Submission by TEN to NPDC

Re: All Community Board Proposals & Horses

Date:12 August 2026

Thankyou to the Katitake Community Board for this very welcome opportunity to let you know how things are in your rohe for equestrians.

Equestrian Overview

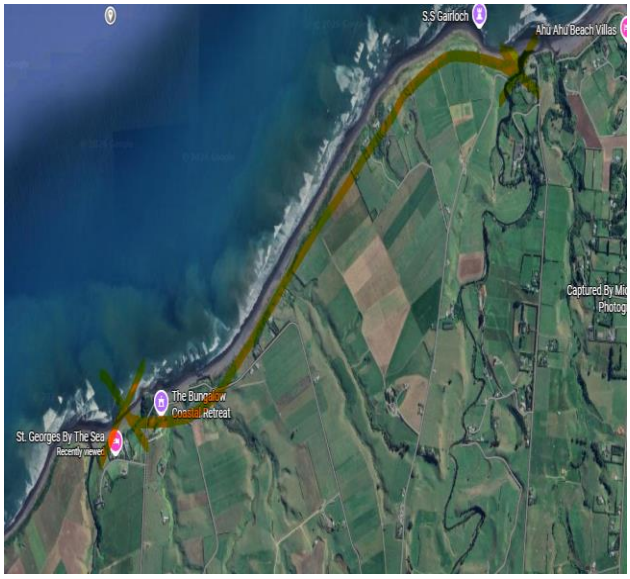
A significant lever to improve the economic wellbeing of our rohe, is to support equestrian sport and recreation. 2024 figures by independent consultant Visitor Solutions found the Taranaki equestrian community spent **$53.8 million annually** (excluding capital purchases). Most horses live in North Taranaki, and we have a solid horse-riding presence. Equestrian properties support businesses – fencing, building, earthworks, weed spraying, hay contracting, coaches, feed stores, vets, farriers etc.

Community Boards could therefore encourage economic growth by enabling safe riding from rural properties and around the pony clubs in their areas.

Kaitake Community Board Proposals

Thank you for your great ideas. Here's our responses.

We have amazing beaches in north Taranaki from Tapuae, Ōakura, AhuAhu Rd, through to Weld Rd and south … but from Weld Road, the beaches are not always safe for horses. An inland coastal trail would be awesome.



Community Board proposals for Kaitake

• Complete the coastal trail from the Timaru Stream to Fort St George.

This is a tick! Ōakura area is densely populated by horses and Ōakura/Weld Road beaches are very popular with horseriders.

However, the rideability of the beaches south towards Fort St George is patchy due to deep sand shifts, stone dumping, and changeable quicksand areas. Therefore, inclusion on the Coastal Walkway trail would enable riding when beach riding is unsafe. The lines of sight there are very good meaning few surprises for horses and cyclists. A coastal horseride would also be a big

Equestrian tourism is growing…

Inclusion of equestrians on some formed part of the North Taranaki coast is well overdue. At last count there were less than 13 small stretches of coastal paper road in the whole of Taranaki. What is left is precious and needs to be used for maximum enjoyment, economic wellbeing and public benefit.

It is safe to have horses on public trails. ACC hold no statistics for horses injuring people on public land.

Horseriders would be required to dismount and kick their horses' manure to the side and in a day or two it will have disappeared with bird help and decomposition.

If need be, horses could be required to wear poo bags if, after a trial period, horse manure was a problem.

Horses make so little impact on trails, that authorities often don't realise they exist because they barely even see their hoofprints.

We'd love to show you evidence from around the world where horses share trails with humans. Consider Hyde Park in London, for one.

Kaitake Community Board proposals

• Establish a walkway loop track from Ōkato village centre along SH45 south, <u>across the Kahihi stream</u>...

Yes please! Horses always used to cross the Kaihihi Stream by the swing bridge. That allowed riders from the Okato village side to ride across to the Domain and pony club. I think boulders have been placed at the stream edge- perhaps to stop vehicular use? If they were parted just 1 metre and a bit of digger work on the stones, that would allow horses through but still prevent vehicles. A small effort here would make such a difference for local riders.

Being Reserve Land, this area must, by law, be available to the public which includes horse-riders. See light blue circle.

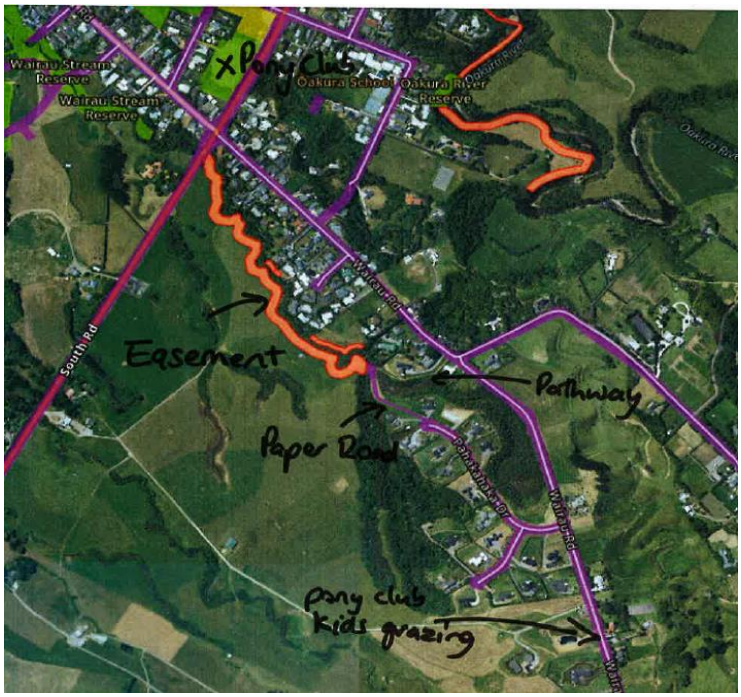
The green areas are Reserve Land. The darker green areas are Public Access Reserve Land.

- **Develop a path to link up both sides of Waireka Road,West and East utilising the existing paper road to connect both parts of the Road.**

TEN supports this initiative on behalf of horseriders. There are sure to be riders there and a local safe ride from your paddock is super important for horses.

• Investigate the establishment of more trails on the paper roads on Hampton and Leith Roads.

Absolutely. It allows walkers, cyclists and horses safe enjoyable and exercise along our coast. Off road trails are so helpful when beach riding is unsafe or impossible due to tides.



Note the unformed legal road (aka paper road) at the end of Pahakahaka Dr which connects with the easement (in orange). The easement was created, we understand, for a bridle trail in 2019.

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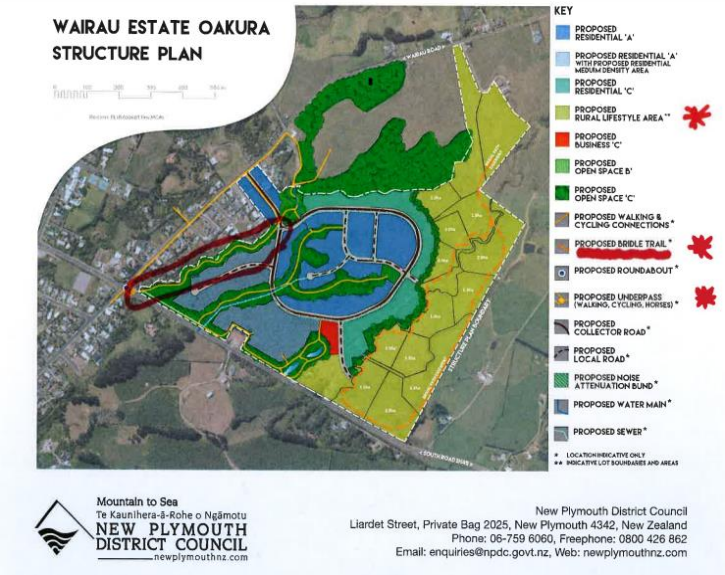

Review Bridleway options with Ōakura Pony Club

For Ōakura:

For safe access to Ōakura Pony Club, riders and pony club kids from Surrey Hill Rd and Upper Wairau Rd would like to ride down Pahakahaka Dr, along the paper road and easement beside the Wairau Stream (on McKee land) to the main road-South Road.

[Note the paper road between Pahakahaka Dr and the orange easement (image to your left)]

The 'Wairau Estate Oakura Structure Plan' shows NPDC's and Mike McKee's 2018 Private Plan change intentions. Observe the underlined 'Proposed Bridle Trail'.

The Easement is a graded mown (or was) walkway intended for horses, walkers and cyclists. It has great lines of sight (meaning less surprises for horses) apart from one corner that needed benching back a little.

It is hoped that the landowners' still possess the generous and community-minded intentions they had at that time and that access for horseriders can be negotiated.

TEN asks that the Community Board help facilitate conversations between the landowners, the pony club and local riding representatives so that a safe pathway to pony club can be achieved.

Further Kaitake Community Board Proposals

- **Review Bridleway options with Ōkato Pony Club, consult with landowners and impacted groups, consult with iwi and hapū representatives, consider best route to follow at bottom of Timaru Rd etc**

TEN supports all of the above. After checking with Ōkato PC first (a relatively new committee apart from Mathew Grayling, long time president), it **may be that help is needed with the Domain Board** for the pony club to resume very occasional use of the back rugby field for a dressage competition.

One final thing - more signs are needed for the horsey roads around Ōkato. This image is NPDC signage installed around horsey roads some years ago after TEN advocacy and they do help alert traffic to the presence of horses.

Hampton Rd- another sign is needed at the start of the road

Upper Kaihihi Rd – signage is needed at the SH 45 end and another on the right hand corner coming from Ōkato Pool.

To conclude, Kaitake equestrians have detailed local knowledge about many of the off-road trail possibilities in your rohe. Please ask TEN for their details and they can give you precise information because they ride a lot of these areas frequently.

Ngā mihi. Your time is appreciated.

Megan,