

Eastern Bays Shared Path Consent

Submission in favour by Derek Wilshere

Kia Ora Tatou

Ahi Ahi Maree

Ko Derek Wilshere Aho

I am a Civil Engineer with a career in Water and Soil Conservation and early times in Coastal Engineering.

I have been user of this coastline for 70 years and a resident for 25 years. I have walked it, run it, cycled it, and swum and dived off it. It has been generally dodgy ..and getting worse over time!

I was an Eastbourne Community Board Member from 2004 and Chair from 2010 to 2013.

This project has been a desirable and necessary piece of infrastructure for decades and was a major reason for my joining the Board. My stated aim was to ride the Walkway before I was 80!

My comments are in that context.

Accepted by the Hutt City Council (HCC) progress has been painfully slow with capital works proceeding as funding was granted, most recently by rolling three years funding into a one-year construction – to a plan developed by consultants advised by a community led Walkways group including HCC staff. Segments of the top priority works languish uncompleted (southern York Bay).

In a community survey by the Eastbourne Community Board (c. 2016) the project received the highest ranking. This forward - thinking initiative provides the only project wide democratic data on public preferences for Eastbourne wide issues.

Reasons for this included (not exclusively):

- the partially completed walkway provides the only dedicated pedestrian/ cycle / mobility vehicle access between Point Howard and Days Bay – a very dangerous situation.
- The desire to have some physical separation with erosion resistance providing improved protection from sea flooding and debris inundation for the Marine Parade carriageway.

The current Waka Kotahi NZTA policy for “Shared Paths” clearly showed a way forward. Willingly supported by the Eastbourne community a Technical Working Group (including ECB Chair Ginny Horrocks and previous Chair Derek Wilshere) developed the current proposal that for the first time attempted to design a coherent and aesthetically pleasing path that:

- recognises current best design practice
- provides sustainable model that recognised the impending risk of climate change
- maximised protection and security for the main carriageway
- recognises the unique marine and coastal environment on its fringes
- recognises and caters for the value and needs of the seabirds and little blue penguins that are common along this coastline
- recognises the special and cherished values of the three main beaches (Point Howard, Lowry Bay and York Bay) it traverses

- caters for the enhancement of the unique and valued link between southern Days Bay around Windy (Russos) Point and Eastbourne Village, opening up a safe coastal trail to Burdans Gate, the Pencarrow Road and the prospective tourist trail building on the “Great Harbour Way” and other regional trails.

“Shovel Ready” funding is the “icing on the cake” making the proposal viable in the short term and potentially providing an opportunity not previously available to:

DO IT ONCE AND DO IT RIGHT

**BY RECOGNISING A MODE SHIFT OPPORTUNITY AND ALLOW MANY OF THE CONSTRAINTS
RAISED BY SUBMITTERS TO BE REMOVED**

And, honouring the Community consultation programme that was thorough and open through the development of the final proposal.

Thus, this project must be consented as a whole and a programme for the funding agencies to complete the project agreed.