

Interviewee: Marco Renalli

Title: Cyclist Advocate

Interview Date: 01/31/24.

Interview Time: 12:15-1:00 PM

He has been part of the Project Design Liason Group for 10 years.

Can you please tell us what your role is within the cycling community?

He is the president of the Port Nicholson Ponake cycling club.

I'm a commuter from Lower Hutt to Wellington every day.

Are you a user of the Hutt River Corridor?

Follow up if yes: What activities do you use the corridor for?

Yes... I use the new piece from the Nomendarrow bridge to Petone.

Do you consider yourself an advocate for recreational cyclists, commuter cyclists, or both?

Yes, cycling and commuting. I help with racing events and with the cycling club. Now I don't do any road racing because it has died.

Can you explain how your experience with cycling relates to the Hutt River Corridor?

Yes, every year there is a 5 round cycle cross , they hold events on the Hutt river, about 200 plus people go there around stop banks and the parks. Huttcross, google it.

Do you believe the Corridor, in its current condition, is well-adapted for recreational cyclist use?

For commuter cyclist use?

No, the cycle ways north of Petone are better.

"It's hard to get to the stop banks through the cycle lane."

"RiverLink is a big project. They haven't got connections to the Hutt."

What is your ideal situation for recreational cyclists within the River Corridor?

Follow up if commuter: situation for commuter cyclists?

Follow up: what would it take to accomplish this?

They need.. Okey best situation would be separated paths, then there is segregated, that is when you have one side of cycle lane. Then, there is shared, that is the worst one.

3.5 meters wide is for a 2 way cycle lane. “There are places where there is enough land and some where there are pinch points where there isn’t enough land.”

Solar light on the ground is the new thing they want to do, but it isn’t as good as the top lights. That is because they are worried about floods.

“This RiverLink thing will cause lots of disruptions and we just have to accept we can’t always get out way.”

“If you want to walk your dog you can walk 1 kilometer north and walk your dog there.”

Do you believe there is conflict between the users of the Hutt River Corridor?

“Yes, mainly dogs.” with kids they just go around them.

Follow up if yes: What do you believe could be a solution for the conflicts between users without excluding any user?

“If it is separated there will be no conflicts. When they ask us to share, it’s gonna cause a lot of conflict.”

What is your opinion on cyclists using bells while passing other users?

Follow up: how does this affect your use of the trail?

“Cyclists should be encouraged to have a bell, and use it.”

I had a situation where I was trying to pass someone and I yelled: “keep left” and they responded saying: “ring your bloody bell!”.

“Etiquette and learning to share is missing. There is a bit of education missing that needs to be done.”

What is your opinion on visitors using headphones in a shared space like the River Corridor?

Follow up: how does this affect your use of the trail?

“I don’t like it, you should be able to hear.”

“Walkers with headphones are a problem because they can’t hear the bell or our call.”

What is your opinion of dogs being on or off lead in the River Corridor which is a shared space?

Follow up: how does this affect your use of the trail?

“On lead would be preferable.”

“They need to designate an off-leash area and fence it from the cyclists.”

They should have more signs designating which areas are off leash and which ones are on leash:

“I’m a cyclist and I don’t know which areas I should have some extra care.”

Do you believe the trails along the corridor should be expanded? If so, why?

“Yes, that comes back to the wish of them being separated.”

“They could have a sign at the top of the stop banks saying bikes only and have the rest of the people below.”

What are your thoughts on adapting the River Corridor for increased commuter cyclists use?

Follow up: Would this affect you, if so, how?

Follow up: Do you think the River Corridor being a shared space impacts how commuters use it?

Yes, it is already used by commuters... but there are bits that are gravel, bits that are narrow, and bits without lights.

What do you believe is the best way to go about adding a commuter route in the Hutt Valley, and is the River Corridor the space that should be used?

“It is the only place we’ve got.”

“The train people have to learn to look both ways.”