



**ADOPTED
BRIDLEWAYS
STRATEGY
2007**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Horse riding is a popular growing activity in some areas of Rodney District. Horse riding has several individual, community, environmental and health benefits. The Bridleways Strategy aims to address community's desire for recreational horse riding in high patronage areas.

The Strategy aims to ensure horse riding is a safe, enjoyable and a popular recreational activity for our communities. The purpose of this Strategy is, "to guide the development of recreational bridle trails in the District".

In order to realise the vision of the Strategy, a series of objectives have been developed through the public engagement process. In summary, the objectives are:

- To identify potential routes for further investigation
- To guide the development, implementation and maintenance of bridleways
- To promote public awareness and utilisation of bridleways
- To improve safety associated with horse riding in the District

The Bridleways Strategy will provide guidance to decision-makers and will act as a co-ordinating tool when determining how, when and where public bridleways will be provided. It gives direction and helps co-ordinate the establishment of bridleways throughout the District.

The Strategy focuses on developing routes around existing pony clubs, high patronage areas, and away from busy roads, so as to focus our limited resources in areas where minimum expenditure can result in maximum benefit.

The Strategy examines three potential medium-long term bridle routes namely, Huapai Pony Club, Coatesville Pony Club, and Dairy Flat Pony Club. These routes will require individual feasibility study to be undertaken, prior to any budgets being allocated for the development of these routes. The Strategy also recommends some specific actions which include identifying potential trail routes, undertaking route investigations, improving safety, and establishing route maintenance programmes.

The implementation of the routes will take place over the next 8-10 years. The routes identified in the Strategy will be actioned through the Long Term Plan and Annual Plan processes. It is intended to review and update the Strategy every three years. This triennial review will enable the monitoring of the objectives and outcomes of the Strategy, and the adjustment of the Strategy according to the changing needs and aspirations of the community.

BRIDLEWAYS STRATEGY (2007)

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PART 1 INTRODUCTION

Background

As people's leisure time and mobility has increased, so too has their demand for recreational activities. The rapidly increasing population of Rodney District especially on the Hibiscus Coast, the District's proximity to Auckland city, and improved access to the area, are creating increased demand for recreational activities within the District. In 2006, Rodney District Council had a total population of about 89,559 and this is projected to increase by about 17-20% in the next decade. An increase in the total population would have an impact on future access and availability of recreational space. Hence provisions need to be made to meet the projected demand for recreational space, of which bridleways and walkways form an integral part.

Horse riding is a popular growing activity in some areas of the District. Horse riding has several individual, community, environmental and health benefits. Just like any sport and recreation, the benefits of horse riding are well documented and include, increased physical and mental health, the development of physical skills, opportunities for social interaction, and improved community well being. Additionally, providing outdoor recreation opportunities creates healthy, cohesive and vibrant communities.

Purpose

The Bridleways strategy aims to address community's desire for recreational horse riding in high patronage areas¹. Essentially, the Strategy is a 'tool' to guide the community and the Council in providing access through an ongoing consultative process. The purpose of this Strategy is to provide positive guidance to Rodney District Council and the community on how best to manage, plan and provide for horse riding within the District.

The Strategy aims,

“To give direction and co-ordinate the efforts of the Rodney District Council and other interested parties in establishing bridleways throughout the District.”

The Strategy will serve as a key reference document for planners, parks and reserve staff, traffic and road safety engineers and other external parties (example, pony clubs). It will help support the provisions for horse riding facilities in the Long Term Plan and Annual Plans, and direct strategic acquisition of land and accessways by the Council.

Links to Other Strategic Documents

The Bridleways strategy complements the visions of two main recreational associations - New Zealand Recreational Association (NZRA) and Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC). The NZRA's vision is to promote recreation within New Zealand², whilst SPARC aims at making New Zealand the most active nation by investing in sports and systems that will effectively achieve their vision³. The North Harbour and Auckland Regional Physical Activity Strategies are a part of a national initiative by SPARC to identify obstacles, find

¹ High patronage areas are defined as areas where horse riding is a significant recreational activity and where the number of riders is high and steadily growing.

² NZRA website, <http://www.nzrecreation.org.nz>

³ SPARC website, <http://www.sparc.org.nz>

solutions and improve strategic planning in order to increase the physical activity levels of New Zealanders, which includes bridleways as well.

At the local level i.e. in *Vision Rodney*, communities have identified the need to maintain Rodney's outdoor lifestyle accessible through the development of linked walkway, cycleway, bridleways and waterway networks. This *Vision Rodney* goal is delivered through policy documents, comprising of *Physical Activity Strategy (2006-2009)*, *Walkways Strategy*, *Draft Walking & Cycling for Sustainable Transport Strategy*, *Draft Public Open Space Strategy*, and the *Bridleways Strategy*. The actions recommended in these strategies are delivered through mechanisms like the Annual Plans and the Long Term Plans.

Public Engagement Process

The Strategy was advanced as a result of series of public meetings held across the District in 1999, subsequent discussions with rider groups and site visits to each route. A key component in the formulation of this Strategy was input received from the public, landowners, organisations such as Department of Conservation, riders and equestrian groups.

In November 1999, a working draft of the Bridleways strategy was circulated to interested parties for comment. These parties included participants of the public meetings and potentially affected landowners. Comments were received on various routes and a number of significant issues were raised. Comments were also captured from a questionnaire circulated with the draft document. Input from interested parties enabled the identification of routes with good potential, and routes that were physically unsuitable or unsafe. In addition, issues surrounding high use routes and growth areas were also identified.

This revised version of the Strategy incorporated public input received on the 1999 version of the draft Strategy. Due to the period of time that has elapsed since the circulation of the first working draft, the draft Strategy was re-circulated. In May 2007, comments were sought on the draft Strategy from pony clubs and directly affected land owners, given that significant amendments were made to the draft Strategy, especially on the draft Strategy's policies and identified proposed routes. The Strategy was finally adopted by the Council on the August 2, 2007.

The process framework pertaining to the Bridleways strategy is schematically illustrated in Figure 1.

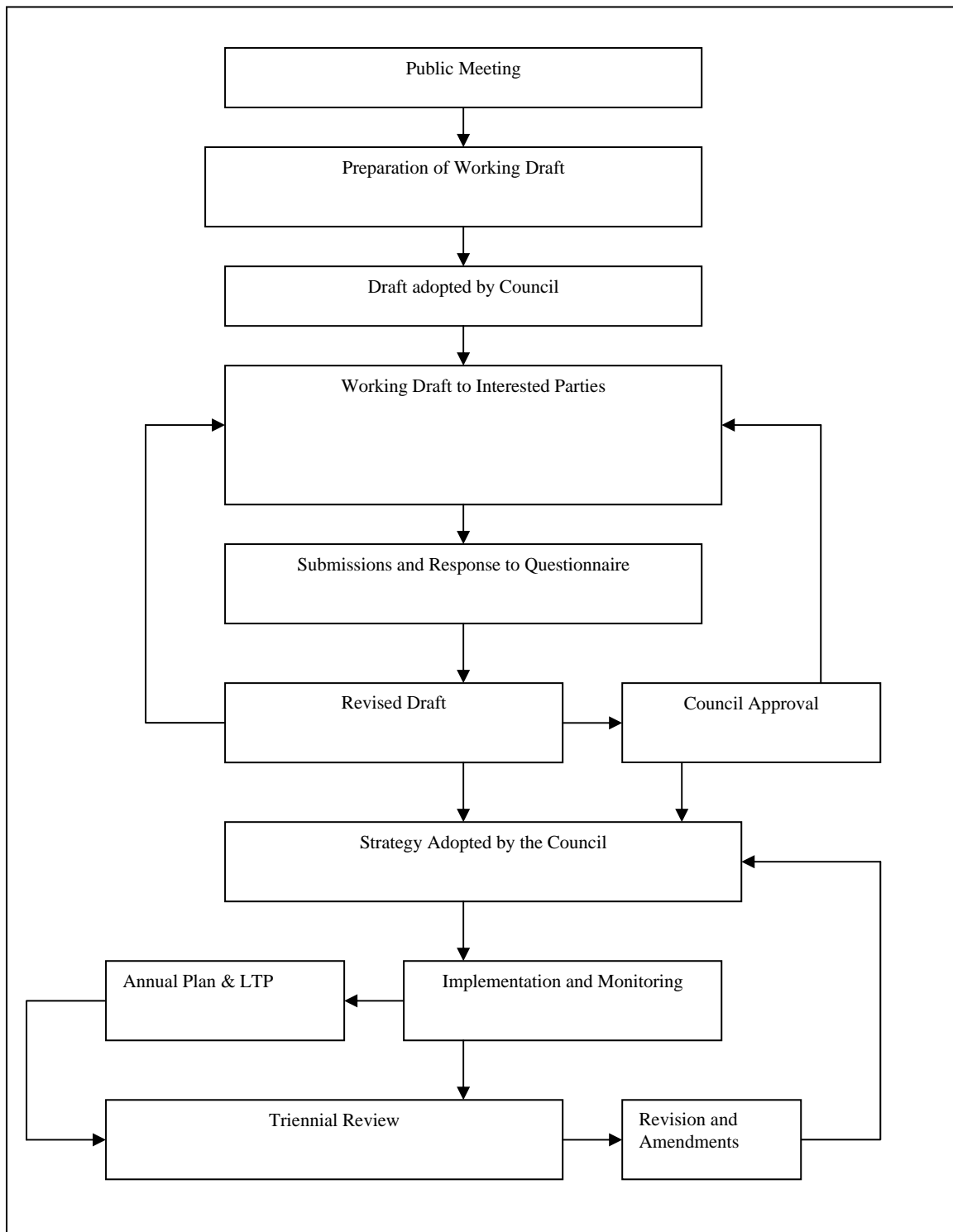


Figure 1 : Bridleways Strategy - Process Framework

PART 2 THE STRATEGY

The Bridleways strategy provides decision-makers with guidance and acts as a co-ordinating tool when determining how, when and where public bridleways will be provided. It gives direction and co-ordinates the establishment of bridleway routes throughout the District. This section sets out the vision, objectives and policies of the Strategy, which are necessary to direct and co-ordinate the efforts in establishing bridleways in the District.

Vision

The long-term vision for the Bridleways strategy is to,

“Guide the development of recreational bridle trails in the District with the aim of recognising the environmental and social benefits of managed horse riding and providing accessways to ensure horse riding is a safe, enjoyable and popular recreational activity.”

Objectives & Policies

In order to realise the vision of the Strategy, a series of objectives have been developed through the public engagement process. In summary, the objectives are:

- To identify potential routes for further investigation;
- To guide the development, implementation and maintenance of bridleways;
- To promote public awareness and utilisation of bridleways; and
- To improve safety in the District.

Each of the above mentioned objectives gives rise to policies which provides specific guidance to those involved in the planning and implementation of the Strategy.

Objective 1 - To identify potential routes for further investigation

Policy

- Routes that are away from busy roads, close to pony clubs and with high riding patronage should be identified as a potential route for further investigation.

Explanation

The objective of the Strategy is to identify an initial series of routes around the District for closer investigation, and to provide long-term direction as to where potential routes can be established. These potential routes have been identified in areas which are away from busy roads and with high riding patronage. Each identified route will need further

detailed investigation, and issues arising from such an investigation will need to be addressed in consultation with land owners, neighbours and other affected parties.

Objective 2a - To guide the development, implementation and maintenance of routes

Policies

- Routes that require little development or no new facilities should be made operational first.
- Development and construction efforts should be prioritised in favour of work that ensures the safety of riders and the public, and avoids disruption and damage to roads and property.
- Maintenance of bridle routes should be kept to the minimum.
- Riders and equestrian groups should be encouraged to maintain and care for the bridleways they use, and for routes with high use the Council may enter into agreement with equestrian groups to assist in the maintenance of bridle trails.

Explanation

The proposed bridleways will be developed over a period of 8-10 years. It is quite possible that large sections of the routes will remain in a largely natural state with no surfacing, bridging or any other facilities provided. The initial emphasis will be on selecting routes that require little development to get them operational.

The principal objective of any development work would be to ensure that safety of riders has been addressed, and that the potential for liability on part of the Council, riders and surrounding landowners have been minimised.

Minimal maintenance is expected on many routes. Riders and equestrian groups are encouraged to take an interest in developing and maintaining local routes. On routes that have high demand, the Council might consider assisting in its maintenance. However, such an arrangement will need to be worked out in conjunction with other relevant stakeholders. Education, advocacy and regular dialogue between Council, landowners and rider liaison groups will be important to ensure effective development and maintenance of bridle routes.

Objective 2b - To guide the development, implementation and maintenance of routes through policies on formalising bridleways on private land

Policies

- Bridleways reliant on numerous landowners for informal bridle trail access should not be encouraged.
- Section of bridle routes that traverse private land(s) should be formalised in consultation with landowners.

- Arrangements between horse riders and large holding landowners should be acknowledged and encouraged.

Explanation

In some cases, landowners already allow for passage of horse riders across their land. As an interim measure this may be a suitable approach. However, ownership can change and create future access difficulties, in terms of connectivity. As such, routes that depend upon informal access across private land are not favoured and access should be formalised wherever possible. Formal arrangements such as creation of easements may not be necessary or realistic on very large holdings for example, on forestry land. In such cases, alternative mechanisms can be established. For example, long standing working arrangements already exist between riders and forestry companies within the District.

Objective 2c - To guide the development, implementation and maintenance of routes through policies on use of unformed legal roads

Policies

- The planning and implementation of bridle routes using unformed legal roads, across and adjacent to private properties should be carried out in consultation with affected landowners.
- When developing a bridle route on paper roads, all reasonable steps should be taken to make the routes safe by addressing liability and access issues, in conjunction with affected landowners.

Explanation

Routes developed in the future could be developed along unformed legal roads or paper roads. While the use of unformed legal roads by the public is legally permitted, numerous difficulties may arise. In some instances, Council may have prior arrangements with adjacent landowners. This often involves fencing or erecting gates across paper roads and allowing them to be used for farming or other purposes. Such an approach often results in benefits to both parties, for example - weed control, fire safety, access and grazing.

Some of the common concerns identified by the landowners in using unformed legal roads as a bridle route include, loss of privacy, reduced security, disruptions to farming operations (for example, through gates being left open), potential stock losses, and liability issues if people are injured on the farm.

In addition to liability that might arise due to improper use of paper roads, legal issues with regards to trespassing might also arise, where paper roads are not clearly marked or fenced. It would not be sound environmental management practice to encourage riders to use paper roads simply on the basis that they are 'public places'. Accordingly, bridleways especially those traversing paper roads will require individual investigation prior to being

identified as a bridle route. Ultimately, if ongoing issues cannot be satisfactorily resolved the suitability of the route will need to be reassessed.

Objective 2d - To guide the development, implementation and maintenance of routes through policies on fencing

Policies

- Fencing of bridleways must be consistent with Council's *Policy No. 3810 - Fences and Gates on Roads* or any replacement policy.
- Fencing arrangements for bridleways, where appropriate, should be determined in consultation with affected landowners.

Explanation

In order to address concerns about liability, safety, trespass and damage, fencing of some bridle routes may be necessary. The fencing of bridle routes should be consistent with the existing arrangement between the Council and landowners. However, case specific issues may be considered by the Council and should involve consultation with landowners.

Objective 3a - To promote awareness and utilisation of routes through joint uses of bridle trails

Policies

- Joint use of bridleways for horse riding, cycling, and walking should be encouraged only where it is safe and practical to do so.
- The use of footpaths as bridle trails is prohibited.
- Bridle trails that use berm should have a minimum width of 2 meters.

Explanation

It may not always be practically or financially possible to acquire and develop routes solely for equestrian use. Initial investigations indicate that potential opportunities for the joint use of bridleways could exist where the intensity of use of bridle trails will not be high.

According to s.45 of Part IV of the Traffic Regulations, a horse is required to be ridden only on the road shoulder, and if not practical then as far to the left as is practical on the carriageway. Furthermore, horses are prohibited on footpaths. Given the need for horses to be on the road shoulder or the left extreme of the carriageway, there is potential for conflict to arise between riders, pedestrians and cyclists when sharing the path. The potential for such conflict is far greater in high use urban areas and busy roads. For the most part this Strategy proposes bridleways in rural areas, and conflicts would therefore be significantly minimised.

It is necessary to ensure that joint use bridleways should be wide enough to accommodate both walkers and riders, and for them to pass safely. Additionally, to ensure that horse riding on the berm is safe, a minimum width of 2 meters is required.

Objective 3b - To promote awareness and utilisation of routes through prevention of motorised vehicles on bridle trails

Policy

- Methods for managing motor vehicle access on bridleways should be investigated, whilst ensuring access and safety of riders and pedestrians alike.

Explanation

Through the public engagement process, inappropriate use of bridle routes by motorised vehicles was raised as a significant issue. In some cases, these activities damaged routes making them almost impassable to both riders and walkers. While acknowledging that all sporting activities have their place, the aim of this Strategy is to minimise those activities on formalised bridle routes that will make them dangerous or impassable to horse riders. Some of the potential controls could include the use of bollards, horse stiles, or appropriate bylaw controls.

Objective 3c - To promote awareness and utilisation of routes through development of drop off points

Policy

- Drop-off points on high use bridle routes should be investigated, developed and promoted.

Explanation

Given the extensive network of busy roads across the District, the routes identified in the Strategy cross or travel along sections of a main roads. Many riders at the consultation meetings advised that some main roads have become so busy that they are now in the practice of transporting their horses by horse float to key drop off points, and rides are then commenced from these drop-off points. Ideally, encouraging long and uninterrupted bridleways would be the goal, however, given safety concerns in using and crossing main roads, promoting the development of drop off points would enable creation of safer environments for horse riding.

Objective 3d - To promote awareness and utilisation of routes through marking of bridle trails

Policies

- A system of bollards and/or signs should be developed to mark bridle routes.

- A generic bridleways marker/sign warning motorists of riders should be developed and erected, where appropriate.

Explanation

In some instances, bridleways can be difficult to identify and follow. In addition to the confusion this causes riders, the inability to find and accurately follow bridleways can contribute to cases of trespassing, danger to riders, and damage to private property. To ensure that riders know where the routes are, it is important to mark bridle routes. An effective marker would be one which would not only be visually unobtrusive but would also be sufficiently clear to give riders confidence to use a route, and avoid getting lost or trespassing. The Council successfully uses bollards and small signs on its walkway network. Similar bollards and small signs could be developed for marking bridle routes as well.

Additionally, the Council would consider the development and erection of road signs along roads warning motorists of horse riders, to ensure safe riding environments. These signs will need to comply with the Manual of Traffic Signs and Markings (MOTSAM).

Objective 4a - To improve safety by discouraging the use of busy roads

Policies

- Generally, busy roads should not be used as a bridle trail.
- Areas of significant horse usage in the vicinity of busy roads should be identified, and safety measures should be developed to manage potential conflicts between motorists and horses.

Explanation

Sections of formed road throughout the District (many carrying high traffic volumes) have been identified for possible use as bridleways in this Strategy, and in many cases these roads are currently being used for equestrian activities. The area of Coatesville is a good example. There are significant issues relating to the safety of riders and motorists in using busy roads as bridleways.

The Bridleways Strategy provides an opportunity to manage potential conflict between horses and vehicles, especially in areas of high motor vehicle use by, discouraging riders in high-use areas to use busy roads, and considering crossing busy roads only at selected safe points. In some instances it might be appropriate to consider installing culverts, safety barriers, signs, and traffic calming measures. In considering safety measures, issues such as maintenance and equestrian access to public berms need to be investigated as a part of the route's feasibility study.

Objective 4b - To improve safety by developing a code of conduct

Policy

- A Code of Conduct for bridleways users should be developed.

Explanation

The promotion of a code of conduct through the Bridleways strategy is one of the means of improving the safety of horse riders in the District. It also plays an important role in minimising conflict between users and minimising adverse impacts upon the environment.

The code of conduct is aimed at all users of the bridle trail, so as to educate motorists, horse riders, and other recreational users on how to understand each other and co-exist in a safe manner. Fair and reasonable behaviour is encouraged and should be observed by all parties including riders and landowners whilst using bridle routes, especially those on unformed legal roads. A 'Code of Good Conduct' should be developed in conjunction with landowners, horse riders and the Council, so as to achieve safe and enjoyable riding routes.

PART 3 ROUTE IDENTIFICATION

Rodney District covers a vast area. Strong demand for bridleways has emanated from areas around the main urban centres of the District, and around the countryside living areas in the south and west along the District's boundaries with North Shore City and Waitakere City. The three potential routes identified in this section are mainly in the south and western parts of the District.

The identified routes are based on the selection criteria. It is important to note that these routes are not finalised routes but rather they highlight routes which have the potential to be developed as a bridle route in the medium-long term. Each identified bridle route will require individual investigation (including a feasibility study) prior to being developed as a bridle route.

Bridleways Selection Criteria

The proposed routes identified in this section need to be prioritised so as to focus our limited resources in areas where minimum expenditure can result in maximum benefit. A number of potential routes identified in the earlier work have been abandoned because the routes were either traversing unsafe or sensitive environmental areas, or involved complicated management issues. The principal criteria used for selecting the routes include:

Physical characteristics

- Topography, and suitability of the route for horse riding
- Width of the road reserve and berm, existing road verge, and additional land required
- Sensitivity or vulnerability of cultural, natural or historic resources

Accessibility /Connectivity

- Existence of pony clubs
- Linkages to areas currently used by pony clubs
- Proximity to Council reserves where horse riding is a permitted activity
- Accessibility from the existing road network that are not busy, and the potential for developing a drop-off points

Need

- Present level of use/popularity of the area for horse riding
- Proximity to proposed concentrations of pony clubs/equestrian facilities
- Need for a bridleways to resolve issues of safety or landowner concerns

Management Issues

- Present land ownership

- Costs of establishment (example, costs associated with erecting gates, bridges, fencing, signs, off-carriageway upgrades, crossings)
- Costs of maintenance
- Level of risk, safety, and liability issues
- Other management concerns (example, concerns raised by DOC, ARC and forestry companies)
- Iwi issues

Bridleway Routes

Based on the previously mentioned criteria and input received from various stakeholders, three bridle routes have been identified. However, it is possible that changing demands within the community might result in the identification of new routes. The Strategy will remain open to this possibility. All identified routes (proposed and new additions) are subject to further investigation, prior to being considered for development. As a part of the investigation, property owners adjacent to bridle trails need to be consulted with.

A schedule has been compiled along with the recommended actions for each bridleway along with the route maps, which are attached at Appendix 1. Appendix 2 lists the initial feasibility study undertaken for each of these three potential routes.

BRIDLEWAYS & RECOMMENDED ACTIONS
<p>Kumeu - Huapai Pony Club – Map 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Investigate and discuss access to Kumeu District Trotting Club land. ▪ Create a route around Brood Crescent along the road. ▪ Create a horse crossing across Waitakere Road to access Brood Crescent bridle route. ▪ Maintain a minimum required verge along the Waitakere Road between Huapai Pony Club and Trotting Course Drive. ▪ Erect signs warning motorists of horse riders. ▪ Consult with landowners that are adjacent to the route.
<p>Coatesville Pony Club – Map 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a safe route close to the Pony club along berm of non-busy roads. ▪ Investigate berm width (of minimum 2 meters) along the route so as to ensure adequate width for a bridle trail. ▪ Consider upgrading paths that already exist ▪ Erect signs warning motorists of horse riders. ▪ Consult with landowners that are adjacent to the route.
<p>Dairy Flat Pony Club – Map 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communicate and negotiate with Transpacific Industries Group (NZ) Limited about a possible development of a bridle trail on their land ▪ Consult with Transpacific about developing a system that allows horse riding to occur only during non-operational hours of the land fill, so as to ensure safety of riders and truck operators. ▪ Erect signs warning motorists of horse riders based on MOTSAM, so as to ensure the

safety of riders.

- Consider developing the route in light of a possible equestrian facility being developed on the Council owned site at Green Road.

PART 4 IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, AND REVIEW

Implementation and Funding

All routes identified in section three of the Strategy are potential routes. Before any of these routes are finalised, a detailed feasibility study examining the costs (operational and maintenance) and benefits needs to be undertaken, along with the resolution of any other relevant issues. Consulting with land owners, adjacent to the proposed routes, will form an essential component of a feasibility study.

Community groups and pony clubs are encouraged to make submissions to the Long Term Plans and Annual Plans to see allocation of budgets and new routes being added to the Strategy. Before any new route is provided through the Annual Plan, a detailed feasibility study will need to be undertaken.

Horse riding advocates should take a lead role in the promotion and implementation of the Bridleways strategy. Within the Rodney District Council, the implementation of the Strategy will lie with the Assets and Facilities and Transport Directorates. Ongoing public involvement with the Strategy will also be encouraged to achieve solutions to specific site related issues, identification of further implementation actions and priorities, and effective ongoing management and care of established routes.

Funding for the implementation of the routes will be provided through the Long Term Plan and Annual Plan processes. Community groups and community trust funds are also potential alternative sources of funding.

Monitoring

Regular and ongoing monitoring is an integral part of ensuring that the objectives and policies of this Strategy are being fulfilled. The following features are identified for monitoring:

- Physical works programme;
- Horse riding crashes;
- Satisfaction levels regarding horse riding facilities;
- Increase in recreational horse riders.

The table below outlines the range of performance indicators and mechanisms that can be used for monitoring the above features.

Monitoring Features	Reporting Indicators	Mechanism
Physical works programme	Percentage completion of	Annual progress report

	the bridleways route	
Horse riding crashes	Total crashes between horse riders and other road users over three/five year period Number of calls involving horse riders	Land Transport New Zealand crash data (CAS) Crash or fatal accidents (CR) reported through the Rodney District Council's Call Centre
Satisfaction levels regarding horse riding facilities	Percentage of increase in satisfaction in relation to horse riding facilities	Level of Service surveys
Increase in recreational horse riders	Percentage of increase in club memberships	Club membership roll

Ongoing monitoring will be undertaken in conjunction with pony clubs and other horse riding advocate groups.

Review

The Bridleways strategy will be reviewed triennially, to ensure alignment of the Strategy's objectives and policies with the District's development. A review allows the aims and objectives of the Strategy to be updated so as to ensure the outcomes desired by the communities are achieved. Additionally, this will also provide for the Strategy to be developed according to the evolving needs of the community. Any changes as a result of the monitoring process will also be addressed as a part of the review process.

APPENDIX 1

(INSERT MAP 1)

(INSERT MAP 2)

(INSERT MAP 3)

APPENDIX 2

Kumeu - Huapai Pony Club

Map Reference

Map 1

Need

The level of use for bridleways in this area has been identified as moderate. However, due to the growing popularity of Kumeu as a lifestyle area, it is important to identify a bridle route before future subdivision in the area causes foreclosure of a potential bridle route.

Access/Connectivity

The Pony Club is accessible due to its proximity to Waitakere Road and Access Road. Kumeu District Trotting Club is located to the west of the Huapai Pony Club, and a connection between these two areas could be investigated once a route around Brood Crescent is established.

Route Description

The route starts at the Pony club on Waitakere Road. It then crosses over the North Auckland line onto Brood Crescent to form a circuit.

Physical Characteristics

The topography of the land surrounding the Huapai Pony Club is flat, making it easy for riding. The Pony Club is surrounded by Waitakere Road and Access Road. These roads experience a consistent moderate level of traffic along them during the day. The size of the Pony Club is 16.28 hectares and they have access to the Showground on the adjacent property which is an addition of 16.68 hectares.

Significant Management Issues

- The ownership of the land west of the Pony Club is owned by Kumeu District Trotting Club. They need to be a part of the discussion when considering the development of this route.
- Ensuring safety of riders crossing Waitakere Road to access Brood Crescent needs to be considered when developing this route.
- The verge along the roads needs to be brought up to a standard where it would be made suitable for horse riding.

Recommended Actions

- Investigate and discuss access to Kumeu District Trotting Club land.
- Create a route around Brood Crescent along the road.
- Create a horse crossing across Waitakere Road to access Brood Crescent.
- Maintain a minimum required verge along the Waitakere Road between Huapai Pony Club and Trotting Course Drive.
- Erect signs warning motorists of horse riders.
- Consult landowners who are adjacent to the route, when undertaking the feasibility study.

Coatesville Pony Club

Map Reference

Map 2

Need

The area is a popular riding area. With the projected growth in the areas' population, the demand for equestrian facilities is projected to increase. Additionally, there is a need to create safer riding environment by trying to take the riders off the Coatesville Riverhead Highway.

Access/Connectivity

The Pony Club is easily accessed from the roading network. Mahoenui Valley Road is a busy road on weekdays between 8-9 am and 2.30-4 pm due to school traffic. This street is otherwise quiet, allowing horses to ride up the road towards Ridge Road. Mahoenui Valley Road provides an entryway onto this road taking horses off the Coatesville Riverhead Highway, and ensuring the safety of riders. The Scenic Reserve along Mahoenui Valley Road could provide another possible route.

Route Description

The route could be developed as a loop starting from the Pony Club, moving along Mahoenui Valley Road down Ridge Road and onto Glenmore Road to return back to the Club. There are existing bridle tracks along the Coatesville-Riverhead Highway between Mahoenui Valley Road and Sunnyside Road.

Physical Characteristics

Much of the route is along flat land with some gentle hills.

Significant Management Issues

- Rodney District Council currently owns the land and there is no need to purchase any land in the area. The cost of upgrading and maintaining the current bridleway will need to be taken into account whilst considering the development of this route.
- The only major safety issue is the traffic on the roads with many of the roads having inadequate road verges for horse riding purposes.

Recommended Actions

- Create a safe route close to the Pony Club along berm of non-busy roads.
- Investigate berm width (of minimum 2 meters) along the route so as to ensure adequate width for a bridle trail.
- Consider upgrading paths that already exist
- Erect signs warning motorists of horse riders.
- Consult with landowners whilst undertaking the feasibility study.

Dairy Flat Pony Club

Map Reference

Map 3

Need

The level of use in the area is high. Due to the popularity of Dairy Flat as a country side living area, it is important for a route to be identified before future subdivision in the area causes foreclosure of a potential bridle route. Additionally, the need for a bridleway has been identified in the area so as to create safe riding conditions for riders.

Access/Connectivity

There are currently no bridleways in the area. The farm adjacent to the Pony Club allows riders to ride in parts of their farm when they do not have much stock. The riders are able to access facilities such as the showground with ease. There is plenty of space to develop a drop off point.

Route Description

The route starts at the Pony Club, then following the internal road around the Transpacific landfill site, and completing the loop by getting back to the Club.

Physical Characteristics

The area around the Pony Club is flat with some rolling hills making it ideal for riding. The width of the verge seems adequate for horses to travel along the road.

Significant Management Issues

- Ownership of the land is an issue, as Council does not own the land around the Pony Club. Discussions with Transpacific Industries Group (NZ) Limited will need to be undertaken so as to assess the feasibility of considering the route as a potential route. Additionally, as the road is owned by Transpacific, discussions will need to involve the possibility of using the road/ road verge as a potential bridle trail.

Recommended Actions

- Communicate and negotiate with Transpacific Industries Group (NZ) Limited about a possible development of a bridle trail on their land
- Consult with Transpacific about developing a system that allows horse riding to occur only during non-operational hours of the land fill, so as to ensure safety of riders and truck operators.
- Erect signs warning motorist of horse riders based on MOTSAM, so as to ensure the safety of riders.
- Consider developing the route in light of a possible equestrian facility being developed on the Council owned site at Green Road.