

# Mud Cycles proposal for the former Terawhiti Bowling Club

## Proposal

Mud Cycles has for 20 years been deeply involved with Karori, its community, and its outdoor spaces. We wish to continue and expand this involvement with the proposed relocation to the former Terawhiti Bowling Club, when our current leased site at 421 Karori Road expires. Relocation to the Terawhiti Bowling Club is proposed to take place on 1 May 2015.

In our view having Mud Cycles present at this site and its development of Karori Park Reserve is necessary, and it will provide the following benefits:

- Establish a riding hub that connects to the Makara Park Mountain Bike Park. Offering different tracks for families and groups that contain riders of varying skill levels.
- Provide tourism opportunities to bring more cycle tourists into Wellington. A growing market for NZ tourism.<sup>1</sup>
- Support the Governments proposal for developing cycleways by giving accessible services and products and an area to practice and develop riding skills.<sup>2</sup>
- Provide accessible cycle safety education which has been identified by Coroners as an area for improvement.<sup>3</sup>
- Improvements to the site will enable greater community involvement in Karori Park.
- Improvement of local resident's physical and mental well-being by making access to cycling easier.
- Reduction in congestion by encouraging people to ride bikes, not just to the bike park for recreation, but for the work commute.

As part of this proposal Mud Cycles will:

- Further develop and enhance the site by creating a new indoor space with storage for community groups, and providing facilities such as showers, toilets and storage areas for residents undertaking outdoor activities.
- Enable public access to Terawhiti Bowling Club memorabilia.
- Support the development of a beginners riding area, which has been identified by the Council as being needed.
- Support the development of a community garden, subject to community interest and practicality.
- Provide a stable tenant with a vested interest in looking after the area, not just the building (10 years lease with a right of renewal).
- Support economic development in Karori by bringing more jobs into the area.

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<sup>1</sup> Tourism Profile, Tourist Special Interest, Cycling, New Zealand, April 2013, New Zealand Tourism, p1. See [link](#).

<sup>2</sup> Dearnaley, M. (2014, 18 August) Govt promises \$100m for urban cycleways. *NZ Herald*. See [link](#).

<sup>3</sup> NZ Chief Coroner's Inquiry into Cycling Deaths, v2.4, June 2013. See [link](#).

- Create and expand public amenities, at a low cost to the ratepayer.
- Provide long term lease payments which will help to offset the Council's investment in mountain biking and track maintenance.

## Current situation

When the current lease expires at 421 Karori Road, Mud Cycles will have virtually zero options to remain in Karori, and indeed Wellington City. The current landlord purchased the property in August 2013, with the plan to develop residential accommodation on the site, and therefore, will not extend the lease. The Terawhiti site is the last remaining suitable site left for Mud Cycles.

Mud Cycles would prefer to move into the Bowling Club site in winter, as it is a quiet time of the year for the bicycle industry. Trying to move in summer at peak season would be problematic for a smooth transition, and damage revenue at the time of the year when the bike shop needs to be running at its peak, in order to get sufficient reserves to make it through the quieter winter period.

The lease would be for 10 years with a 10 year right of renewal. This includes community access to the room at the north end of the building to be used by community groups. Mud Cycles would commence operation at the new site on 1 May with a period of up to 6 weeks needed for fit-out.

## Development of the building site

The Terawhiti Bowling Club is part of the rich community history of Karori and we would like our presence in the building to be sympathetic to this. For example, we would retain the public display of the "Roll of honour boards". They will of course have to be moved around to accommodate the shop development, but we wish to keep them highly visible and accessible to the residents of Karori and to descendants of the former bowling club members. In addition, we propose the following changes would be made to the site:

- The former ladies rooms at the north end of the building (marked in yellow on the aerial photo) would be separated off, either by lockable doors, or filling in the doorway (for flexibility of use I tend to lean towards lockable doors). As this space is a reasonable size and has its own toilets, it would be great for community groups that require temporary use of both an indoor space, toilets, and easy access to a large flexible use outdoor space.
- The locker area of the bowling club, we would propose to use as a storage space, and the toilet area for the use of staff and rental bike customers/tourists.
- The showers would be made available (for a fee to cover water/cleaning/maintenance etc.) for people post bike ride, or people doing other outdoor activities e.g. backpackers. This would be of great benefit mid-winter when backpackers come back muddy and consequently make a mess of seating on the buses or rental vehicles.
- The kitchen area would be the staff kitchen and rest area, and the bar, turned into storage and office. In addition, this space could be made into a secure lockup for rental customers belongings, as it is both lockable and with the mesh grill still highly visible and easily monitored.

- The area underneath the building (at the rear) is quite suitable to be converted into storage space for groups like the Lions or community gardening groups (see community development and park area development sections).
- The foot bridge entrance from Karori road beside the Dairy, is currently dark, overgrown and generally untidy. This area will have the vegetation tidied up from its current messy state, keeping natural shade over the stream, but allowing the light in over the path and entrance.
- Minor upgrades to the entrance path from Karori Park will also be made. This will include tidying up the path and maintaining the path surface.

### **Pollution and signage**

We feel that the relocation of Mud Cycles will not create any noise pollution, as the shop is shut in the evenings and is not naturally a noisy operation. Visual pollution for the neighbouring houses will be negligible due to the orientation of the site and screening hedgerows. We will require signage visible from Karori Road, but like the current shop this can be done in a manner that is not intrusive to local residents, and no longer requiring the shipping container storage will in effect be much less intrusive.

The signage will involve 3 signs at entrances: Karori road footbridge, Makara road carpark entrance, and one at the entrance from Karori Park. Signage on the building will include graphics on the side facing the current bowling greens, the end of the building, and one sign mounted on the roof facing Karori road. The entrance signs will be small, approximately 1 metre x 1 metre. The size of the building graphics and roof top sign have not yet been determined.

An example of the Karori Rd sign is provided below.



### **Development in the park area**

Mud Cycles wish as part of the move to the Bowling Club site to help with developing the much needed beginners riding area that Wellington City Council Officers have identified as being needed. Currently, the area is underutilised but has great potential as a Wellington riding hub.

Having a pump track and skills area with access to services and other tracks provides great benefits to the Karori Park Reserve, the local community, Wellington region and Government.

### **Pump Track and skills area**

An easily accessible pump track and skills area would be developed. The current one at Karori Park is inadequate in design and largely hidden from the public. A pump track, being located by the new Mud Cycles site, with an improved layout, and greater visibility (and publicity via Mud Cycles), will result in a better utilised resource for the community.

The pump track we propose to be developed where the dilapidated sheds are currently situated. This spot is preferred as it is away from houses, thus saving noise pollution for residents. In addition, it is highly visible from the shop, from the road, and will help discourage antisocial behaviour. The opening up of this currently enclosed area, and the 7 day a week nature of Mud Cycles operation, will also help discourage antisocial behaviour in the area.

In order for the pump track and skills area to be developed Mud Cycles would seek from the Wellington City Council the supply of materials needed. Mud Cycles would organise the design, construction and maintenance of the pump track (contingent on the Council supplying materials). We envisage this requiring up to 400 hours labour. In addition, Mud Cycles would endeavour to consult with other interested parties such as Bike Wellington to ensure a suitable level of track difficulty. Mud Cycles are happy to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Mud Cycles and the Council which sets out activities and timeframes.

### **Beginners Mountain Bike Track**

In addition, to the Pump track is the proposed beginners' mountain bike track in Karori Park. This will be located in the valley to the left of the ridgeline the Wahine track runs down. This area has been identified as one of only 2 sites within Wellington City with the correct mix of terrain, accessibility and size that is suitable for such a track. The only other site is in Island Bay.

Having the beginners bike track in Karori Park will by co-locating it with all the other tracks within this area create a "go to" hub for cycling that will cater to all levels. Outside of Rotorua, Mud Cycles are unaware of any other public mountain biking facility with this capacity. Therefore creating a great feather in Wellingtons cap for the current drive to promote the city as a mountain biking tourism destination.

Mud Cycles will undertake to provide 50 hours of design consulting work on the beginners track and with the pump track we would offer to provide 400 man hours labour to design, construct and maintain the pump track if the council will provide the materials. As identified above Mud Cycles are happy to enter into a MOU with the Council on this work.

### **Further future development of Bike Skills Area**

A bike skills area can also be developed in the future. The size and placement of this cannot be determined at this time as it is too early to know how much area is needed for all the planned facilities and how much surrounding area is needed for landscaping etc, the pump track size/location, car parking locations and public access ways to and from these facilities.

The bike skills area would complement the planned beginners bike skills area at Karori West School and would provide for more experienced riders.

Having the skills area at the Terawhiti site will also make emergency services access in the case of an accident vastly easier than the current skills area at the end of a rough locked off 4wd track which has high tension lines overhead to interfere with rescue helicopter access.

#### **Access to other tracks**

Makara supporter's organisation and the Wellington City Council, parks & reserves staff, are looking into upgrading the Varley's track which is part of the skyline track project running from the south coast to Mt Kaukau.

As the trails in Karori park get developed we envisage this being linked together to form a viable alternate easily accessible route to the top of Makara and onto the Skyline track. This will help take pressure off the Koru track in Makara Bike Park, which currently gets impacted by high traffic volumes.

## **Hub for riding**

A genuine beginner's track, and a pump track, such as the one drawn on the layout picture, along with the current 1km path running around the playing fields will create a family friendly riding environment that Wellington City currently lacks, and is in need of.

Co-locating a bike shop with beginner riding facilities will help encourage new people into the sport and into the park, by making that first step that much easier because everything they need is onsite, from tracks, to riding equipment, to advice, and education.

The shop will be a natural alternative start and finish point for rides and its presence in Karori, close to the trails, encourages people to ride to Karori instead of driving. Mud Cycles presence in Karori Park will also provide backup and support for cyclists if their bikes develop problems during the ride.

This hub will help take pressure off the Makara Bike park car park, and the south Karori Road and associated side roads, which are swamped most weekends and many weekday evenings year round.

Karori Park and tracks are a natural link to the Makara bike park, which would offer beginners and learners facilities in close proximity to intermediate level and advanced level tracks. Therefore, creating an integrated central hub for families and groups that contain riders of varying skill levels. Giving riders a destination where they can all enjoy riding in Wellingtons living cloak. Creating this hub in Karori, will also move the learners away from the more congested inner city trails, where user conflict is becoming an issue.

The proposed lease and development of Karori Park supports the Government proposal to develop cycleways across New Zealand. This is because it provides a safe environment for people to learn to ride, with safety education and support provided nearby, before they venture out on cycleways around town and potentially through traffic.

## **Tourism Opportunities**

Cycling is a popular tourist activity and an excellent way to see Wellington. Tourism New Zealand is focusing future marketing activity on attracting more international tourists to visit NZ to participate in cycling based holidays. Based on Tourist information from 2008 to 2012, of the tourists which came to New Zealand 4% participated in cycling based activities.<sup>4</sup> This is expected to increase in the coming years. Around 45% of these tourists did mountain biking with the remainder doing road biking or both.<sup>5</sup> Cycle tourists often spend longer in NZ and spend more on their trip which encourages local growth.<sup>6</sup> From 2008-2012, 25,000 cycle tourists came to Wellington.<sup>7</sup> The largest populations went to Auckland and Canterbury (36,000 each).<sup>8</sup> These tourists often hire vehicles (38%) and bikes, and need access to parking and hire and support services when they visit their biking destinations.<sup>9</sup> Having services, and varying level tracks so easily connected, with accessible public transport and parking, will enable Wellington to become a greater cycle tourism destination.

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<sup>4</sup> Tourism Profile, Tourist Special Interest, Cycling, New Zealand, April 2013, New Zealand Tourism, p1. See [link](#).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p1.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p4.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p2

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p2.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p4.

### **Hire Bikes**

As part of this proposal, Mud Cycles will hire out mountain bikes to tourists and local residents. It is envisaged that these bikes will mainly be used around Karori Park and Makara Peak mountain bike park.

### **Greater public access and facilities**

Mud Cycles proposal will INCREASE public access to what has been closed off to the general public. The entrance from Karori road over the bridge will be cleaned up and opened up with the land on that side of the building being offered to community gardening groups for vegetable growing type activities which will be both more usefull and more visually apealing than the current hidden and wasted space.

The area between the building and the footbridge that comes out beside the Dairy (marked in green on the aerial photo) we would like to look at creating a community garden for people or groups to grow food.

The sustainable city's movement is growing and gaining traction worldwide and having these community gardens dotted around Wellington will look good in promoting Wellington as a liveable city to attract business and immigrants to the region. To develop a community garden would involve cleaning up the overgrown and hidden entrance to the area from Karori Road and possibly the creation of storage under the bowling club building.

Draft development plan for the site showing the location for the pump track, community room and community garden area.

**Note: Area in Yellow is the room's available for community groups.  
Area in Green is the community garden**



## Community development

Mud Cycles has for 20 years been associated with, and deeply involved with, Karori, its community, and its outdoor spaces. We wish to continue and expand this involvement.

The former ladies room, off to the north side of the building, we would like to see become a community room for the use of assorted groups (for example Friends of Karori Stream, Makara supporters organisation, community education classes and schools).

We would also like to, in conjunction with outfits like Bike Wellington and Bikewise, do bike skills and bike safety classes to help encourage children to ride (recreationally and as a way to get to school). Last week for example, Mud Cycles and Bike Wellington held classes for 30-40 children from Scotts College each day teaching them mountain biking and bike safety. Having Mud Cycles onsite in the park would make this a safer operation by avoiding the current wagon train of kids with bikes leaving the shop and crossing (via 3 pedestrian crossings) 2 major roads and transiting through a bus terminus to get to Karori park which we currently use for classes.





### **Adding to the public amenity**

With the current and proposed tracks in Karori Park having Mud Cycles present will help encourage learner riders into the park by giving trail and safety advice, riding instruction, and providing bike repair.

It is a common occurrence for Mud Cycles to have to repair bikes that people have damaged in the park. Often people ride to Karori then damage their bike on the trails. For these people, without an onsite workshop open 7 days, they are then stuck for transport home as they cannot ride the bike. Bikes are not allowed on the Go Wellington bus system and the vast majority of taxis cannot and will not take a mud covered bike in the back. Being able to do on the spot repairs so these riders can make it home is an important draw-card for people that want to ride in Karori.

Bike sales and accessory sales are necessary for Mud Cycles for the financial viability of the shop. Rentals and workshop sales alone would generate insufficient returns to make it viable. However, this service, like the workshop, is also often needed by people who break, forget, or lose bike parts in transit to, or on the Karori bike trails. This includes accessories such as lights, high visibility clothing, or helmets, which would otherwise stop them from riding when they get up to Karori.