

SUBMITTER: Methven Adult Riders Group (Colin Crossen)

Methven Adult Riders Group in conjunction with the Ashburton Hakatere River Trail Committee have prepared the below submission to be considered by Council as part of the Long-Term Plan 2021-31.

We (DO NOT) wish to speak in support of this submission at the hearing.

The community volunteer-based groups that comprise this committee provide countless hours towards the progression of walking, cycling, horse-riding, 4WD and motorbike tracks that follow the course of the Ashburton River. This group originally had strong support from council when the committee was formed 10 years ago, including a robust and dedicated budget allocated specifically to these developments.

We believe Council recommitting to this time-proven successful and popular development would have immense benefits for a vast portion of the community, as such aligning with the values in the Long-Term Plan as detailed below:

- Residents will achieve a sense of community and belonging through the opportunity to contribute to the development of a valuable community asset that is the riverside tracks.
- The riverside tracks form part of our district's great spaces and places - they are the ultimate natural-environment recreational space to assist in promoting a healthy lifestyle.
- Many of the groups working alongside the river have a strong environmental focus. Through native planting we are helping to promote a sustainable resource that can be enjoyed by many generations to come.
- The tracks we have developed attract visitors to our area thus assisting with the economic development of the district. Cycling in particular is enjoying a significant increase in popularity amongst several different age groups nationwide with multiple regions already recognising this and working to support it. We believe this market is currently untapped within Mid-Canterbury as a whole.

We believe the preceding combined efforts of Council and volunteer groups should be preserved and further enhanced by way of an ongoing partnership and maintenance program. The success of this partnership will require a financial commitment from Council, in conjunction with transparent and open communication between the groups.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide this submission, and trust Council will consider all points with the best interests of the community in mind.

The Methven Adult Riders Group is a horse trekking group who use the track on a regular basis plus as individuals.

With funding allocation it would be better maintained, currently it is inclined to get overgrown which restricts us using the track.

In the early days there was a lot of work put into establishing the track for public use by individual groups and since then it is used constantly by people from all walks of life with lots of positive feedback from visitors to Ashburton.

We consider the track to be an asset to Ashburton and without funding it could deteriorate and become overgrown as it was 10 years ago when we started clearing and cleaning up the area.

I would like to request that this submission be read out at the council meeting, as due to work commitments I'm unable to attend the meeting.

Colin Crossen

On behalf of the Methven Adult Riders Group