



Queen Charlotte Track

Picton Smart & Connected – Bike Walk Picton Working Group

Submission in Support of Queen Charlotte Track Incorporated application to MDC 2016-17 Annual Plan, for funding to improve conditions on the track for all users

Picton Smart & Connected supports the Queen Charlotte Track Incorporated application for the Council to make provision for up to \$290,000 in the 2016/2017 Annual Plan to be spread over this financial year and two subsequent years, to enable QCT Inc to work with DOC to remedy sections of steep track, improve the experience for walkers and cyclists, broaden its appeal and allow for managed visitor growth.

Benefits of Improving Queen Charlotte Track for all users

QCT is one of Picton's and Marlborough's significant attractions for national and international visitors. The QCT experience drives the economy in Picton: from sole business service providers, retail and accommodation providers, through to larger scale commercial operators. Activities supporting QCT are of benefit to the wider Picton community, and its economic and social well-being, and vitality.

A growing QCT experience has the potential to extend tourist visits and the corresponding financial gain into the shoulder season and through the quieter winter period – but only if the track maintains its appeal. Easing of the steep gradients will also make QCT more accessible and attractive for a wider range of people throughout the year.

Being a proven tourism magnet, QCT is a major contributor to the overall experience of how Marlborough is viewed, be it a positive experience or otherwise. With the rapid advancement of many cycle and walking options throughout New Zealand, QCT is at risk of losing popularity and patronage. It is incumbent on the Council to decide its position on supporting the continued growth of QCT for the long term success of Picton and in turn Marlborough.

A well maintained and patronised QCT forms the base for other cycling initiatives around Picton. These include completion of the Link Pathway, mountain bike trails in Victoria Domain, the Marina 2 Marina upgrade and the Picton to Blenheim State Highway 1 cycle and walking path.

As outlined in the QCT Incorporated submission this funding request is essential for maintaining the Great Ride Status and also accessing the 'Maintaining the Quality of Great Rides Fund (MGR)' for future development. MGR funding is an opportunity to bring additional dollars into the regional

economy; and to support the contribution made by Department of Conservation, operators (services in-kind) and private land owners.

Improved patronage and a growing cycle/walk experience from Ship's Cove could become an enduring legacy of the Council's 250 year anniversary celebrations of Captain Cook's visit.

Picton Smart & Connected supports any upgrade to QCT that will enhance the visitor experience and local economy. Support is given on the proviso that QCT Inc consults with the Endeavour Inlet residents and accommodation providers to the satisfaction of Council.

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