

27th July 2023

To whom it may concern

EQUESTRIAN USE OF MULTI-USE TRACKS IN KĀPITI COAST DISTRICT

The Kāpiti Coast District Council (KCDC) manages approximately 40km of off-road tracks and trails in parks and reserves, plus another 40km of tracks and connections with transport links. Together, this network (known as CWB – cycleways, walkways and bridleways) provides connectivity between communities, facilitating recreation and safer active transport, especially for vulnerable road users.

KCDC works closely with Department of Conservation, Greater Wellington Regional Council and Waka Kotahi, who also manage trails within the District. As the locally-based Council, we often receive service requests (in the first instance) relating to all CWB trails in the district.

To the best of KCDC's knowledge, during the past 18 months there have been no reports of accidents, incidents or near misses relating to horses or horse-riders on CWB network in the district.

Most of the off-road CWB network which KCDC manages is 'multi-use' and shared by pedestrians, cyclists and horse-riders.

Most of the off-road CWB network is constructed from compacted base-course and top-course (gravel). Where possible, grass mown-strips are provided next to the track, at least one metre wide, but this is not essential. This extra space is included where possible because it improves sight-lines for all users on the trail.

KCDC has not found that horses damage or particularly increase wear and tear to the CWB network (damage has been reported caused by dirt bikes and scooters).

When renewing tracks, the preferred construction method is to apply the top-course as a slurry and leave to set. In fine weather conditions, this takes several days. The aim is to keep horses off the section of renewed track until it is dry. Once cured, the tracks are not affected by horses using them. The local equestrian community has been obliging when requested to avoid a trail for this reason.

The primary purpose of the CWB network as defined in the Kāpiti Coast Open Space Strategy is to *support active transport, landscape and ecological connectivity*. It notes that trails *perform a wide range of functions including habitat creation, areas for picnics, walking, biking, horse riding and other recreation*. The trails also connect communities and keep vulnerable road users (of which horse riders are identified) safer.

The Coast35 (Paekākāriki to Ōtaki) off-road trail is a 35km long multi-use trail which forms an important 'spine' of the network of the Kāpiti Coast. This trail has supported and encouraged a rise in biking in the District in recent years (for recreation and transportation). The trail is regularly used by horse-riders as well as cyclists and pedestrians.

The Kāpiti Coast has a culture of shared multi-use trails, which are promoted using the slogan *pass wide and slow, and let people know*.

The network of multi-use off-road trails on the Kāpiti Coast provides valuable recreation and potential for further tourism opportunities. This potential is highlighted in the Kāpiti Coast Destination Management Plan 2021.

Please contact tracey.waye@kapiticoast.govt.nz for further information.

Yours sincerely



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