

# Discussion topics from Stakeholder Workshop #2 on biking

**Date:** 07/09/2023

**Time:** 12:30pm

**Venue:** Online via Teams

## Purpose:

This summary provides a general overview of the main discussion areas and comments raised during the second stakeholder workshop on biking.

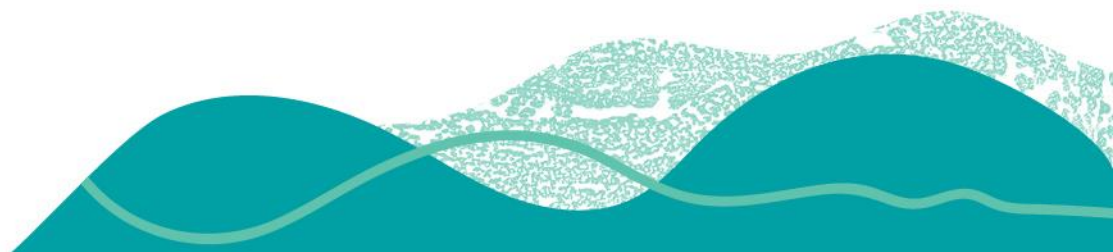
## How discussion areas will be responded to:

Where discussions have been open ended the topics will be brought back into the fourth Stakeholder Workshop on 26 October 2023. This final workshop is a wrap up session to enable time to revisit these discussion areas and provide further responses and updates. Therefore, responses are not provided within this document.

## Summary of discussion topics raised:

- Does this apply to all tracks (i.e. does it include walking tracks), does it mean that no tracks at all would be considered in bike free areas?
- Why is 'identify' in the Conservation General Policy (CGP) being interpreted to mean listing of locations, can you consider interpreting it another way that involves assessing based on effects only, and do you have legal advice behind this interpretation?
- What are the actual effects from bikes that DOC is trying to manage here, a lot of tracks are dual use?
- Consider differences between walking tracks, that can be just a triangle on a tree, and bike tracks that often involve clearing and machine-built surfaces.
- Consider proximity of waterways beside tracks as sedimentation impacts freshwater values. Will DOC specifically consult Fish and Game when proposed tracks are near streams / rivers / wetlands / lakes?

- There is a fear that large areas could become bike free, how much conservation land will become bike free areas?
- The risk we are concerned about is that trail ideas may not get to that in-depth consultation stage because the area has been ruled out through a much less in-depth process.
- Is the idea that each of these criteria can stand on their own, if one criterion is met then is that enough for an area to be declared bike-free?
- There's a risk that people applying these criteria as they are currently phrased may include quite large areas. Is there a requirement for consultation with potential user groups in the process to interpret the criteria and create bike free areas?
- I don't see how you can make evidential decisions on this without considering actual applications, prefer an effects-based approach.
- Can you create a nominal area as bike free, can we get around this CGP requirement?
- Does this mean I can ride my bike on any walking track not in a bike free area?
- The task of identifying bike free areas will be a challenge for boards, and is a big ask of iwi, and may be more conservative than is necessary.
- Once put in place around the motu, does it come back for public consultation?
- If the Minister was made aware that we could avoid significant cost, national process, contention etc by initiating a definition change to Vehicle in the CGP, would that not be entertained?
- Suggest having a specific DOC team to assist local DOC staff with drafting proposed bike free areas list to ensure the criteria are applied equally in different regions.
- The definition of bikes as vehicles is becoming increasingly important - we are seeing a huge growth in the numbers of e-motorbikes on trails.



# Questions received via email

## Questions received:

The following excerpt is from an email received from a stakeholder requesting responses to the following questions:

1. *“What are the actual effects the Department is trying to manage through the use of bike free areas and or other forms of scheduling? Note it will be useful to understand these effects as they relate to the use of bikes as separate from the effects of trails (for walking and or biking) and trail development.*
2. *Have alternatives to using Bike Free areas/scheduling in CMS documents been considered and if so what were they and why were they discounted?*
3. *Has there been a robust assessment undertaken of the relative costs and benefits of the use of bike free areas/scheduling versus reliance on other methods such as the identification of areas through robust criteria/policy that enables the consideration of the use of bikes on trails on a case by case basis as they arise?*
4. *How will bike free areas be future proofed and resilient to change? i.e. such areas are likely to remain in a CMS for up to 20 years and experience over the last 20 years has shown significant change in this area which could never have been predicted.*
5. *How will DOC ensure that any public discussion around bike free areas will not be hijacked by perceived (rather than actual) issues (e.g. walking vs cycling) and recognise the positive impacts which trails (regardless of user groups, as majority of trails are shared) can have on places and people.”*

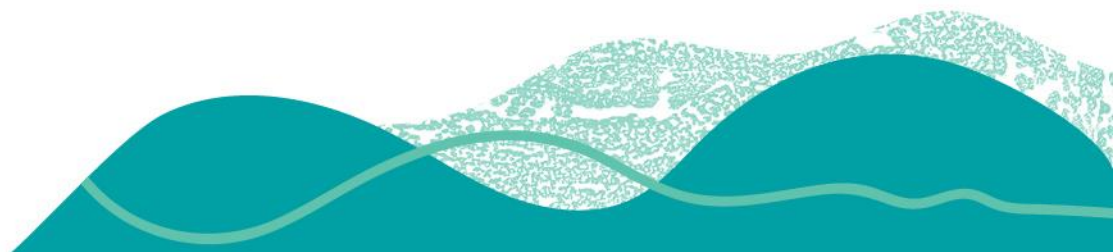
## Response to email questions:

Please find below responses to these emailed questions:

1. *“What are the actual effects the Department is trying to manage through the use of bike free areas and or other forms of scheduling? Note it will be useful to understand these effects as they relate to the use of bikes as separate from the effects of trails (for walking and or biking) and trail development.”*

The bike-free areas are to manage the values of the pcl&w as required by legislation and statutory policy.

The development of bike tracks can alter the landscape, use, and may affect the values of the pcl&w. These effects need to be considered. Most will be managed through the new policy assessment criteria which will be included in CMS. The development of



walking tracks is subject to the same consideration of effects as other activities, as required by the CGP.

Managing biking activity on a new bike track occurs through an approved Management Agreement or Concession, consistent with the CMS, and will include requirements for managing the adverse effects of biking.

2. *“Have alternatives to using bike-free areas/scheduling in CMS documents been considered and if so, what were they and why were they discounted?”*

The approach has evolved over the last few years as problems, assumptions, and the possible future state have been worked through. We also had to ensure the new approach is consistent with legislation and statutory policy.

Through this process and to meet the requirements of the CGP two options remained: list where bikes and bike tracks could go, or list where bikes and bike tracks could not go.

The Otago partial review took listing where bike tracks could go as far as possible. The term ‘will identify where’ does not encompass just relying on assessment criteria to determine where biking may be allowed. Therefore, one option remained which is to identify where biking should not occur.

The NZ Conservation Authority are the final decision makers on what is included in a CMS. They have been kept up to date and are comfortable with the new approach.

3. *“Has there been a robust assessment undertaken of the relative costs and benefits of the use of bike-free areas/scheduling versus reliance on other methods such as the identification of areas through robust criteria/policy that enables the consideration of the use of bikes on trails on a case-by-case basis as they arise?”*

No, a cost-benefit analysis has not been undertaken as the new approach is required to meet the CGP requirements.

To remove the need for scheduling altogether, would require a review of the CGP. All CMS would then still need to be reviewed to meet the new requirements.

4. *“How will bike-free areas be future proofed and resilient to change? i.e., such areas are likely to remain in a CMS for up to 20 years and experience over the last 20 years has shown significant change in this area, which could never have been predicted.”*



Criteria for bike-free areas has been developed with future proofing at front of mind. They are designed to protect enduring conservation values and will not change over the lifetime of a CMS.

5. *“How will DOC ensure that any public discussion around bike-free areas will not be hijacked by perceived rather than actual issues e.g., walking vs cycling, and recognise the positive impacts trails can have on places and people, regardless of user groups, as majority of trails are shared.”*

The criteria for determining bike-free areas will ensure they are identified consistently. Bike-free areas will not be an extensive list, but rather those areas where the values are significant. We will work with those making this determination to maintain this consistency at the right level.

We understand how valuable bike tracks can be for some locations. We also understand biking is a valued form of recreation. Conservation values are also required to be appropriately managed. The criteria have been designed with all this in mind. In any event bike-free areas will be included in draft CMS and will be tested through public processes in which all views will be considered.

