

## Consultation summary - Proposed new mountain bike track in Montgomery Spur Reserve

Public consultation ran for two and a half calendar months from 19 December 2020 to 5 March 2021. The standard two-month Reserves Act consultation requirement was increased to allow for the Christmas/New Year statutory holiday period.

Public notice was made in The Press on 19 December 2020 and the Southern View newspaper on 14 January 2021, and activated on the public notices page on the Council's website on 19 December 2020.

Flyers were delivered to approximately 500 households in the adjacent residential area, and the information also sent to an extensive list of stakeholder groups and organisations.

Corflute signs with plans and information about the consultation were put up at the Rapaki Road, Mt Vernon Park and Summit Road access points to travel through to Montgomery Spur Reserve.

A Newsline story to introduce the proposal was viewed 4,608 times. A social media (Facebook) post in December 2020 reached 47,500 people, and it was engaged with (likes, comments, shares) 458 times.

Information, and the opportunity to submit, was available online on the Council's 'Have Your Say' webpage.

Two informal drop-in sessions were held: (1) at the Rapaki Road road-end from 5pm to 6.30pm on Tuesday 19 January 2021 and (2) at the St Martin Scout Hall on 197 Centaurus Road from 4.30pm to 6pm on Tuesday 23 February 2021.

About 20 people in total attended the drop-in sessions. Most were residents, many of whom were also mountain bikers. All were generally in support of the proposed new mountain bike track although the residents, who were mostly from Rapaki Road, raised concerns about issues relating to public access to recreational tracks in the area via Rapaki Road. Particular concerns were raised about parking, safety and congestion on Rapaki Road and at the Rapaki Road/Centaurus Road intersection.

Suggestions from the drop-in sessions included installing signs to include a map of the tracks and protocols for using them (for example, the give-way conventions for mountain bikers), information on dog poo disposal and indication of alternative access/parking points.

Submitters were sent an acknowledgement response. Those indicating they wished to be heard in support of their submission have been advised that they will be contacted to arrange a time for them to appear before the Hearings Panel.

### Summary of Submissions

Three hundred and two valid written submissions were received (a number of duplicate submissions were received). These are provided in a table along with Council officer response to key comments. There was overwhelming general support for the proposal, although 53 of these submitters included suggestions for further improvement or flagged related concerns. Two provided comments only and three submitters indicated they do not support the proposal. One late submission was received which was not included in analysis but was forwarded to the hearings panel to consider and the submitter was able to speak to their submission at the hearing.

The Mount Vernon Park Management Committee supports the new mountain bike proposal as being consistent with the intent and direction of the current management plan by appropriately complementing and extending the recreational track network, including an alternative to Rapaki Track.

The Waihoru/Spreydon-Heathcote Community Board strongly supports the proposal because it will help separate mountain bike walkers and runners across the area, especially on Rapaki Track. They support the monitoring of vehicle parking on Rapaki Road, and strongly support the development of the Port Hills Management Plan to ensure holistic planning for recreation and native regeneration.

Heritage NZ requests that the Accidental Discovery Protocol be applied during the track development work.

The main themes are:

**Key support comments:** These are predominantly about supporting the opportunity for mountain bikers to choose an alternative route to Rapaki Track, reducing the growing conflict of use on that track.

**Suggestions:** Twenty-one submitters suggested there should be separate uphill/downhill tracks, seven said alternative access points to Montgomery Spur Reserve should be developed, and one requested a wider track to accommodate disability users including trikes.

**Concerns:** Twenty-one submitters pointed out that the convention is for downhill riders to give way to uphill riders, not the other way as had been included in the consultation material (an error). A good number of submitters raised concerns about downhill bikers speeding on Rapaki Track. Five submitters referred to the impact of increased mountain bike activity on roads below Montgomery Spur Reserve and Rapaki Track, particularly with regards to parking and speeds.

**Opposition:** Of the three submissions indicating opposition to the proposal, two are concerned about the cost. The third is concerned that the new track connection to the Taramea Mountain Bike Track will increase intermediate and advanced biker use, contrary to, in their view, that tracks purpose as a track for beginners, damage more of Montgomery Spur Reserve and not be wide enough.

