



Hurunui Walking & Cycling Strategy 2017-2020



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 WHY HAVE A STRATEGY?

The purpose of the Hurunui Walking & Cycling Strategy is to provide strategic direction to encourage and promote the development and maintenance of walking and cycling trails within the Hurunui District.

The Hurunui District Council is supportive of the development of walking and cycling trails in all its forms, due to the range of benefits it provides including benefits to health and wellbeing; providing alternative transport options for local trips; providing connections between communities and providing tourism and recreation opportunities.

Hurunui District Council supports the Hurunui Trails Trust in their goal of championing the development and maintenance of walking and cycling trails throughout the Hurunui District. The Hurunui Trails Trust has developed a Strategic Plan which aligns with the Hurunui Walking & Cycling Strategy.



2 CURRENT SITUATION

2.1 EVOLUTION OF THE HURUNUI TRAILS TRUST

The Hurunui Trails Trust is a charitable trust that was formed in 2009 by local walking and cycling enthusiasts. The Trust was formed with the vision of taking a coordinated approach to the development of walking and cycling trails throughout the district. Since 2009 the Hurunui Trails Trust has successfully developed the Waipara Valley Vineyard Trail, which has a tourism focus, and the Amberley to Leithfield part of the Amberley Area Cycle Trail, which has a focus on recreation and connecting communities.

The Hurunui Trails Trust has transitioned from a group that develops walking and cycling trails to a governance role, with the aim of encouraging and promoting walking and cycling opportunities throughout the Hurunui District. As of early 2017, the Trust is in a position where they can provide governance, guidance and practical support to community groups throughout the district on how to approach, fund, build, maintain and promote walking and cycling trails.

The Council is supportive of the Hurunui Trails Trust in their goal of becoming the champions for walking and cycling in the district.

The Trust has developed a Strategic Plan which is aligned with this strategy. The revised Hurunui Walking & Cycling Strategy is a document that provides broad, strategic direction for the Council. The Hurunui Trails Trust Strategic Plan is to be a working document that will have more detail.

2.2 WHAT IS HAPPENING IN NEIGHBOURING DISTRICTS?

The districts that adjoin Hurunui are proactively encouraging cycling.

To the south, Waimakariri District Council has a *Walking & Cycling Strategy 2017-22*. This strategy encourages residents to walk and cycle, while aiming to provide safe and accessible environments for walkers and cyclists. Waimakariri District is developing two new cycleways that are receiving Urban Cycleways Programme funding. These are proposed to link Rangiora to Woodend and Rangiora to Kaiapoi. Christchurch City Council is developing a network of Major Cycle Routes with funding from the Urban Cycleways Programme.

To the north, Kaikoura District has a *Walking & Cycling Strategy 2009*. This strategy is in line with the NZTA documents of the time and the Hurunui Walking & Cycling Strategy was based on this. Kaikoura District is very similar to the Hurunui District in that they are both large rural districts with small settlements and have a larger settlement that is the tourism drawcard.

2.3 THE HURUNUI KAIKOURA EARTHQUAKE

The Hurunui Kaikoura earthquake that occurred on 14 November 2016 caused significant damage to the northern part of the Hurunui District.

As part of the recovery process there is an opportunity to develop walking and cycling trails throughout the affected area, linking these to the remainder of the district. Such initiatives are

likely to aid in the economic recovery of various towns affected by the earthquake. This would be in the form of encouraging the promotion of the district as a premiere cycling destination, which in turn is likely to encourage cycle tourism. This is likely to encourage the development of complimentary services such as accommodation options and food outlet options.

There are also considerable wellbeing benefits from developing a comprehensive network of trails throughout the district. Providing these alternative linkages will help support community connectedness and encourage participation in outdoor activity, which have positive outcomes for the physical and mental wellbeing of residents.

Kaikoura District Council is also looking at developing cycling opportunities following the earthquake, including a proposed Coastal Pacific Cycle Trail that would connect Kaikoura to Picton. This opportunity is available due to the reinstatement work being done to State Highway 1 and the Main North Railway Line between Kaikoura and Picton.



3 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HURUNUI WALKING & CYCLING STRATEGY

3.1 SUPPORT FOR WALKING AND CYCLING

There are a number of factors contributing to the increased interest in the development of walking and cycling trails in 2017:

- The revision of the Council's Hurunui Walking & Cycling Strategy.
- The development of the Hurunui Trails Trust into a governance group which can provide guidance and support to community groups.
- The willingness of Council to support the Hurunui Trails Trust in their goal of becoming the champions for walking and cycling in the Hurunui District.
- The development of the Hurunui Trails Trust's Strategic Plan, to give strategic and detailed direction to their work.
- The completion of the Hanmer Springs Recreational Track Network Group's Development Strategy, which gives strategic direction for this group until 2020.
- The momentum for economic recovery following the Hurunui Kaikoura earthquake.
- The proposed development of a cycle trail from Picton to Christchurch.

This combination of factors means there is great momentum to build on the work already done by the Hurunui Trails Trust, and to further encourage the development of walking and cycling trails.

3.2 HURUNUI DISTRICT COUNCIL SUPPORT OF THE HURUNUI TRAILS TRUST

While this momentum is encouraging, the Council recognises that the Hurunui Walking & Cycling Strategy needs a champion to ensure implementation and effectiveness. With this in mind, in early 2017 the Council requested that the Hurunui Trails Trust expands the number of trustees. This has been done, with the trustees and the participant groups providing better geographical representation of the Hurunui District.

The Council is supportive of the Hurunui Trails Trust and has formally endorsed the Trust as the champion for walking and cycling in Hurunui District. The Council recognises that a collaborative relationship with the Hurunui Trails Trust will empower the Trust in this work. The Council is committed to continuing to develop this relationship and to support the Hurunui Trails Trust.

4 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES & PRINCIPLES

4.1 WORKING WITH STAKEHOLDERS TO DEVELOP AND PROMOTE WALKING AND CYCLING

Explanation: The walking and cycling trails that have been developed since 2009 have been instigated by community groups who have identified a need for a walking and cycling trail and gone about designing, fundraising, building, maintaining and promoting the trail. To date these have been accomplished with minimal support from the Council.

However, the Council recognises the value of these community groups in turning ideas into reality, and the importance of actively encouraging these groups. The Council is committed to developing and maintaining these relationships, and working with the Hurunui Trails Trust to develop and maintain these relationships.

The Council also recognises that input from a number of stakeholders can be required for the development of a trail. The Council is committed to working with the Hurunui Trails Trust to develop and maintain these relationships.

Objective: The further development of the special relationship with the Hurunui Trails Trust and the development of relationships with stakeholders.

Principle 1: To recognise the special relationship between Hurunui District Council and the Hurunui Trails Trust, and to encourage and empower the Hurunui Trails Trust to become the champion of walking and cycling in the Hurunui District.

Principle 2: To recognise the importance of forming and maintaining relationships with various stakeholders involved in the development and maintenance of walking and cycling trails in the Hurunui District, and to work with the Hurunui Trails Trust to develop these relationships.

Examples:

Stakeholder relationships:

- Hurunui Trails Trust.
- Hurunui District Council Roding Department.
- Hurunui Tourism Board.
- Hanmer Springs Recreational Track Network Group.
- New Zealand Transport Agency.
- New Zealand Cycle Trail group.
- Department of Conservation.
- Christchurch NZ (formerly Canterbury & Christchurch Tourism).
- Christchurch City Council.
- Waimakariri District Council.
- Kaikoura District Council.
- Marlborough District Council.
- Coastal Pacific Cycle Trail group.

4.2 TOURISM

Explanation: The Hurunui District is a predominantly rural district and has an abundance of natural features. These include rugged coastline, secluded beaches, forests, lakes and protected landscapes. The main tourism areas in the district are Hanmer Springs Alpine Spa Village and the Waipara Valley wine region, which has a number of wineries, cellar doors and winery restaurants. There are also a number of local events throughout the district that occur during the year.

The Council, through Hurunui Tourism, recognises the importance of diversifying tourism and will be looking at the potential of developing products and visitor experiences. The promotion of walking and cycling trails throughout the district, as well as events, is a method of introducing tourism to areas of the district that have traditionally not had a strong tourism focus, yet have an abundance of natural and rural landscapes which lend themselves to the activities of walking and cycling.

Objective: The diversification of existing tourism features and development of new tourism features that encourage the development of the Hurunui District as a premiere walking and cycling destination.

Principle 1: To diversify existing tourism features to include walking and cycling activities.

Principle 2: To support the development of new tourism features that include walking and cycling facilities.

Principle 3: To encourage the development of a network of walking and cycling routes across the Hurunui District.

Principle 4: To actively promote the Hurunui District as a premiere walking and cycling destination, including for events.

Examples:

Examples of Tourism trails that have already been developed are:

- The Waipara Valley Vineyard Trail, which was developed by the Waipara Valley Vineyard Trail Group.
- Kaiwara Classic event.

Some examples of potential Tourism trails are:

- Extending the Waipara Valley Vineyard Trail.
- The proposed Hurunui Heartland Cycle Tour route connecting Amberley to Kaikoura, and connecting through to Picton (the Coastal Pacific Cycle Trail).
- Proposed routes that connect to existing tourism features, e.g.: Waipara to Motunau Beach; Hanmer Springs to Culverden and Waiau.
- Proposed routes that encourage a network of walking and cycling routes across the Hurunui District, e.g.: Hanmer Springs to Culverden and Waiau; Culverden to Waiau and Cheviot; Hawarden and Waikari to Waipara and Cheviot.

- Proposed routes that connect the coast to inland settlements, e.g.: Gore Bay and Cheviot to Culverden and Waiau; Amberley and Waipara to Motunau Beach.
- A proposed coastal route from Motunau Beach to Gore Bay.
- Tirimoana Bush Walkway.



4.3 RECREATION

Explanation: The Council recognises the importance of exercise and recreation and the role this plays in physical and mental wellbeing, as well as recognising that this has social wellbeing benefits. Walking and cycling are modes of travel that have the added benefit of providing these associated wellness benefits.

Objective: Improve recreation opportunities by providing walking and cycling trails, helping to improve physical and mental wellbeing, and assisting the Hurunui Trails Trust and community walking and cycling groups to implement these recreation opportunities.

Principle 1: To encourage the use of existing walking and cycling trails for recreational use.

Principle 2: To encourage the development of walking and cycling trails for recreational use.

Examples:

Examples of Recreation trails that have already been developed are:

- The Amberley to Leithfield part of the Amberley Area Cycle Trail, which was developed by the Amberley Area Cycle Trail group.
- The Ready Money Trail in Cheviot Hills Reserve, which was developed by the Cheviot Reserves Board and the Cheviot community.
- The Amberley BMX track, which was developed by the Amberley community.

Examples of potential Recreation trails are proposed trails that would connect:

- Amberley to Amberley Beach.
- Leithfield to Leithfield Beach.
- Waipara to Amberley.
- Waikari to Hawarden.
- Cheviot Hills to surrounding areas.
- Amberley Beach to Leithfield Beach.



4.4 COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Explanation: The Hurunui District is characterised by predominantly small rural communities. While some are located in close proximity to each other, others tend to be located some distance from other settlements. There are no bus services serving the district, apart from chartered school bus services, and no taxi services. As such, private motor vehicle is the predominant mode of transport throughout the district.

The Council recognises that the development of local walking and cycling trails is important so that people have transport options other than private vehicles.

Objective: Improved connection of local communities through the provision of cycling and walking trails, and assisting the Hurunui Trails Trust and community walking and cycling groups to achieve these community connections.

Principle 1: To encourage the development of walking and cycling trails that connect local communities.

Principle 2: To encourage the development of walking and cycling trails that can be used by commuters, as an alternative to private vehicle use.

Principle 3: To encourage the development of walking and cycling trails that can be used by schoolchildren, as an alternative to being dropped off and picked up by private vehicle.

Principle 4: To recognise that some of our rural communities have local roads which have high speed limits and high heavy vehicle use, and to encourage safe practices for schoolchildren if using these roads for walking and cycling to school, e.g.: the use of walking school buses.

Examples:

Examples of Community Connection trails that have already been developed are:

- The Amberley to Leithfield part of the Amberley Area Cycle Trail, which was developed by the Amberley Area Cycle Trail group.

Some examples of potential Community Connection trails are proposed trails that would connect:

- Amberley to Amberley Beach.
- Leithfield to Leithfield Beach.
- Waipara to Amberley.
- Waikari to Hawarden.
- Waikari to Greta Valley to Motunau Beach.
- Motunau to Gore Bay.
- Culverden to Cheviot.
- Waiau to Cheviot.

4.5 REGIONAL CONNECTIONS

Explanation: The location of the Hurunui District in North Canterbury means that the district is well placed to benefit from regional connections from the top of the South Island to Christchurch City, as well as to the West Coast.

The Council recognises the importance of regional connections in contributing to economic strength as well as strengthening relationships with neighbouring councils. Having good regional connections also means that regional tourism opportunities are likely to be better connected, thus enhancing tourism potential.

Objective: Improved regional connections through the provision of cycling and walking trails, and working with regional stakeholders, the Hurunui Trails Trust and community walking and cycling groups to achieve these regional connections.

Principle 1: To encourage the development of walking and cycling trails that connect with walking and cycling trails in neighbouring districts, thus enhancing regional connections.

Principle 2: To encourage the development of walking and cycling trails that improve regional economic opportunities and connections.

Principle 3: To encourage the development of walking and cycling trails that improve regional tourism opportunities and connections.

Examples:

Some examples of potential Regional Connection trails are:

- The proposed Hurunui Heartland Cycle Tour connecting Amberley to Kaikoura, and connecting through to the Coastal Pacific Cycle Trail.
- Connections south to Waimakariri District, which in turn connects with Christchurch City.
- Connections from the northern part of the district to the Clarence Valley and through to Marlborough.
- Connections from Hanmer Springs to Molesworth and Rainbow Stations and through to Marlborough.
- Further development of the St James Great Ride and surrounding area, north and south, potentially connecting to other New Zealand Cycle Trail routes.

4.6 EARTHQUAKE RECOVERY

Explanation: Following the Hurunui Kaikoura earthquake, some towns and rural areas in the northern part of Hurunui District are experiencing various hardships, including economic hardship.

The development of walking and cycling trails and the active promotion of these trails can provide opportunities for economic revitalisation in earthquake-affected areas. This can include the development of complementary services such as accommodation options, food outlet options, and associated tourism ventures.

The Council recognises the importance of providing these revitalisation opportunities for people living in those areas affected by the earthquake.

Objective: The provision of walking and cycling trails that provide opportunities for the economic revitalisation of earthquake-affected areas.

Principle 1: To support the development of walking and cycling trails to provide opportunities for the economic revitalisation of earthquake-affected areas.

Principle 2: To encourage the development of activities that are complementary to the development of walking and cycling trails and provide opportunities for the economic revitalisation of earthquake-affected areas

Examples:

Some examples of potential trails that can encourage recovery for earthquake-affected areas are:

- The proposed Hurunui Heartland Cycle Tour route connecting Amberley to Kaikoura.
- Proposed routes that improve connections across the northern part of the district, e.g.: Culverden to Waiau to Mt Lyford; Waiau to Cheviot; Culverden to Cheviot.
- Proposed routes that improve connections between the northern part of the Hurunui District and other areas.