

Marlborough Mountain Bike Club
Fraser Brown
1397 Waihopai Valley RD
Blenheim 7276

Marlborough Mountain Bike Club is submitting to the annual plan on behalf of our 450 members and our wider cycling and mountain biking community.

Mountain Biking is continuing to grow at an exponential rate, in Marlborough, nationally and globally.

This rapid growth of mountain biking can be attributed to many reasons. It is a healthy recreational activity, environmentally friendly, sustainable, and as you can see with the growth in the E Bike market, technological advances are enabling more people to partake and enjoy Mountain Biking. For Marlborough at a local level, and outside of the growth reasons above, MMBC has been working with key stakeholders to develop new MTB areas, extend our trails and ensuring we are catering to all levels of riders, this is contributing to the growth we see in Marlborough. A clear example of the interest and excitement of the sport can be seen with the popularity of the new pump track at the Rifle Range carpark.

October this year we will be hosting 1000+ riders and families for the NZ Schools MTB Nationals. We are expecting significant growth and demand for trail development, maintenance, and upgrades on the back of this event.

MMBC is planning to host the NZ MTB nationals in 2024, the NZ Schools CX Nationals in 2025 and a desire to host a NZ Enduro round within the next 3 years. Drawing riders into the region for these National level events results in significant economic benefits for the region. Octobers NZ Schools event is forecast to be in excess of \$4 million for the 4-day event.

To achieve these plans, we need to ensure our trail networks meet the required standards.

This submission is to request the following.

COMPLETION OF THE WITHER HILLS MTB PARK TRAIL NETWORK.

Currently there are sections of the MTB park that are disjointed and lack synergy. Many of the trails within these locations are 2 way, with the increased use they have been identified as potential conflict points and as such a hazard.

Submission request.

MMBC request these areas will be reviewed within the next 6 months, prior to summer 23/24, and plans implemented to address these issues.

MAINTENANCE OF MTB TRAIL NETWORK

The WH MTB park was originally built on the back of volunteer labour. Since then, there has been a dedicated and willing volunteer base who have helped to develop the trail network and maintain the asset.

In recent years the maintenance has been undertaken via a joint effort from MMBC and our volunteer base, specialist MTB trail building contractors and Downers who are contracted to maintain the entire network of trails within the Wither Hills and beyond.

Covid lock downs, wet winters and difficulty engaging contractors have resulted in the MTB park in urgent need of maintenance.

It is vitally important that trails are maintained to the specified grade they were built and designed to. Lack of maintenance results in trails falling outside of the grade and potentially becoming hazardous for riders who find themselves outside of their skill set.

It has been noted that many of the walking trails within the WHFP were maintained and/or upgraded since the August 2022 storms. Unfortunately, the MTB trails have not had the same attention.

Submission request.

1. MMBC request there is sufficient budget to allow for the required maintenance to the MTB trails on yearly basis.
2. Maintenance and trail development work is carried out by either experienced volunteer trail builders (MMBC) or Specialist MTB trail building contractors.
3. To note the **urgency** on returning trails to their specified grade for rider safety and also to ensure Marlborough is presented in its best possible light when we welcome the 1000+ visitors to our region this coming October.
4. A review into the MDC approval procedure for volunteer and trail building contractors. Currently contractors need to sub-contract to Downers. At the time of writing, volunteer work is not currently permitted, despite the current WHFP management plan encouraging volunteer participation.

RESOURCE CONSENT PROCESS FOR TRAIL MAINTENANCE AND DEVELOPMENT.

Currently MMBC is required to fund resource consents in relation to developing new trails within the WHFP.

As a volunteer-based club with limited funding it is not feasible to fund the required Resource consents.

MMBC sees the MTB park and the trail network as a public asset, no different to the network of trails spread across WHFP.

Currently MMBC has been required to apply for RC for the following.

- MTB Skills park XC Trail
- MTB Skills park – zones and features
- Electric Brae realignment (currently exits onto a dual use path and is a potential collision point).

Submission request

MMBC requests the funding of resource consents to be reviewed in relation to MTB trails.

BIKE/WALK CATTLE STOP CONSTRUCTION – CONTINUATION AND FINISH OF PROJECT

Kevin Wilson and Peter Blackmore have been undertaking this admirable project for several years, constructing 23 pedestrian cattle stops around the Mapp Track and Mt Vernon traverse.

This has been hugely popular and has resulted in increased use of the circuit.

The main attraction here is the ability ride the circuit without the need to open and close gates, which also becomes problematic for the farmer with gates being left open.

They are very close to completion of the project and are requesting MDC fund 5 more cattle stops.

Submission request

- MMBC approve the construction of the remaining cattle stops.
- MMBC fund the required fencing work and partially fund the materials required.
- Volunteer labour and the contribution of some materials will be covered by MMBC.

MMBC is grateful for the opportunity to submit the Annual plan.

We wish to speak about this submission at the annual plan hearings and look forward to discussing it further.

Any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Kind Regards

Fraser Brown

President

Marlborough Mountain Bike Club.