

14 October 2019

Otaki to North Levin Project Office
NZ Transport Agency
PO Box 5084
Lambton Quay
Wellington 6145.

Attention: Mr Chris Robertson, Project Manager

OTAKI TO NORTH LEVIN HIGHWAY PROJECT PROVISION OF SHARED PATHWAY

Dear Mr Robertson

This letter follows our telephone conversation of 21 February 2019. The purpose of this letter is to formally advise the NZTA Project Office of our desire to secure the inclusion of a shared pathway within the corridor for this project. Our understanding is that the NZTA is currently conducting investigations of the preferred option, with a view to producing a detailed business case and seeking approval under the Resource Management Act (RMA) in 2020.

Who are we?

This letter is on behalf of Kapiti Cycling Action (KCA), a branch of the national advocacy group the Cycling Action Network. We have formed an informal action team with Ms Shelly Warwick, Chair of Kapiti Equestrian Advocacy Group (KEAG) and member of the Kapiti Coast District Council's Otaki Community Board, in order to advance our request on behalf of both cyclists and equestrians on the Kapiti and Horowhenua regions.

Previous Experience on Peka Peka to Otaki Project

In 2012 my group KCA was in contact several times with NZTA's project manager for the Peka Peka to Otaki (PP2O) Project Mr Rowan Oliver. Our request was to present a case for a shared pathway to be included as a logical extension of the highly successful Mackays to Peka Peka highway pathway. Mr Oliver assured us that there would be an opportunity later to formalise our request. However, no further contact was made with my group until the NZTA applied to the Environmental Protection Agency in 2013 for RMA approval via a Board of Inquiry. The papers released for the hearing dismissed any case for a shared pathway within the designation, with walkers, cyclists, and equestrians relegated to a share of the existing state highway under revocation. The project proceeded to design and construction on a narrow corridor. It was only as a result of a local campaign by KCA and others in 2017 that the NZTA was forced to review its decision and include a shared pathway within the highway corridor. Because of the limited corridor width granted by the EPA, the solution has been less than desirable for local equestrian and cycling groups.

Whilst we do not have access to the final costings, we understand that the shared pathway was costed at \$6 M compared with the \$330 M for the highway project itself.

Otaki to North Levin Project – what we want

With the experience of the PP2O behind us, we want:

- Provision of a shared pathway included in the pre-design stage of O2NL; and
- Sufficient physical space provided within the land designation sought under the RMA for the proposed four lane highway.

We do not want to be summarily dismissed when there is a clear business case for such a pathway together with support from both local authorities.

Agreements obtained

Since speaking to you we have obtained the following attached documents:

- Letter of support from local MP Hon Nathan Guy;
- Letter of support from Kapiti Coast District Council Mayor K Gurunathan.

On 3 July last we also facilitated a meeting between the two local authorities KCDC and Horowhenua District Council in Levin. The outcome of this meeting was an agreement for staff of the two councils to work collaboratively towards supporting a shared pathway on the O2NL highway, because of the potential to provide similar benefits to the associated highway improvements to the south. We acknowledge that HDC is also seeking improvements to the existing state highway under revocation.

Details suggested for shared pathway

In terms of detail, we suggest a similar standard for a shared pathway to that used for M2PP and PP2O, namely a 4 m width comprising a 2.5 m pathway for walkers and cyclists and an adjacent 1.5 m track for equestrians. There should be some discussion with equestrian groups about the value of providing a buffer zone between the two facilities in order to avoid clashes between horses and bicycles. These details can be negotiated with user groups as the NZTA reduces the 300 metre wide corridor identified in the 2018 Indicative Business Case down to the width required under the RMA requirement for the four lane highway option.

Members of our group have extensive knowledge of the cycling networks North and South of the District, and how they can be linked. We can also tap into the equestrian community for support and local knowledge of how connections can work for them. We acknowledge that the staff of KCDC have vast experience of the CWB going through Kapiti including economic and social benefits to business and the community.

Summary

Kapiti Cycling Action submits that there is a clear case to consider the incorporation of a 4 m wide shared pathway within the corridor identified for the Otaki to North Levin highway project, and requests that the NZTA includes such provision within the detailed business case leading to the designation request under the RMA.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

Lynn Sleath (Mr)
Secretary



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