it would cost \$500,000 to establish the above trails and around \$10,000 to \$15,000 a year to maintain them.

## Remarkables

The Remarkables are currently underutilised for mountain biking, with the only trails being a pair of DH trails on the lower flanks and an ok descent from Ben Cruachan to Coal Pit Saddle, typically accessed by helicopter. There is huge potential for trails on our most prominent and recognisable mountain. There is the potential for extremely 'good value' rides using the highest road in the district to gain elevation, climbing for possibly another 400m elevation before descending to near lake level.

QMTBC proposes a small number of very high quality trails on the Remarkables, with a descent down Queenstown's most famous ridge an obvious priority! We also have plans for an XC loop and a rebuild of the existing descent from Ben Cruachan.

Ultimately we would like to see a multi-day ride from to Garston with huts and believe this would be a boon to other user groups such as walkers, ski tourers and climbers. This trail could also serve as *raison d'etre* for the proposed Remarkables National Park.

## Our Partners

### Kelly McGarry Foundation

The Kelly McGarry Foundation (KMF) was set up in the memory of Kelly McGarry, a professional freeride mountain biker who died on Ben Lomond in 2016. The KMF organise the annual McGazza Fest around the anniversary of Kelly's passing. This celebration of Kelly's life involves bike related events for all abilities of riders.

KMF is also working towards establishing an overnight mountain biking descent that will be accessed by helicopter and include a hut for overnight use. QMTBC supports KMF in this goal.

QMTBC has also worked closely with the Kelly McGarry Foundation, holding joint fundraisers and events.

### Queenstown Trails Trust

While previous Queenstown Trails Trust (QTT) projects have been important to cycling infrastructure, they have been of little interest in terms of recreational mountain biking. Two upcoming QTT projects are of great interest to QMTBC and our members.

#### Around Coronet Trail

This trail, currently under construction, will not only be an excellent full day cross country ride in its own right, it will also work as a connecting trail between the bottom of Rude Rock and Bush Creek Saddle. With future trail development in Coronet Forest this trail will be an increasingly important link between the two sides of Coronet Peak. It may also serve as a catalyst for further trail development on the lower flanks of Coronet Peak, such as the proposed Lower Rude Rock Trail.

#### Sunshine Bay to 7 Mile

Currently the only way to ride from Queenstown to the intermediate level trails at 7 Mile is along the busy Glenorchy Road. With 7 Mile being a particularly popular destination for inexperienced tourists, who rent bikes and don't have a vehicle to transport them, we believe it is only a matter of time before there is a serious incident on this route. A Sunshine Bay to 7 Mile track would eliminate this risk. If built as recreational single track this trail would encourage riders to ride their bikes to 7 Mile eliminating more car journeys.

## Top of the Lake Trust

The newly formed Top of the Lake Trust aims to build recreational trails around Glenorchy with a long term goal of building a trail from Skippers to Glenorchy to link a missing section of Te Araroa, the New Zealand trail. QMTBC fully supports the Top of the Lake Trust in this endeavour.

## Project Timeline

The timing of logging of Coronet Forest and 7 Mile, along with a possible Gorge Road Jump Park relocation mean there is a lot of uncertainty past the next couple of years. Please see appendix 1 for detail on our planned trails.

### Years 1 to 2

#### Fernhill Bike Park

In the next two years we plan to build a significant part of Fernhill Bike Park.

The trails we are adding here will offer good bang for buck as we will have connected trails to form loops that can be ridden in many ways. These trails are easily accessible from central Queenstown with or without use of the gondola. This will leave us well positioned to expand this trail network east into Horne Creek and towards Arthurs Point, and west across Fernhill toward Gold Digger and 7 Mile.

#### Coronet Peak: Peak To Valley Floor

In its current state Rude Rock has become world famous. Upper Rude Rock will more than double the trails length and pass through even more scenic terrain. The climb to get to the top of this trail will ensure that it remains a special ride and not something you can bang out ten laps of in a day with a shuttle vehicle. Combined with other projects this will create a descent from the top of Coronet Peak to the valley floor below.

#### Remarkables Ridge: a New Iconic Trail

This trail will be by far the longest single trail that QMTBC has built and will possibly be the largest vertical descent in the country. The climb will provide a much needed link for summer sightseers from Lake Alta to the Shadow Basin Lookout This scenic trail will likely become world famous overnight.

## Years 3 to 10

If this trail building programme can be completed in the next decade, mountain biking in Queenstown will be permanently changed for the better.

In this period we are likely to see large scale felling of wilding pines at 7 Mile, and harvesting of Coronet Forest. These two locations will likely be the focus of our efforts for significant periods during this time and once we are done, will be great riding centers for riders of a wide range of ability.

Gorge Road Jump Park will likely need to be relocated in this time frame as well, which will be a major expense with little net benefit to the club. It will be exciting to see something new that matches the awe inspiring dirt sculptures that make up the current Gorge Road Jump Park.

With the proposed trail development around Ben Lomand and Coronet Peak/Forest we will be in a good position to host a 2 day EWS race with a day of racing focused around each of these locations.

Multiple descent options from high on the Remarkables will mean a wide cross section of riders will be able to enjoy some epic descents down our most recognisable mountain.

Cross country riders will be better catered for with a long day ride around Bowen Peak beginning right in town. A world cup level XCO course at Coronet Forest will be a major benefit to racers, professional, aspiring professional and amateur. A 20 km loop located on The Remarkables will offer a unique ride at altitude in a location that is unlike any other riding in the country.

If and when it is completed a Remarkables to Garston trail will be one of the great rides of the world. This trail and the associated infrastructure will be a boost to many recreational groups, not just bikers. This trail will seem an obvious idea in hindsight, but there is a lot of work ahead to make it happen.

# Appendix 1: Project Schedule

## Years 1 - 2

During this period we will concentrate on the implementation of Fernhill Bike Park, extending Rude Rock, and a new trail on Remarkables with the potential for international renown.

Ref	Project Name	Grade	Length	Cost	Start	Finish	Notes
1	"Blue Trail"	3-4	4.5km	Volunteer	November 2016	May 2018	Currently in progress volunteer project.
2	Fernhill Bike Park (FHBP) Climb	3	2.5km	\$28,000	Autumn 2018	Winter 2018	Major new climb for Fernhill Bike Park. \$10,000 raised from Southern Trust for this purpose. The cost and length of this trail will change as are looking at alternative lines that won't interfere with planned descents.
3	7 Mile Structures	3-4	-	\$4,900	Autumn 2018	Winter 2018	\$3500 raised from Sky City Community Trust put toward material cost. Building of structures to be undertaken by volunteers.
4	Minidream Rebuild	3 to 6	1km	\$15,00 - \$20,000	Winter 2018	Spring 2018	Rebuild to incorporate slopestyle elements. Jumps to be made more consistent. Will include an easy line. Budget assumes some material donations and volunteer time.
11	FHBP Lower Salmon Run	6	1km	Volunteer	Winter 2018	Spring 2018	Extend Salmon Run down the One Mile Creek to Thompson Street bridge.
6	FHBP Descent 1	3-4	2km	\$40,000	Winter 2018	Spring 2018	Fernhill Flow, an alternative descent to the steep section of the Fernhill Loop above Wynyard Bike Park. The lower part of this trail will involve clearing a block of wilding pines and planting natives.

7	FHBP Descent 2	5?	2km	Volunteer	Spring 2018	Spring 2019	Next Summer's Wednesday Dig Project. Native Bush Descent. Digs accessed by Gondola.
8	FHBP Linking Climbs 1	3	1.5km	\$15,000	Spring 2018	Summer 2019	These linking climbs between Fernhill Loop, Beeched As and the 2 way section of Lower Missing Link are left over from the Through the Loop project
9	Upper Rude Rock	3-4	4km	\$40,000	Summer 2019	Summer 2019	Descent will start behind Greengates top station and wrap around the hillside, outside ski area boundary. Will more than double the length of Rude Rock!
10	FHBP Linking Climbs 2	3	2km	\$20,000	Autumn 2019	Spring 2019	Link [2] into the Fernhill Loop. This will make all Ben Lomond trails accessible by single track climbs.
12	FHBP Descent 3	5	1km	Volunteer	Spring 2019	Autumn 2020	Extend the top of legitimised Fernhill trials.
13	Remarkables Ridge Descent	3	15km	\$150,000	Summer 2020	Autumn 2020	Instant classic descent, potential to be one of the most photographed bike trails in the world! Climb to top of Shadow Basin via Lake Alta, top section of climb will be dual use and likely popular with summer sightseers. Descent from Homeward down ridge to be natural singletrack. Descent down north face above road to be flow trail.

Project names are placeholders, and final trail names to be decided upon completion. All costs and distances are approximations only.



## Years 3 - 10

Timings in this period are highly dependent on external factors such as the harvesting of Coronet Forest and 7 Mile, and the Gorge Road Jump Park relocation. Timings are not given for this period. These projects are loosely ordered by geographic location, not priority order.

Ref	Project Name	Grade	Length	Cost	Notes
14	Gorge Road Jump Park Rebuild	3 - 6	-	\$100,000	This expensive project may have to be brought forward if at some point we find the lease is unlikely to be renewed in the next 12 months.
15	Upper 7 Mile (U7M) Climb	2	2.5km	\$25,000	Extend 'What's Up?' climb a further 80m vertical above Gravitron, and traverse along top edge of reserve. This will open up new area of 7 Mile Reserve for trail development.
16	U7M Descent 1	3	1km	\$10,000	Continue Gravitron into upper 7 mile.
17	Lower Gravitron	3	1km	\$10,000	Continue Gravitron down to lake
18	U7M Descent 2	3	1km	\$10,000	Extend Kachong
19	U7M Descent 3	5	800m	\$16,000	Extend Jack Be Nimble
20	U7M Descent 4	4	2km	Volunteer	Handbuilt singletrack from high point of 7 Mile to the lake shore at the eastern side of reserve.
21	U7M Descent 5	5	500m	Volunteer	Steep descent from upper 7 mile to existing trails.
22	Gold Digger Descent	4	2km	Volunteer	Dedicated descent on opposite side of valley to the dual direction Gold Digger
23	7 Mile Reforestation			\$????	This could be an expensive process depending how successfully the natives recolonise and how much weed control is necessary.
24	7 Mile Rebuild	2 - 5	15km	\$50,000 to \$500,000	In a worst case scenario the existing trail network at 7 Mile would need to be entirely rebuilt after tree felling. This could be more expensive than many trails depending on the amount of clean up required.

29	Fernhill Traverse	3	8km	\$80,000	A traverse across Ben Lomond above Fernhill. Will link FHBP with Gold Digger and 7 Mile. Again on leasehold land.
30	5 Mile Descent	5	5km	\$50,000 / Volunteer	A descent down 5 Mile Creek. Accessed from [29]
25	Horne Creek Descent 1	6	4km	\$40,000 / Volunteer	A technically demanding descent through native bush in a similar style to Salmon Run
26	Horne Creed Descent 2	3-4	10km	\$70,000	An easier trail than [25]. Would stay out of the bottom of the gully. Would connect to the [27] to form part of the Around Bowen Peak Loop..
27	Queenstown Gorge Water Race	2-3	4km	\$40,000	This dual direction trail would follow a water race above Gorge Road and then join up to the Moonlight Track. This track along with [27] is on leasehold land and obtaining permission to build these could be a challenge.
28	Lower Ben Lomond Track Rebuild	3	4km	\$60,000	Rebuild the lower half of the Ben Lomond track, from the Moonlight Track towards the saddle, to make it a rideable climb. Combined with [26] and [27] this will create a single track loop ride around Bowen Peak. This will be an excellent day ride starting and finishing in downtown Queenstown.
43	Arthur's Point To Atley's track	3	6km	\$60,000	This is as close as we can get (without building a bridge) to linking the Coronet Trails to the Moonlight Track and the Bowen Peak/Ben Lomond trails.
44	Mt Dewar Trails	3-6	??	??	Mt Dewar currently has dual use trails that aren't popular bike rides. There is potential for several great trails on Mt Dewar
31	Lower Rude Rock	4	4km	\$40,000	A dedicated descent to avoid down hill traffic on the Around Coronet Trail and complete Rude Rock as a peak to valley floor ride.
43	Lower Zoot Track	4/5	2km	\$20,000 / Volunteer	Continue Zoot Track from the opposite side of the road to the valley floor.
44	Skippers Saddle to Coronet Turnoff	4	6km	\$60,000	A trail from Skippers Saddle to the bottom of Coronet Peak Road. This would mostly be on Mt Dewar Station.
32	Coronet Forest Climb	2	8km	\$100,000	An easy grade climb from Alan Reids Road to the the eastern end of the ridge

33	Coronet Forest Ridge	3	4km	\$50,000	A dual direction trail linking Bush Creek Saddle to the top of [32]
34	Coronet Forest Descent 1	3	5km	\$70,000	A machine built flow descent.
35	Coronet Forest Descent 2	4	4km	\$60,000	A machine built flow descent.
36	Coronet Forest Descent 3	4	4km	\$50,000 / Volunteer	A hand built technical descent.
37	Coronet Forest Descent 4	5	3km	\$40,000 / Volunteer	A hand built technical descent.
38	Coronet Forest Descent 5	6	2km	Volunteer	A hand built technical descent. Perhaps named Spidergoat.
39	Coronet Forest XCO Loop	4	5km	\$75,000	A XCO World Cup style loop, at the lower east end of the forest, out of the way of descents.
40	Ben Cruachan loop	4	20km	\$300,000	An XC loop from Sugar Bowl around Toilet Bowl to Ben Cruachan and back through the Doolans to re-enter the ski field at the Wye Saddle. This would be a unique alpine ride along ridges, past tarns, and with views into many basins. It would provide access to existing descents.
41	Ben Cruachan Descent Rebuild	5	10km	\$150,000	Rebuild the existing descent to Coal Pit Saddle and into Rabbit Ranch. This would be a more challenging alternative to [13]
42	Remarkables Traverse	4	70km	\$2,000,000	Remarkables Ski Field to Garston with overnight huts required. This is a project on the scale of the Old Ghost Road; Queenstown's Haute Route. Huts would be used by riders, walkers, mountaineers and ski tourers. This would need to be a collaborative effort between user groups, and could form the focus of the proposed Remarkables National Park.

# Appendix 2: Trail Maps

The Following maps show the trails we proposing to build in years 1 to 2 of our Project Schedule. Trail labels refer to the reference numbers and names in Appendix 1: Project Schedule. Trail locations and grades are indicative only and the final trails may differ from this.

Map 1: Ben Lomond Overview

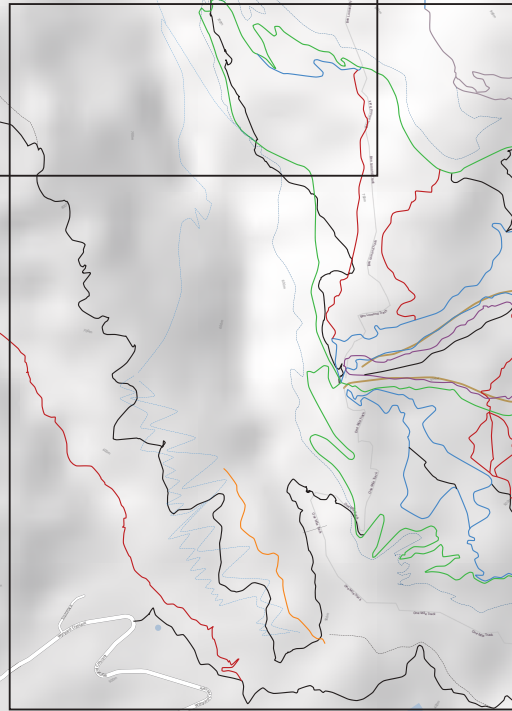
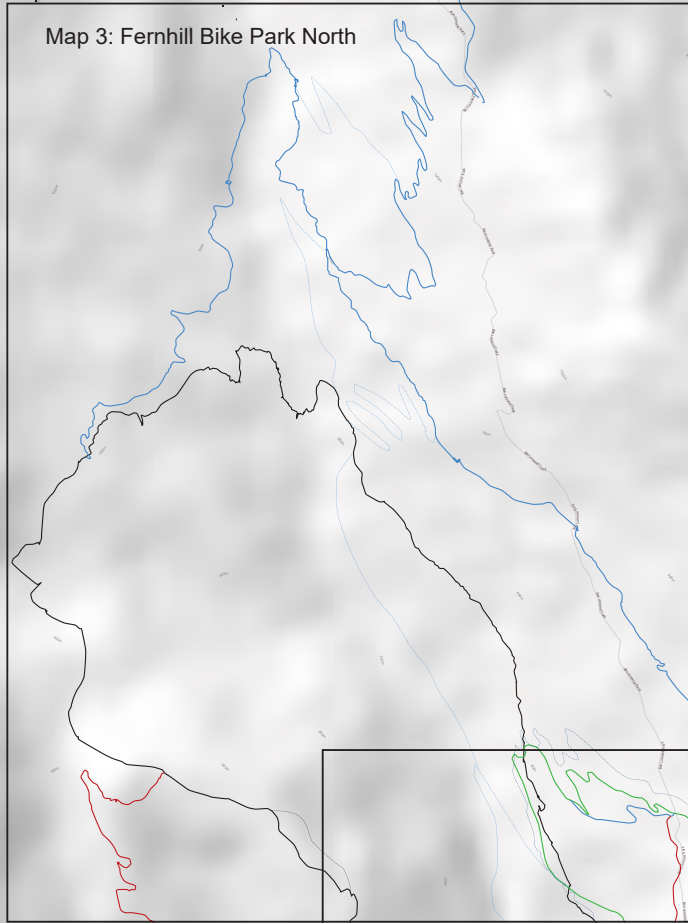
Map 2: Fernhill Bike Park South

Map 3: Fernhill Bike Park North

Map 4: Coronet Peak

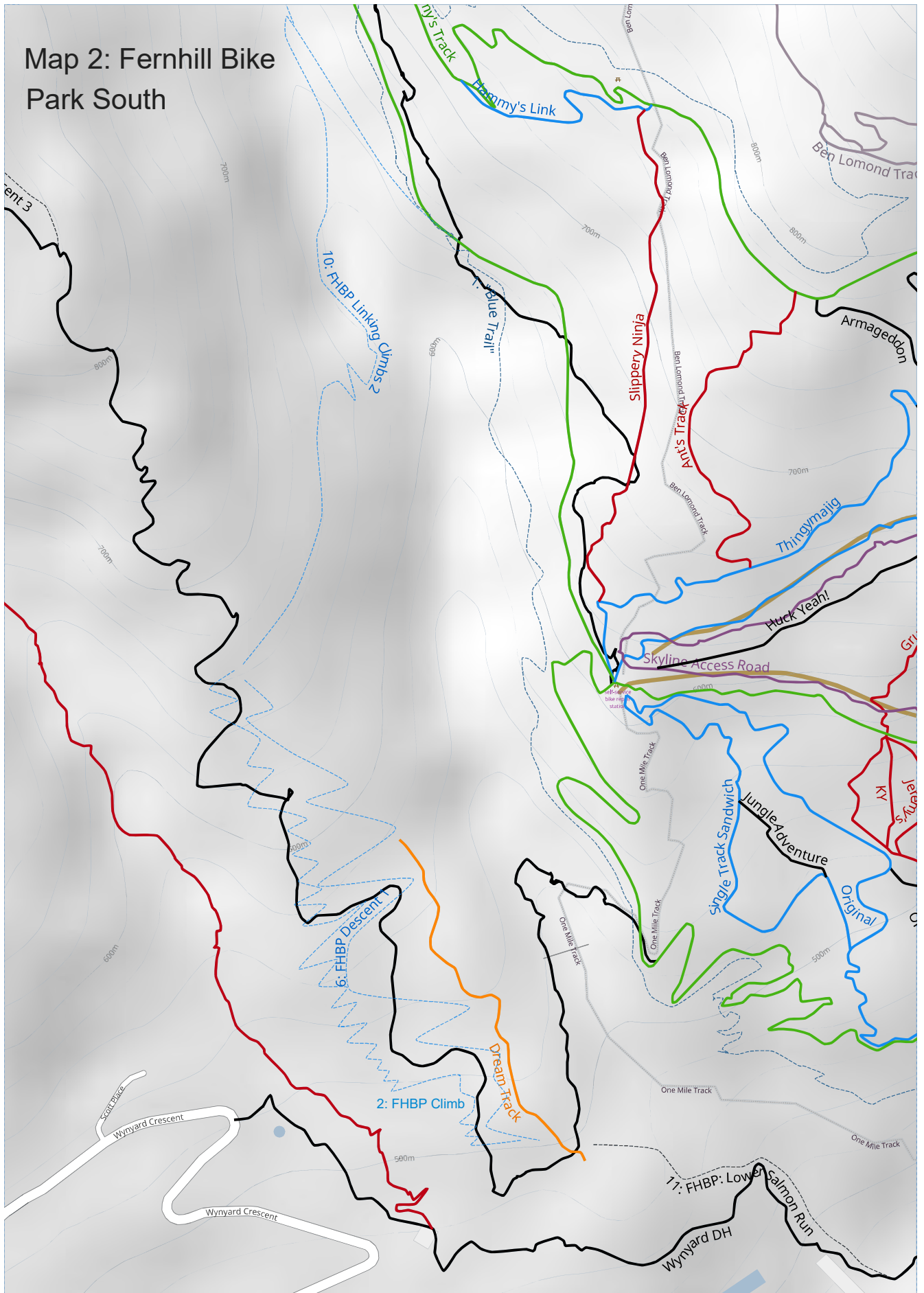
Map 5: The Remarkables

# Map 1: Ben Lomond Overview

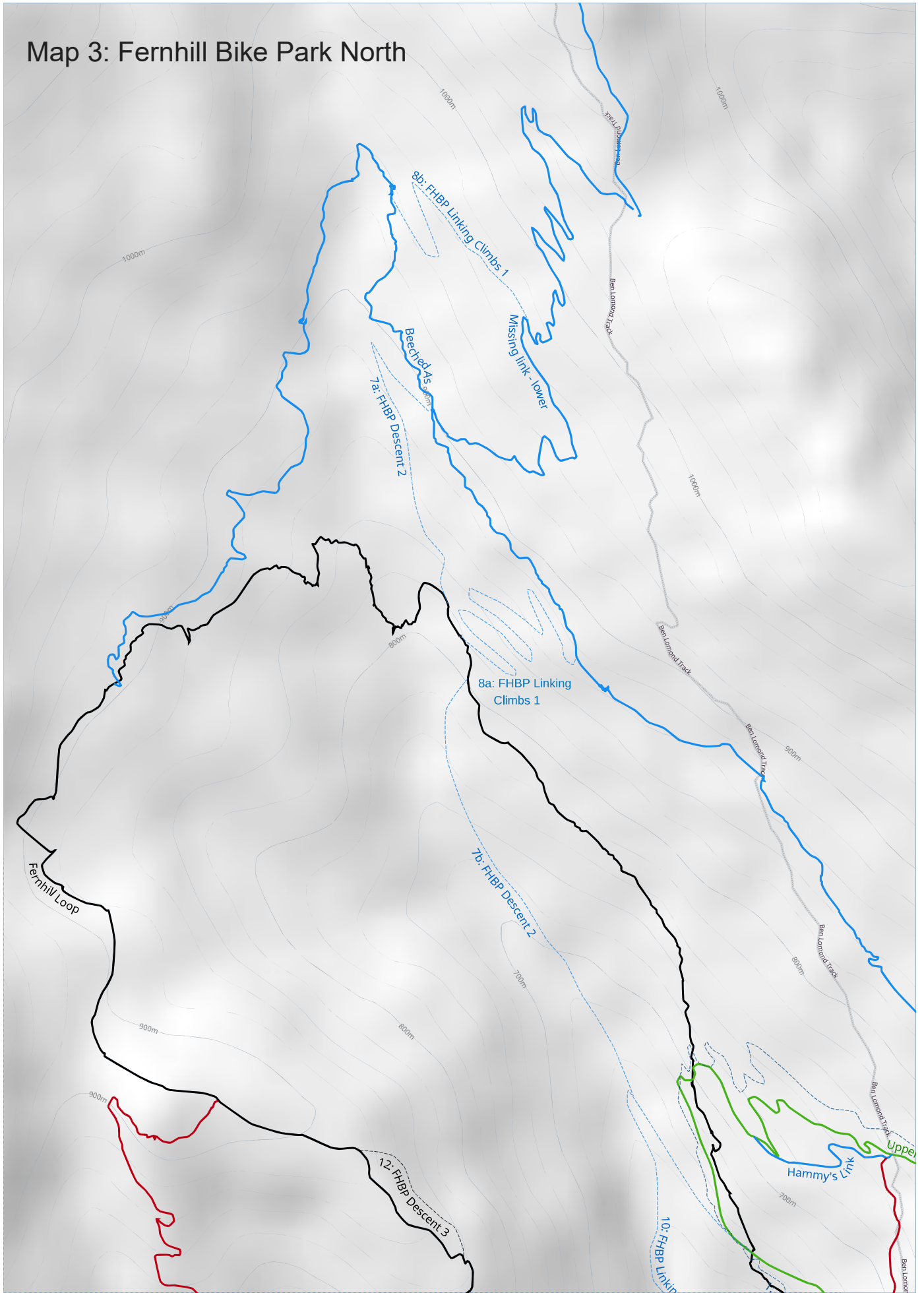


Map 2: Fernhill Bike Park South

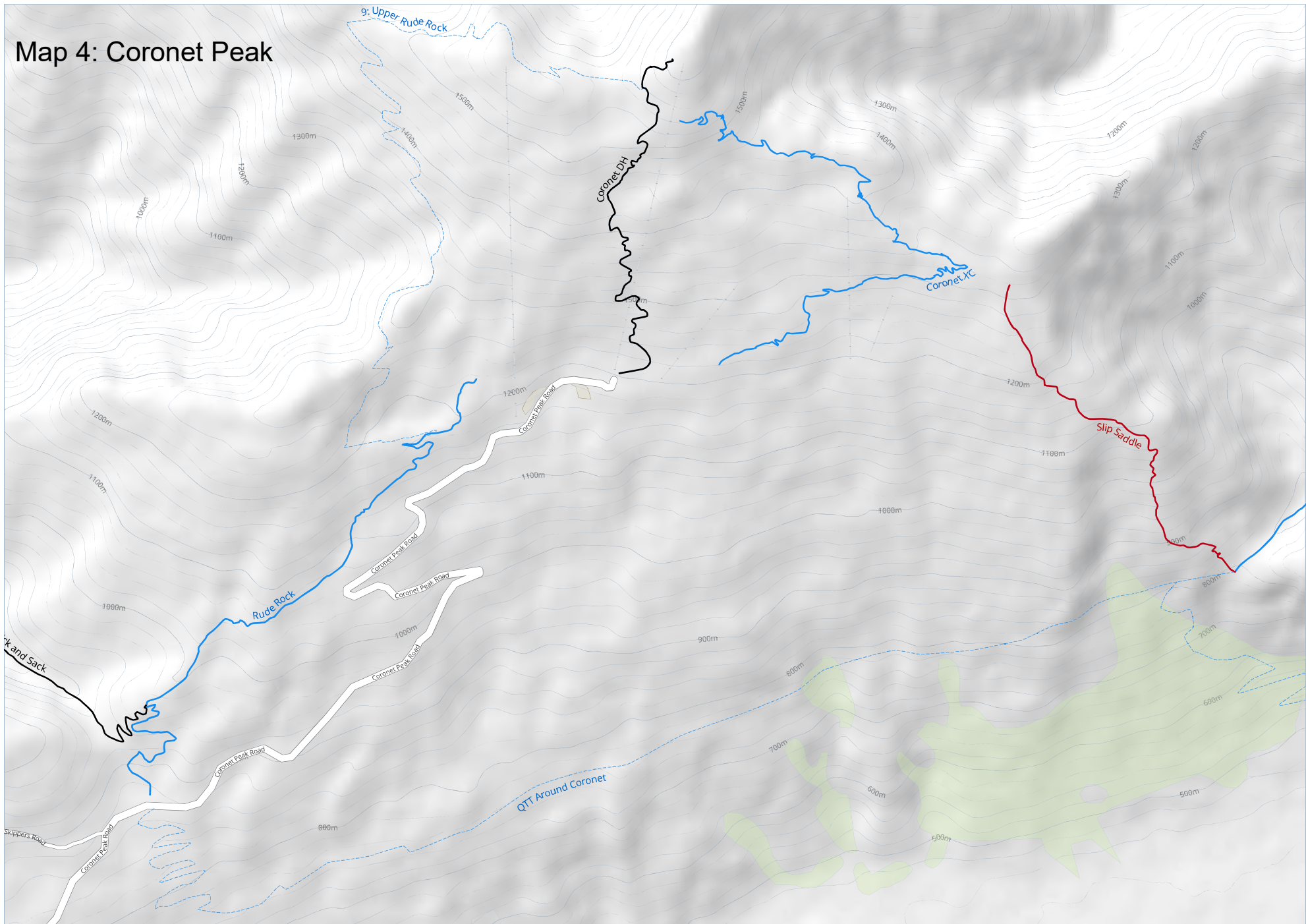
# Map 2: Fernhill Bike Park South



# Map 3: Fernhill Bike Park North



# Map 4: Coronet Peak





# Map 5: The Remarkables

