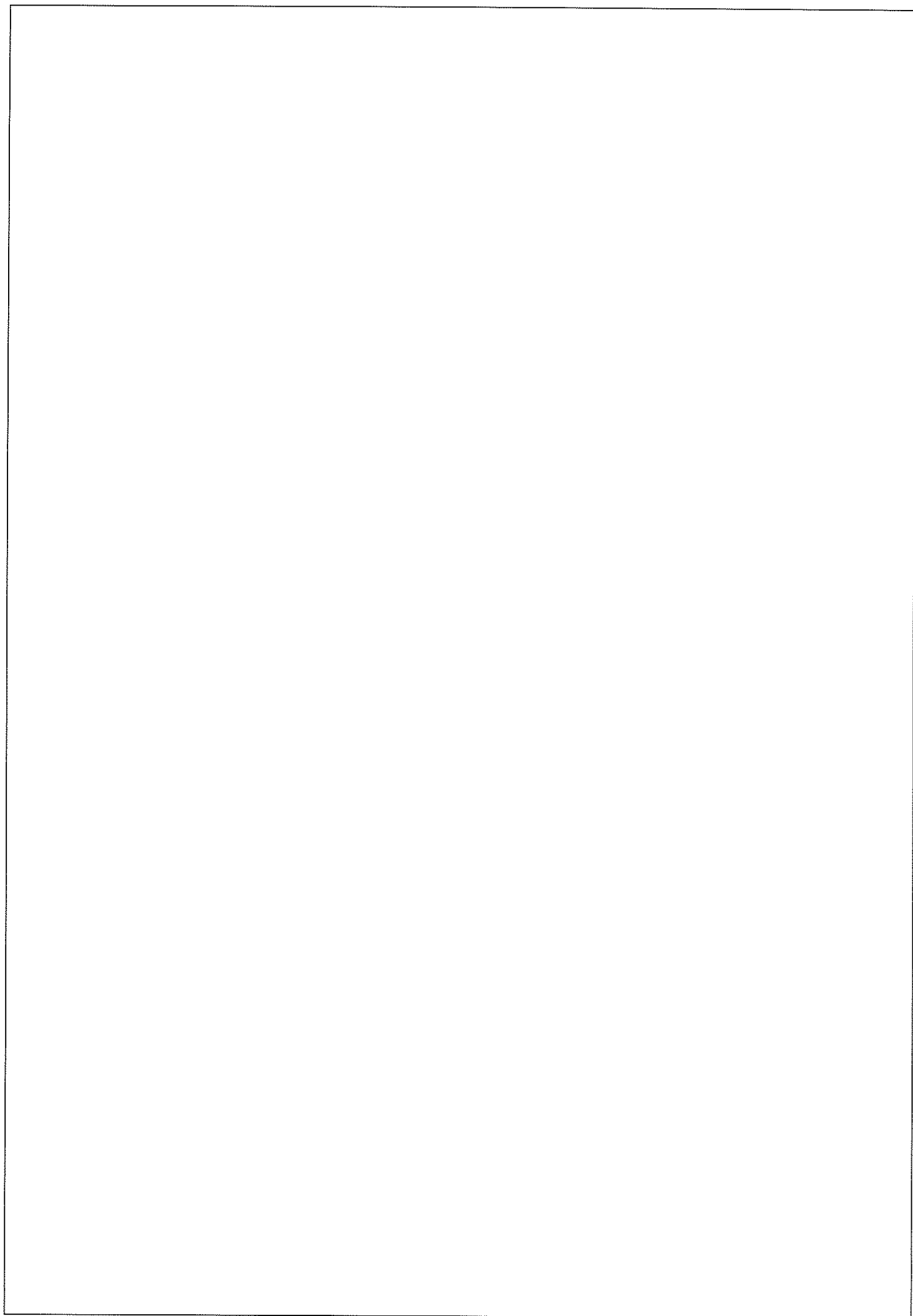




## **Submission on Marlborough District Council Eltham/Beaver Road Cycle Link Project**

**31 July 2017**

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## **Introduction**

1. Nelson Marlborough Health (Nelson Marlborough District Health Board) (NMH) is a key organisation involved in the health and wellbeing of the people within Te Tau Ihu. NMH appreciates the opportunity to comment from a public health perspective on the Marlborough District Council (MDC) Eltham/Beaver Road Cycle Link Project.
2. NMH makes this submission in recognition of its responsibilities to improve, promote and protect the health of people and communities under the New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000 and the Health Act 1956.
3. This submission sets out particular matters of interest and concern to NMH around pedestrian and cycle safety and has a number of recommendations for consideration which would further improve health outcomes for the community.

## **General comments**

4. NMH strongly supports the development of good quality active transport infrastructure for cyclists of all levels, which is known to encourage physical activity and be beneficial to population health. The Eltham/Beaver Road Cycle Link will be a valuable asset for Blenheim residents accessing local schools, particularly given that the (partially) separated cycle link will offer a safer route for students.
5. NMH is pleased to see that the criterion related to safety was weighted the highest when evaluating the possible options available.
6. NMH notes that some parts of the proposed route will be shared pedestrian and cyclist pathways. These shared pathways must be wide enough to accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists and have clear pedestrian priority signage to ensure pedestrian safety and reduce the likelihood of accidents.

## **Beaver Road Options**

7. NMH strongly supports Option C as this has the best outcome for cyclists, as well as the highest score for residents and the community as clearly shown in the MDC Cycle Link Report. Option C includes sharrow road markings, cyclist signage, the installation of median islands, a reduction of the speed zone to 30 kms and traffic calming.
8. NMH supports the introduction of sharrow road markings and cyclist signage. These measures will raise drivers' awareness that cyclists are present and promote better road sharing, creating a safer environment for cyclists.
9. NMH supports the option to reduce speed limits along the cycle route. Speed affects the likelihood and impact of all crashes. Small reductions in impact speeds greatly increase the chances of surviving a crash, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.

The Ministry of Transport's Safer Journey report<sup>1</sup> states that there is a 10% probability of death for pedestrians struck by cars travelling at the proposed 30km limit compared with 50% probability for pedestrians struck by cars travelling at 45km.

10. It is noted that traffic calming options for Beaver Street include the introduction of street trees. NMH supports the introduction of trees but consideration needs to be given to the choice of tree and the potential extent of its foliage. It is important that road users have clear sight lines to ensure that risk of conflict between road users is minimised.
11. NMH supports the installation of median islands at the Beaver Road and High Street intersection. It is vital that there is a safe place for pedestrians and cyclists to cross. It is noted that at this intersection, cyclists are diverted on the footpaths at the corners to cross the road. It is important that all four footpath corners and the median islands are large enough to safely accommodate both cyclists and pedestrians.

#### *Recommendation*

12. That MDC adopts Option C for Beaver Street with the addition of the full suite of street calming measures.
13. That appropriate street trees are chosen that will not block road users' sight lines.
14. That median islands and the footpath at the corner of Beaver Road and High Street are large enough to safely accommodate cyclists and pedestrians.

#### **Dillon Street Alternative**

15. NMH supports the Dillon Street Alternative because it extends the length of the route where cyclists are separated from traffic and improves the pedestrian facilities at the Eltham / Dillon Street intersection.
16. If Dillon Street alternative is installed, consideration should be given to using green coloured road surface paint across Beaver Road and Dillon Street to make the path more legible. This will ensure that cyclists can clearly see the safest route to use, and make drivers more aware of the presence of cyclists.

#### *Recommendation*

17. That green coloured road surface paint is used across roads for route legibility

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.saferjourneys.govt.nz/assets/Safer-journeys-files/SaferJourneyStrategy.pdf> page 2



## Eltham Road Options

18. NMH notes that the MDC report indicates that Option D, with the cycle path routed into the school, is considered to be the best option. This may be the best outcome for cyclists and drivers but it may result in poor outcomes for pedestrians.
19. Option D cross-section (pg.29) shows a very narrow footpath outside the school gate. The measurements are not given but the report states that the cycle path will be 2.7 metres wide and, therefore, it appears that the footpath will only be 1.5 metres wide which is well below NZTA's recommended acceptable width. The NZTA pedestrian planning guide recommends that footpaths are 2.4 metres outside of schools given that they are places where people often gather. NMH does not have a preferred option for Eltham Road but would like to emphasise the importance of adequate footpaths widths outside of the school and the neighbouring playcentre.<sup>2</sup>
20. NMH supports the installation of a two-way cycle path on the east of Eltham Road but expresses its concerns that a contra-flow path may cause confusion for road users. Appropriate signage must be used and education needs to be provided to:
  - a) local residents to ensure that they look both ways when accessing driveways
  - b) school students and parents to ensure that they look both ways when crossing driveways.

This is especially important given the proximity of the cycle path to the primary school and playcentre whereby young children and younger cyclists may be unaware of traffic movements.

21. Consideration should be given to extending the pedestrian crossing across the cycle path to the school gate. This would give priority to pedestrians especially very young children who may be unaware of approaching cyclists. Adequate signage should also be installed so that cyclists are aware that pedestrians may be crossing.

### *Recommendation*

22. That the footpath widths outside of the school and playcentre are adequate and align with best practice standards (e.g. the NZTA pedestrian planning guide).
23. That signage is used on the contra flow cycle path.
24. That any shared pathway is wide enough to accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists and that pathways have clear pedestrian priority signage.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/resources/pedestrian-planning-guide/docs/chapter-14.pdf>

25. That education is given to residents and school students and parents about etiquette on contra flow cycle paths.
26. That the pedestrian crossing is extended to the school gate and adequate signage is installed.

### **Conclusion**

27. NMH thanks MDC for the opportunity to comment on the options for Eltham/Beaver Road Cycle Link Project. NMH strongly supports MDC's investment in better cycle facilities for Blenheim. However, it believes that in finalising the design, consideration should be given to the further measures noted in our recommendations in ensuring better safety outcomes for both cyclists and pedestrians.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'P. Bramley', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Peter Bramley  
**Chief Executive**

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