



Have your say on Middle Renwick Road cycle lanes

Middle Renwick Road (State Highway 6) in Blenheim is getting much-needed cycle lanes thanks to some welcome funding from Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency.

Councillor Michael Fitzpatrick said the project seeks to increase cycling and improve safety by extending the cycle lanes between the Westwood Business Park and the Murphys Road/Battys Road roundabout.

"This is an important part of completing the Blenheim urban cycle network and encouraging more people to get on their bikes," he said.

"We know there is pent up demand - we saw many more cyclists out and about during lockdown. Blenheim, with its flat geography, is an ideal biking environment."

"This upgrade will provide a separate, defined lane for cyclists and a painted buffer line between the cycle lane and the traffic lane. This also makes it much easier for drivers to pass cyclists safely."

The public are invited to view the designs and submit feedback.

Come along to a drop-in session at PAK'nSAVE, Blenheim on Tuesday 24 November from 4.00 pm to 6.00 pm; or Saturday 28 November, from 11.00 am to 1.00 pm.

Call in to the Marlborough District Council office at 15 Seymour Street or go to the Blenheim Library.

Go to the project page on the website <https://bit.ly/MRRCycleLanes> Consultation is open until 5.00 pm on Monday 14 December.

Walking and Cycling Coordinator Braden Prideaux said surveys indicated there were up to 100 cyclists using this stretch of road each day, including school students. "Between 2015 and 2019, there were 16 crashes on this section of road, with six involving cyclists."

"By creating a much safer urban cycle network in Blenheim, we're confident cyclist numbers will increase," he said.



This image shows the proposed new configuration of Middle Renwick Road, looking west

Finish line in sight for Renwick wine trail

Wheels are in motion and the finish line is in sight for the final stages of the Renwick wine trail, which will traverse 23.9 km of the area's vineyards and cellar doors.

Council's Assets & Services Committee recently approved \$1,045,000 from the existing long term walking and cycling budget to complete the trail, conditional on easements being secured with landowners. This is in addition to \$225,000 already allocated in the 2020/21 budget.

Committee Chair Nadine Taylor says the completion of the multi-use trail will provide welcome recreational opportunities for Marlborough locals and visitors.

"Council's Walking and Cycling Strategy aims to maximise off-road walk and cycle opportunities for tourism and recreation. This funding decision

achieves both. It will help realise the long-held community vision for the Renwick wine trail, while providing an exciting new tourism offering for Marlborough."

"There are already 15.2km of existing shared use paths in the Renwick area for walkers and cyclists, including 11.5km on Council-managed stop banks or on private land. This final section of trail will add an extra 8.7km and we are very appreciative of the support already shown by local landowners for this community project," she said.

An easement is a right agreed between a landowner and another party to use a part of a property for a particular purpose, and can be registered against the property's title. The proposed trail crosses 22 land titles, 17 of which are owned by 13 individuals or corporates. The remaining five are public land.

Fight back against plant pests

Do you want to keep pest weeds off your property?

NZ Landcare Trust, in association with Beef + Lamb New Zealand, are holding a field day on Friday 4 December at the Awatere Community Hall in Seddon.

Pitched at farmers wanting to protect their land from biosecurity risks, the programme will focus on controlling Chilean Needle Grass (CNG), Nassella Tussock (NT) and wilding pines.

Learn the findings of the EQ Biosecurity Project including the outcome of on-farm drilling and over-sowing trials on CNG and NT paddocks, chemical topping of CNG and the CNG risk from cattle. Learn how to identify CNG plus the South Marlborough Landscape Restoration Trust will give a wilding pine control update.

To attend, register at: www.surveymonkey.com/r/FVR5JC9

Wairau River Regional Park plan gets green light

A 'visionary' new regional park along the banks of the lower Wairau River will be the first of its kind in Marlborough.

Last week the Council's Assets & Services Committee decided to contract a project manager to draft a new Regional Park Management Plan and oversee a public consultation process.

It will include partnering and co-designing the plan with mana whenua iwi and seeking feedback from the community and river users on opportunities and ideas for managing the river as a regional park. This process is expected to take up to 14 months.

Committee Chair Nadine Taylor said the project was visionary and would safeguard and strengthen the natural values of Marlborough's iconic Wairau River. "The river is the lifeblood of our region. This status will lift it up to be protected and acknowledged as the treasured taonga that it is."

The regional park, from the confluence of the Waihopai River to the sea, will protect and enhance the river and its environs as well as encourage positive recreational use, in line with flood protection measures.

"It will help to better manage conflicts between users, address undesirable activity and reduce the spread of noxious weeds.



It will also provide numerous opportunities for amenity enhancements, such as native planting, safer walking and cycling tracks, horse riding, fishing, rafting and swimming."

First mooted by the Marlborough Landscape Group during the 2020 Annual Plan submission process, Council has approved \$30,000 towards the project from the Forestry and Land Development Reserve in the 2020/21 financial year.

More information about the public consultation process will be made available once confirmed. The committee decision is subject to ratification at the next full Council meeting on Thursday 10 December.

Exploring our brilliant backyard

Marlborough's tourism offerings were in the spotlight last weekend at the Brilliant Backyard Expo held at the Marlborough Convention Centre.

Organised by regional tourism organisation Destination Marlborough, the expo provided the opportunity for locals to meet face to face with tourism operators and discover what's out there in Marlborough's 'brilliant' backyard.

The expo drew a great response from Marlborough locals with 330 people through the doors on the day.

More than 30 local tourism businesses took part ranging from Marlborough Sounds' accommodation, cruises, water taxis, kayaking, biking and a wildlife sanctuary, to wineries, wine touring and biking wine tours. Accommodation was also represented with hotels, bed and breakfasts and resorts alongside aviation, museums, ferries and the Coastal Pacific.

There were prize draws, deals for locals



Pip Hally from PMH Aviation talks all things tourism to members of the public at the Brilliant Backyard Expo held last Saturday. Photo Credit: Tracey Green

and a chance to find out more about all the possibilities for getting out and exploring Marlborough this coming summer.

New funding for parks, playgrounds and sportsgrounds

The Assets & Services Committee has approved just over \$3.2 million to fund local facilities through its Land Subdivision Account, funded by levies charged to developers for reserves and community facilities. Parks, reserves, sportsgrounds and playgrounds across the district will receive the boost.

Funds have been allocated across a range of projects including new drinking fountains at the Wither Hills Farm Park and Mountain Bike Park; the resurfacing of netball, basketball and tennis courts

in Blenheim, Havelock, Seddon and Spring Creek; new lighting on Picton's London Quay and an upgrade to Picton's Memorial Park; gravel surfacing the Snout Track and widening the Bob's Bay Track; upgrading the lighting and parking area at the Queen Charlotte Lookout; and building a new access way to Kahikatea Reserve in Spring Creek. The projects have been approved for the year ending 30 June 2021, subject to ratification at the full Council meeting on Thursday 10 December.

