

## **Proposals for consideration for Marlborough District Council's Annual Plan 2023 [John Kershaw 3rd May 2023]**

The below points are in addition to my submission set out in the 2023 Annual Plan Consultation Document on-line Submission Form.

### **1. Proposed Wairau River Regional Park**

**1a.** This promising proposal needs consultation, support and funding. Restrictions on access into the river reserve should be implemented while at the same time allocating areas for specific activities.

**1b.** The access roads [from SH62 and SH6] feeding into the existing reserve southern boundary should be retained. However, preventing vehicular traffic from using the stopbank would make a wonderful safe & picturesque Shared Path for walkers and cyclists. This would require gates and squeeze bars and opening up the two sections of stop bank currently closed off to the public. I commend council's on-going efforts to gain access to these sections and encourage you to keep at it!

**1c.** Imagine the joy of this safe Shared Path running from SH1 to the Waihopai confluence. This would immediately add over 20 km to our Shared Path network.

**1d.** Some of the various access points would require parking/turning areas and a limited number should still go to the river's edge to enable swimmers, small boats, canoes, paddleboards and the like to access the water.

**1e.** It would be a real asset to have a couple of formalised swimming areas on the riverbank. Parking, toilets, bar-b-ques, a safe method of entering and exiting the water and a 'harbour' or lagoon type arrangement with placid water for swimming out of the current.

**1f. Co-ordinator:** There was a co-ordinator for this project. I understand we have not had one for many months. Please urgently appoint one so this project can be progressed.

### **2 The Shared Path network in the Wairau Plains and Southern Valleys**

**2a.** I support council's continued investment into Shared Paths [walking and cycling] in the Wairau Plains and Southern Valleys areas.

**2b.** It's wonderful to see the Shared Path from Havelock St in Renwick to Jacksons Rd underway and due to be finished by June 2023. This project has taken some time to grow from inception through to the 'work in progress' that should be completed within the next couple of months. See Appendix A 'Orange colour route.

**2b.** The TRC report [commissioned by council] highlighted the unique characteristics of these areas that make cycling and walking for so desirable: **Flat Terrain**, 'Brilliant Every Day' **weather**, beautiful **scenery** and a **destination**, in our case not only cellar doors but a diverse range of other activities.

**2c.** The status of these paths in order of desirability are:

**'Away from road'** is the most desirable [calling these 'off-road' sounds like a mountain bike track] an example of these is 'The Boulevard' between SH6 and New Renwick Rd, generously provided by Pernod Ricard.

**'Beside Road'**, with a good distance of separation of several metres of grass between path and road, as beside SH6 from Foxes Island Rd to the Wairau River.

**'On-road'**, [marked Cycle Lane] better than nothing!

The **'Away from road'** routes are best but most challenging as these routes can trigger access issues. I ask that council be both brave and innovative in continuing to get access to cross private or leased land.

**2d.** A network of interlinking paths is needed, to provide continuity, link as many destinations as possible and provide distance. Cyclists in particular want distance. Loops are best, rather than there-and-back paths. See Appendix A All colours.

**2e.** The benefit of Shared Paths is significant: Cycle-tourism is popular and we want this demographic of tourists visiting our region to spend money, go home and spread the word about all that sunny Marlborough has to offer.

**2f.** Recreational use for our own residents is important.

**2g.** Commuting by cycling is growing, especially when safe routes are offered as both E-bikes enable faster and easier transport and more of us take to bikes as part of our individual climate change action.

**2h.** I commend council's support and funding for these Shared Paths and ask for this support to continue and grow.

**2i.** Since 2015, The shared paths Renwick Smart + Connected has been involved in facilitating are: Foxes Island Rd to Rapaura Rd [2015], Rapaura Rd to Wairau stopbank [2017], Vintage Lane to Alma St North/Foxes Island Rd [2018], [Appendix A Blue sections] 'The Boulevard' Linking New Renwick Rd to SH6 [2019], Jacksons Rd from Rapaura Rd to Allan Scott [2020]. Appendix A Blue section.

**2j.** There is one section of our existing cycle network that needs improvement: If council could act on now on the section of Wairau River stopbank from the SH6 bridge along to Giffords Rd: Please close off the road on the top of the stopbank to motorised traffic on this section now. Gates or bollards [for Rivers Dept access] and squeeze bars would be required as well as improving the path surface. The benefits of this would be; It could then be considered a true Shared Path [walking and cycling] and thus added to the region's official network of Shared Paths. Secondly, it will start getting those currently using this area adjusting to roads being closed as the Regional Park takes shape. A smaller aggregate path surface would raise the status of this path from what's now a Grade 3 to a Grade 2, making it super-easy for prams and wheelchairs. See Appendix A Red section

**2k.** Marlborough competes with other regions for cycle tourists. Many other regions are way ahead of us in both number of km of path and destinations within the path network. We need to grow our path km, just to keep up, and grow some more to become one of the major cycle trail regions.

**2l.** Just one example: After one year of operation the Dunstan Trail has had 83,000 visitors, and a reputed \$10m to \$12m injected into the local economy.

**2m.** Marlborough wants and needs some of that action!

### **3. Local Shared Paths and the Whale Trail**

**3a.** The Whale Trail is a fantastic project and well done those who seized the moment, made a great pitch and secured the central govt funding for this.

**3b.** To leverage the benefit of the Whale Trail we need 'whale-trailers' to be 'stay another days', and not 'just ride aways'. We need both a North and a South link into the Whale Trail.

**3c.** The ideal North link is the Wairau stopbank from SH 1 all the way up to beyond Renwick.

**3d.** There already are sections of the South link: we just need the vision and the funding to join the 'Boulevard' on New Renwick Rd up to the existing path in the Ben Morven valley.

### **4. On-road cycling and Speed Limits**

**4a.** No matter how big the region's Shared Path network it will always be necessary to walk or cycle on-road.

**4b.** I commend the first wave of speed limit reductions some years ago on our local rural roads. I ask that all local rural roads be reduced from 100 to 80km/h.

**4c.** I commend council for the draft 'Marlborough Regional Speed Management Plan April 2023'. The proposed speed reductions will reduce death and injuries on our roads as well as reducing emissions. In particular it's critical you protect our young people with the proposed speed reductions around schools.

**4c.** Let's think about SH6, which had a series of speed limit reductions introduced before the holiday period in 2020. We heard all the ridiculous claims about the reduction: It would cause more crashes, it would use more fuel, it would be an economic disaster. The fuss has died down and after a couple of years the death and injury rate has been slashed, so please follow Waka Kotahi's example.

**4d.** Its great to see Jacksons Rd proposed to be 80km/hr as this is a major cycle tourist route and a feeder from Rapaura Rd/SH62 to the airport.

**4e.** But the roads that form the Renwick Cycle Route still have 100km/hr sections: that is all roads in the Omaka Valley: Brookby, Barracks & Hawkesbury Rds, plus Dog Point Rd and Godfrey Rd. I ask that these roads too be included.

**4f.** Brookby Rd in particular [ Declaration of interest: I live on that road] should be 80km/h as this is a transport route for two quarries, so can have up to 11,000 truck movements per year on this narrow rural road.

**4g.** The main quarry operator has a consent with one of its conditions being a 70km/h speed limit for its trucks. This is helpful in reducing the impact on cycling and walking, but mixing a quarry haul route with an on-road cycle route is not safe. With many trucks travelling at 70km/h, but some [from the other quarry] can do 90km/hr it will be much safer if all other traffic is restricted to 80km/h.

**4h.** A speed reduction for all traffic will also reduce the road damage, Brookby road is constantly being damaged by quarry trucks, with patches over potholes that quickly blow out again.

## **5 Council's Vehicle Fleet**

**5a.** I understand Council's vehicle fleet comprises these:

- Number of petrol powered vehicles = 10
- Number of diesel powered vehicles = 63
- Number of EVs (either full or PHEV) = 4
- Number of charge stations for EVs = 0

**5b.** When the petrol vehicles are due for replacement, they should be replaced with EVs or PHEVs.

**5c.** 63 Diesels. That's a lot of Diesels! Are this number of large Diesel units really needed? It's recognised 4WD Diesels are necessary for some of your needs, but please consider lower emission alternatives.

**5d.** Please consider mid-sized EV or PHEV SUVs [perhaps some AWD] in place of some of the 63 big Diesels.

**5e.** Does Council have a 'turn it off' rule for Diesels? For some reason it's common for Diesel drivers to leave the engines running for lengthy periods while stationary. This is a legacy practice from yesteryear, but modern Diesels can be re-started the same way petrol engines are. Engines running waste money and cause both greenhouse gas and particulate pollution.

**5f.** Only four EVs or PHEVs is not a great look for a Council facing a climate emergency.

**5g.** Is there a strategy for reducing the fleet's emissions? Is there a target for vehicle emission reductions? The answer to both the above questions should be yes!

## **6 EV & E-Bike charging**

**6a.** The EV charging network in our region is poor. Picton has none! Blenheim has only one in town at the Warehouse and that is a low power 25kw charger, Renwick has none, Seddon has none. Please, lets look enlightened, Council should have these in the Alfred

St carpark and other strategic places in the Town Centre and Redwoodtown. At the very least Council should be facilitating other parties to install these.

**6b.** Picton! Picton, the gateway to the South Is. There is no public EV charge station there. We should have a bank of them, right in the Town Centre.

**6c.** EVs are good for the Town Centre/CBD! Apart from the environmental benefit they take time to charge, so help keep customers in the CBD longer. Same for Seddon, an EV charge station will have EVs stopping for a charge-up, and the opportunity to spend some time and money while waiting.

**6d.** E-Bike charge stations should be at the I-Site and in the Town Centre/CBD, and part of a 'Bike Hub' with tools [on cables] and compressed air for inflating tyres. The Locky-Dock is a great solution: <https://www.lockydock.co.nz/>

## **7      3 Waters/Affordable Water**

**7a.** Despite the recent revision of 3 Waters by the government, I still oppose the scheme. I acknowledge probably every local body needs or will need substantial upgrading of their 3 Waters infrastructure, but council should resist involvement in the proposed 3 Waters entity.

**7b.** A better model would be: Central Government use the set of 3 Waters water standards for all local authorities. Local authorities submit the scope for upgrading infrastructure along with the timeline to meet the standards. Central government should operate a contestable fund model which would provide grants to help fund these works.

**7c.** The money has to come from somewhere and the Government's original 3 Waters plan relied on cost savings from 'efficiencies of scale'. Now we have 10 Three Waters entities. I remain doubtful any significant savings can be made under the proposed 'clunky' 3 Waters organisational structure.

**7d.** In short, the Government should contribute to Councils directly to co-fund large capital works without the extra layer of 3 Waters bureaucracy.

**7e.** Should we proceed with the current revised 'Affordable Water' model, I have two major concerns as below in 7f & 7g.

**7f.** Please liaise with iwi to negotiate the South Marlborough 'border' to actually be the Marlborough region's border thus including Seddon and Ward.

**7g.** Under the old '4 water entities' model we were to be run from Wellington. Under the 10 entities model, we need to ensure we are not 'run from Nelson'.

**My request to council is to adopt the above proposals or points in items 1 to 7 above.**

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Appendix A follows on Page 6

Appendix A: Submission to MDC Annual Plan 2023 [John Kershaw] Existing Shared Paths = Light Blue & Work in Progress = Orange, Safe roads in Yellow, Creating the loop = Red But Red needs bollards and better surface to be safe

