

Consultation Strategy

(April 2011)

For: Southland District Council

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Around The Mountains Cycle Trail Consultation Strategy

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REVISION SCHEDULE

Rev No	Date	Description	Prepared By	
1.	April 2011	Revised	Mike Barnett	

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Objectives of Consultation

The objectives of the consultation are:

- To inform potentially affected parties and adjacent landowners of the proposal.
- To identify issues and constraints.
- To develop possible solutions to any constraints identified.
- To incorporate these, where appropriate, into the design and alignments.
- To broadly identify potential mitigation measures to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects.
- To ensure the implementation constraints and impacts (engineering and environmental) are conveyed to stakeholders and the wider public.
- To inform and seek feedback from Maori, and affected organisations.

The consultation process should ensure:

- It is undertaken in a manner which informs interested parties.
- It provides sufficient time for these parties to respond.
- It obtains useful response.
- It provides time/ opportunities to consider the response and to make modifications of the proposal as appropriate.
- It includes an accurate record of the consultation undertaken to facilitate the development of mitigation measures for future planning applications.

Consultation Process

The general process of consultation has been:

- To personally meet or telephone all the land owners who own land that the trail may cross.
- Correspondence by letter / e-mail or telephone with the consent authorities and any other party that may require statutory authority approvals. Validating the list of "affected parties" by consent authorities will identify who to consult with and the level of consultation to be achieved.
- Identify stakeholders who may be deemed an "affected party" requiring Section 95 (RMA), or equivalent to obtain the formal approval in writing i.e. easements.
- Concurrent to seeking formal S95 approvals consent and concession applications shall be lodged.
- General media releases for the wider community, business sectors, tourism sector, and cycle advocacy groups.

Consultation Strategy

Venture Southland has advertised and held three public meetings in Mossburn, Lumsden, and Athol. There has also be presentations re the cycle trail, 1 ward meeting in Garston and 2 ward meetings Kingston. There have been two public workshops at Lumsden regarding future business opportunities for these communities.

Venture Southland, Southland District Council, or its agents have consulted with the following groups and organisations regarding the cycle trail:

- Met with all farmers on site, who hold leases on the un-allocated Crown Land (disused railway line). They have negotiated that farmers may continue to lease the disused railway line for farm access and light grazing in conjunction with the cycle trail. Consultation has included requirements for fencing, gates, cattle stops and toilets along the trail.
- Easements, 16 in total, have been agreed over private land in several circumstances to enhance the cycle experience. In other instances easements have been negotiated to allow for better operation of farm management.

Meetings have been held with the following groups

- 3 public meetings, Mossburn, Lumsden and Athol
- 3 Ward meetings, Garston and Kingston
- Landlord Farming Ltd
- Iwi Te Ao Marama
- Fish & Game Southland
- Department of Conservation, Southland
- Department of Conservation, Otago
- NZ Transport Agency, agents in Southland
- LINZ re un-allocated Crown Land
- Queenstown Lakes District Council
- Negotiated easements in principle subject to survey and legal documentation with Landcorp Farming Ltd plus 16 private landowners being;

Easements

J R DOUGLAS TRUST	Agree to an easement in principle through the property adjacent to the Oreti River
MALTON FARM LIMITED (C/- E W WILSON	Agree to an easement in principle through the property adjacent to the Oreti River
AMANDA PARK TRUST LIMITED	Agree to an easement in principle through the property on the flood bank adjacent to the Oreti River
W J AND ATJ DAVIS K E, M S, AND V M CHRISTIE (TRADING AS CHRISTIE FARM)	Agree to an easement in principle through the property on the flood bank adjacent to the Oreti River
J A AND A N STALKER	Agree to an easement in principle adjacent to Te Anau Mossburn Highway
HOULISTON BROTHERS	Agree to an easement in principle adjacent to Te Anau Mossburn Highway
LORRAINE AND PETER RUSSELL	Agree to an easement in principle through the property adjacent to the Oreti River
J L and D G SELBIE	Agree to an easement in principle along the boundary adjacent to the Five Rivers Lumsden Highway SH 6
R W and L K BUTSON	Agree to an easement for four toilets and three cycle bridges
WILKINS FARMING LIMITED	Agree to an easement in principle through the property
D AND P NIND	Agree to an easement in principle through the property as outlined on the attached map titled "map 14"
C G KERR AND G P OUDHOFF	Agree to an easement in principle through the property
A AND W ANDREWS	Agree to an easement in principle through the property as outlined on the attached map titled "map 14"
NOKOMAI FARMS LIMITED	Agree to an easement in principle through the property
FLAGSTAFF STATION	Agree to an easement in principle through the property
E D MENLOVE	Agree to an easement in principle adjacent to the Oreti river
LANDCORP FARMING LTD	Agree to an easement in principle adjacent to the Oreti river

Consultation meetings have been held re development of cycle trail with the following agencies:

1. Queenstown Lakes District Council & Southland District Council, cycle trail on existing roads and on reserve land
- 2 Department of Conservation, Eyre Mountains Conservation Park
- 3 DOC Reserve, lease for farming
- 3 LINZ unallocated Crown Land, disused railway line
- 4 Landcorp Farming, easements Centre Hill
- 5 NZ Transport Agency Southland Agents, SH 94, SH 97, SH 6

Support for cycle trail

There has been widespread support for the development of a cycle trail and the anticipated economic opportunities the cycle trail will deliver to the rural communities. At public meetings there has been a strong expression wanting the cycle trail developed sooner rather than later.

Opposition to the cycle trail

Farmers Leasing Unallocated Crown Land (Disused Railway Line)

There are a small group of farmers who would prefer that the cycle track was not constructed on the disused railway line. These farmers currently have short term grazing leases with LINZ. In many cases the farmers are using the disused railway line as a farm access road and would prefer not to have a disused railway line developed as a cycle trail. The applicant's agents have negotiated that the farmers can continue light grazing and using a disused railway line for farm access in conjunction with the cycle trail. Neighboring farmers are not being asked to contribute to the fencing of the cycle trail, although they have a legal obligation to pay for neighboring boundary fencing on a 50-50 basis.

In comparison on the Otago Central Railtrail, when grazing leases expire the Department of Conservation do not allow new leases for grazing or using the cycle trail as a farm lane. The applicant believes the model being developed for Around the Mountains Cycle Trail will lead to better relationships between cyclists and farmers. Allowing farmers to use the cycle trail as a farm access lane may increase the cost of maintaining the cycle trail to the applicant.

Fish & Game Southland

Venture Southland, Southland District Council and its agents have consulted extensively with Fish & Game Southland, this includes 2 field visits and numerous consultation meetings in Invercargill. Fish & Game Southland have put forward an alternative option for the cycle trail to follow the Mararoa River and the Mavora Road. This option has been rejected by the applicant as being not suitable for a grade 1 cycle trail product. Fish & Game Southland have indicated that they do not want a cycle trail constructed through the Eyre Mountains Conservation Park, which would allow the public walking and cycling access. But Fish and Game Southland are not opposed to cyclists and walkers in the Eyre Mountain Conservation Park. *Refer: Route Selection and Construction, Section 4 Amenity Values.*

Fish and Game Southland Comment

Cyclists and walkers are currently able to access and utilise the Eyre Mountains Conservation Park, which includes the upper Oreti River valley, for recreational purposes. The proposal is to construct a 2.5m wide gravelled 'cycle trail' running for approximately 20km through the upper Oreti River Valley. Currently, a historical four wheel drive track offers cyclists and walkers the opportunity to explore the upper Oreti River Valley on mountain bike or on foot. Fish & Game is not seeking to amend or reduce the access opportunities which cyclists and walkers currently enjoy within the Eyre Mountains Conservation Park. Rather, Fish & Game is concerned about the effects of constructing and operating the proposed cycle trail within the Eyre Mountains Conservation Park, this section equates to approximately only 20km of 150km of the proposed cycle trail, most of which is either on an existing gravel road, or bedside sealed roads or across developed farmland.

Specifically, Fish & Game is concerned about the effects on:

1. Surface water quality on the main stem and its tributaries associated with the construction and on-going maintenance of the cycle way in the upper Oreti River valley; and
2. Angling amenity within the upper Oreti River valley.

Accordingly, it is incorrect to misconstrue Fish & Game's concerns as seeking to restrict access by cyclists and walkers to the Eyre Mountain Conservation Park.

The Oreti River is an internationally recognised brown trout fishery which is a valuable domestic and international tourist commodity in its own right. A Water Conservation Order has been established to protect the natural, wild and scenic characteristics of the Oreti River upstream of Mossburn, together with its cultural, fisheries, recreational and spiritual values. The Water Conservation Order specifically recognises the following nationally outstanding characteristics, features and values for the upper Oreti River:

1. Habitat for brown trout;
2. Angling amenity;
3. Habitat for black billed gulls; and
4. Significance in accordance with tikanga maori.

In making its decision the Special Tribunal Report noted at p.37 that *"the peace and solitude of the area, along with the scenic qualities of the environment and relatively low numbers of anglers present"* was one of the contributing factors to the finding of outstanding angling amenity.

Fish & Game has suggested that a viable alternative is for the cycle trial to follow the upper Mararoa River valley. Further, Fish & Game has suggested that an economic analysis of the relative merits and costs of the upper Oreti and upper Mararoa routes is undertaken in order to assist informed consideration of both routes. The Mararoa option and the opportunity to consider / analyse it in detail to provide comparison with the Oreti route has been repeatedly rejected by the applicant. Fish & Game does not consider that this constitutes appropriate consideration of alternative options available to the applicant.