

# Comment on the Te Ara Tupua – Ngauranga to Petone shared path Fast Track Application

## 1. Contact Details

Please ensure that you have authority to comment on the application on behalf of those named on this form.

Organisation name (if relevant):	Living Streets Aotearoa		
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All sections of this form with an asterisk (\*) are mandatory.

## 2. We will email you draft conditions of consent/notices of requirement for your comment.\*

Yes

I can receive emails and my email address is correct



I cannot receive emails and my postal address is correct.

## 3. Please provide your comments on the Te Ara Tupua – Ngauranga to Petone shared path Application



Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the proposal to provide an improved walking route between Petone and Ngauranga – Te Ara Tupua.

Living Streets fully supports, in principle, the proposal to improve the walking and cycling link between Petone and Ngauranga, and the closing of the gap in the round the harbour walkway Te Aranui o Pōneke.

We wish to stress that the provision of good walking access requires attention to detail. Walkers and others on foot (runners) will spend the longest time traversing this path, so planning and design should make that a priority.

### **Key concern**

Currently there is a footpath that has been in existence since the Hutt Road was constructed, which latterly has been built over and narrowed in parts by the state highway and been 'shared' with cyclists. There is currently a significant barrier to walking with the 800 metre section that is part of the state highway shoulder and completely exposed to 100km hour traffic. We expect this to be a popular walk route once this significant barrier at the Petone end is fixed.

Many more people will use this path, as a walk from one place to the other as now, and also as a destination in itself. The more successful this path is the higher likelihood that conflicts and safety issues will arise between those on foot and wheeled users travelling at speed. Safety issues particularly for more vulnerable pedestrians will deter them from using this path (eg children, elderly and disabled pedestrians). The New Zealand Pedestrian Planning and Design Guide states that shared path benefits accrue mainly to cycle users. The same guide recommends a minimum 1.8 metre footpath for pedestrian use on normal urban roads and it will be wider than this in this type of shared path situation. (The reference to 1.5m pedestrian paths is not a best practise standard used in New Zealand and is not supported). This means that we recommend separated paths for pedestrians and for wheeled users.

We recommend use of New Zealand best practise guides – the New Zealand Pedestrian Planning and Design Guide and RTS 14 design for blind pedestrians (combined in the Pedestrian Network Guidance). Lighting at night will need to be sufficient and well designed so as not to dazzle pedestrians or disturb wildlife. Walk surfaces should be for comfort and therefore we do not support boardwalks (due to their unevenness and maintenance issues) or concrete (which is too hard and rigid for comfort).

We understand that there has still not been any accurate measurement of the number of people on foot using this path currently and are concerned at this lack. In our experience, reliance on anecdotal evidence seriously underrepresents pedestrian and walk mode shares, and this is indicated in the Strategic Transport Assessment. The Wainuiomata Hill shared path is a case in point where the numbers of walkers far exceeded expectations, and now regularly includes women pushing baby buggies up and down the steep incline.

The Shared Path Demand Assessment referencing the Northern shared path in Auckland is moot as this is the path where the increase in numbers of cyclists led to the cancellation of a long-running walking school bus due to safety and experiential concerns for the children.

Other comments on the Shared Path Assessment are that assumption 3 and table 1 states that walkers/ runners will only use a part of this path, this fails to recognise that there is no other destination along this path than either Petone or Hutt Road/ Wellington, the only two possible exits. Reference to the Accessible Streets road rule changes are still proposals at this date. It is noted Strava is not a popular app used by walkers.



The proposal for a 5 metre path should allow for the largely tidal, linear flows of cyclists to use half the width of the path separated from people on foot, who move in a completely different manner.

Separation between different modes of travel will remedy this concern.

**Other concerns are:**

1 How will exposure to fumes and noise be mitigated? Even with a seaside path this section of the path is still over an hour walk along a high traffic road and rail corridor. While we note the Air Quality assessment shows that pollutant levels will be below threshold criteria for action we believe that improvements to air quality are possible. Noise levels from traffic on this walk are high and can impede conversation between two people standing next to each other, we hope the design mitigates this.

2 Impacts on the coastal marine area need to be carefully managed and consideration given to the carbon budget of the project with its high demand for fill:

- Where will the millions of cubic metres of fill come from? The proposed Petone-Grenada link road would produce an estimated 8 million cubic metres of spoil but is not an option we support due to its huge negative effects.
- Where would the massive tonnage of rocks to "armour" the seaward face of the "reclamation" come from? Might the rocks be barged from Golden Bay or elsewhere and what impact will that have?
- What volumes of greenhouse gases would the quarrying and transport of the fill and rocks produce?
- What assessment is there of the costs of repairing the damage to road surfaces caused by trucks from the quarrying sites to the proposed "reclamation"?
- What would be the costs of the social and economic impacts on commuter rail services and freight rail services during construction of the proposed "reclamation"?
- What will the costs be for ongoing maintenance of this path, and repair of it after storms or seismic damage?
- Given the widespread failures of reclamation at CentrePort during the Kaikoura Earthquake, plus the fact the proposed pathway would be directly above the Wellington Fault, how would failure of the proposed "reclamation" for Te Ara Tupua footpath/cycleway be avoided?

**Design essentials**

We support inclusion of design elements important to mana whenua along this path.

The provision of natural shade (trees and shrubs) will help mitigate the exposure to fumes, and can be used as a separator between different users; pedestrians and those on wheels.

Planting of native species should provide good shelter options with consideration of both predominant wind directions and break up any hard surfaces that may reflect sound.



To make this path as accessible as possible, frequent placement of seats and shade / shelter will be important. We expect people will want to stop and sojourn along this path so the addition of drinking fountains and toilets is important.

Good way-finding and adequate safe crossings at each end of this section of path are crucial. Access from public transport stops may form a key part for some people's journeys:

- The Ngauranga Hutt Road area is very difficult to navigate on foot and urgently requires improved crossings and clear wayfinding
- The Petone end requires walk access through to Petone railway station on a dedicated pedestrian-only footpath (not the current shared path).

A good walking surface (not hard concrete) is important for a walk trip of over an hour. This route will be accessible to most people and should support maximum comfort of walking.

We support environmentally sensitive development in this area, future-proofed for resilience.

We would welcome any change to improve the functioning and resilience of the rail corridor during this project and to meet an increase in walk mode share.

### **Specific condition recommendations**

The Cultural and Environmental Design Master Plan should:

- Include appropriate parts of New Zealand guidance from the NZ Pedestrian Planning and Design Guide and RTS 14 for blind and vision impaired pedestrians or updated versions of this
- Ensure that pedestrian infrastructure and function has priority over other design features considering that people on foot will spend the longest time on this path and are most affected by poor design
- LV3 shall include best practise design for pedestrian movement including surfaces that promote comfort of movement, seating that is accessible for all, lighting appropriate to the space that does not dazzle, shade and shelter situated for the prevailing winds and using native plantings
- Provide signage and wayfinding of appropriate information for people on foot to determine time and distance to various points
- Provision for drinking water and toilet facilities.

### **About Living Streets**

Living Streets Aotearoa is New Zealand's national walking and pedestrian organisation, providing a positive voice for people on foot and working to promote walking friendly planning and development around the country. Our vision is "More people choosing to walk more often and enjoying public places".

The objectives of Living Streets Aotearoa are:

- to promote walking as a healthy, environmentally-friendly and universal means of transport and recreation



- to promote the social and economic benefits of pedestrian-friendly communities
- to work for improved access and conditions for walkers, pedestrians and runners including walking surfaces, traffic flows, speed and safety
- to advocate for greater representation of pedestrian concerns in national, regional and urban land use and transport planning.

For more information, please see: [www.livingstreets.org.nz](http://www.livingstreets.org.nz)

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