

# Meadowbank to Kohimarama Shared Path

## Feedback to AT

We enthusiastically support this project. It will provide great walking and cycling options for recreational use and commuting, and will open up the Glen Innes shared path to residents of Kohimarama, Meadowbank, Mission Bay Orakei and St Heliers.

The following are some suggestions intended to get the greatest benefit out of the project.

### 1. Provision of parking

For many people, the path will be too far away to walk to, or too steep to ride to (without ebikes) and so will choose to drive to a convenient point to start their walk or ride. Unless provision is specifically made for this, it could lead to serious parking and congestion issues.

The most convenient access points for residents north of the shared path will be John Rymer Place and Kohimarama Road opposite St Heliers Bay Road. These both have particularly poor parking. John Rymer Place is an exceptionally narrow road with very limited parking and few places to turn around. Kohimarama Road is a very congested road with no-parking zones on both sides of Kohimarama Road and St Heliers Bay Road except for a few spaces on the eastern side of Kohimarama Rd.

We suggest creating a small off-road car park off Kohimarama Rd by the pony club. There is suitable land here, either beside the road adjacent to the A frame building, or further down the slope. We recognise there may be competing interests and lease issues, but recommend that the option be explored. Otherwise, the project could result in unacceptable congestion in John Rymer Place and around the already congested St Heliers Bay Rd intersection.

### 2. Protect John Rymer Place residents' parking

There is very limited parking in John Rymer Place, but residents of the northern suburbs who drive to the shared path will find this an attractive place to park. Doing so will have a serious impact on local residents.

We suggest exploring restricting most parking to immediate residents, whether through a residents' permit system or some other method.

### 3. Gowing Drive connection - underpass or bridge to cross the rail line?

We are comfortable with either option if they each meet the criteria for practical and cost-effective use of the shared path. We do not have sufficient detailed knowledge of the contours to make a definitive choice, but based on limited knowledge would expect the underpass option to work better for the following reasons.

- We understand that the shared path would be approximately 3m below the rail line at the location of the crossing. A bridge would need some 7m clearance over the railway, and then a total 10m drop down to the shared path. This would make the connection very steep, necessitating very long connecting slopes with switchbacks for bikes, and/or some 50 steps for walkers. Neither option is very attractive.

- An underpass, in contrast, would likely be at a similar grade to the shared path. It would require 3m more elevation gain on the southern side to Gowing Drive, but we expect this could be easily accommodated.

We recognise, however, that an underpass introduces some safety concerns related to reduced visibility, and that an overpass would be better if the engineering factors discussed above could be resolved.

#### 4. Cycling versus walking

The connections are shared paths and the design must try to optimise the experience for both cyclists and walkers. For steeper sections, cyclists require continuous slopes of a reasonable grade, typically resulting in longer runs of gentle slopes and switchbacks. Walkers, however, generally prefer a straight line approach with steps to manage the elevation changes.

We suggest that where possible, both steps and switchbacks be used to optimise the experience for both groups; steps to provide the most direct route, and switchbacks to keep the gradient to a rideable level.

#### 5. Encourage Selwyn College pupils to use the path

The connections will provide a safe and easy way for Selwyn College students who live in Meadowbank to get to school. They could bike or walk completely out of the traffic except for short distances at each end. This in turn would take quite a few cars out of the morning and afternoon peak traffic and potentially reduce congestion.

The catch may be that cycling to school or walking that distance might not be “cool”, particularly for senior students. We suggest that AT work with Selwyn College to try to incentivise the use of the path instead of being driven to school.

#### 6. Potential cyclist safety issues on Kepa Rd

Kepa Rd is extremely busy at morning peak times in particular, and would not be very safe for Selwyn College pupils riding on the road given that there are two lanes of traffic merging to one plus a bus stop close to John Rymer Place. Pupils may decide to ride on the footpath, but this is also narrow and has a bus shelter that would create a choke point. In the afternoon, Selwyn cyclists on the road would have to turn right into John Rymer Place by waiting in the combined straight ahead / turning lane for a gap. They are perhaps more likely to use the footpath on the western side, again rather narrow for pedestrians and cyclists.

#### 7. Connection to the Kepa Bush trails.

Please ensure that the John Rymer Place connection path connects to the Kepa Bush trails. These trails can provide a network of interconnected walks that would greatly enhance the benefits of the shared paths.

Many people may choose to cycle a portion of the shared path, then leave their bikes and walk the Kepa Bush trails. To facilitate this, please provide suitable bike racks where the two meet.

While more related to Stage 2 of the shared path rather than the Meadowbank Kohimarama connections, we also wonder whether there is potential for other connections between the walking trails in Kepa Bush and the shared path further west from the John Rymer Place connection. For example could the main shared path connect to trails around the end of

Thatcher St (not to the street itself necessarily, just to any walking trails in the area), or trails in Selwyn Bush or Selwyn Park below Selwyn College?