

Welcome to Trail Talk - A monthly newsletter all about the Around the Mountains Cycle Trail. This newsletter contains information and updates about construction and work on the trail, as well as other aspects including work being carried out with businesses and tourism interests.

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# Hearing to Start



The resource consent hearing for Stage Two of the Around the Mountains Cycle Trail will begin on Monday.

Around 14 kilometres of proposed trail along the boundary of Landcorp's Centre Hill farm parallel to the Oreti River needs resource consents from Environment Southland and Southland District Council.

Consent had been sought in 2012 but a commissioner declined consent for that section due to concerns around river works and their effects on the ecology, river and amenity.

There are two significant changes; with a new lower and longer bridge over a section of

the Oreti River, rather than an originally proposed suspension bridge. This has been designed to have a lesser impact visually and on the river and surroundings. The other major change is to the proposed path the trail would take, changing sides of the river to move it further away. Proposed groynes have also been removed from the proposal.

At the hearing each of the witnesses will read a summary and the commissioner will ask questions around their evidence.

[Evidence and other documents can be viewed on the Southland District Council website](#)

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## Stage Two Progresses

Tenders for the next stage of work on the Around the Mountains Cycle Trail have been announced.

Group Manager Services and Assets Ian Marshall says The Roding Company has been successful in their bid to complete construction of Sections 6 and 7 of the second stage of the trail.

Council uses a process which looks at a variety of factors such as price, management and technical skills to assess which company is successful in their tender. The different factors are weighted and a final score is tallied. Price, along with Council's knowledge the project would be in safe hands, meant The Roding Company was successful.

“The successful tenderer is one of the companies we worked with on stage one of the trail – The Roding Company built two sections of the first stage for us,” Mr Marshall says.

“They do a good-quality, reliable job. We know that they know what they're doing.”

Work on the cycle trail will begin to ramp up again after a break during the holiday period. The two sections, just north of Mossburn, will be worked on at the same time and construction is expected to take just under six months.

Another contract, for fencing construction, is being tendered at the moment and tenders to build bridges along the two sections will be next to go out.

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# Summer Cycling Success

The Around the Mountains Cycle Trail's first summer is showing plenty of promise, following the opening of Stage One in November.

Southland District Council Group Manager Services and Assets Ian Marshall said it's a case of so far, so good and other than a couple of reports of locked gates, the trail's first summer had run smoothly.

He said the trail is attracting more than cyclists.

"The big bridges near Athol seem to be getting a fair bit of attention, too. A lot of people are stopping to get out for a look, to take photos. They've become a bit of an attraction in their own right," he said.

Some local businesses are seeing a positive flow on.

Trailer Sixty6 owner Mark Ford said the food truck he and his wife Sharon run is seeing some benefit.



"We had a group of cyclists here from Auckland a while back, and we got talking to them. They ate at the trailer, they were off to Tom O'Brien's Welcome Rock Trail in the afternoon, then eating at the Highway Café in the evening. If that isn't a positive for the trail, I don't know what is. We've all benefited, and that's got to be a good thing but it has to be finished. The locals will use it all day long, but from a tourist point-of-view that second stage is huge," he said.

Welcome Rock Trails owners Tom and Katie O'Brien have recently opened their own private tramping and cycling trail near Garston. Tom said the cycle trail is great for the area.



“With Welcome Rock Trails, we’d been planning things for a couple of years beforehand anyway – it’s something we’ve always sort envisaged for that particular area of the country. But we’re completely and fully supportive of Around the Mountains. It’s the cherry on the cake for us, really. They are completely different products but they bring the same sort of people into the area, and that’s people who are interested in recreation.”

Garston Community Development Area subcommittee chair Pam Naylor said the number of people using the trail was good to see.

"We're getting a lot of people coming through, cycling sections of the trail and stopping off in the village for a bite to eat and that kind of thing," she said.

Mossburn Community Development Area subcommittee chairman Jim Guyton said he expected visitor numbers to climb even higher when Stage Two is completed. "It'll put the seal on everything, I hope."

An upgrade of public toilets is now finished and the CDA has other plans which will benefit cyclists, including construction of an archway for an information kiosk and bike stands.

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